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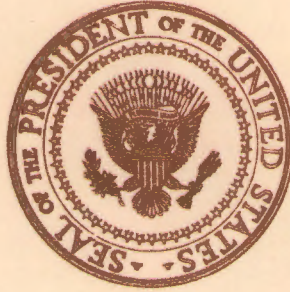
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Mental Illness Awareness Week, 1984

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Mental illnesses are among the most misunderstood disorders. As a result, many of our citizens experience unnecessary pain. Stigma—a by-product of fear and misunderstanding—places an unwarranted burden on those with mental disorders and their families. It is of particular concern that the stigma associated with these problems often discourages people from seeking the help they need.

A recent National Institute of Mental Health research study found that one-fifth of adult Americans—over 24 million people—suffered a diagnosable mental disorder in the previous six months. In addition, an estimated 12 million children in this country have a mental disorder. Many will never reach full potential because their illnesses will go unrecognized and untreated.

The cost of mental illnesses to this Nation is in excess of \$50 billion annually in health care and lost productivity. The cost in human suffering is beyond reckoning; however, the promise of relief is becoming a reality for many.

Research during recent decades has led to new and more effective drug, behavioral, and psychosocial treatments. For many, the pain of depression can be eased, suicide prevented, hallucinations and delusions assuaged, and crippling anxieties eliminated. Many children vulnerable to serious developmental and psychological problems can be protected by early diagnosis and intervention.

In recognition of the unparalleled growth in scientific knowledge about mental illnesses and the need to increase awareness of such knowledge, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 322, has designated the week beginning October 7, 1984 as "Mental Illness Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 7, 1984, as Mental Illness Awareness Week. I call upon all health providers, educators, the media, public and private organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week by participating in appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

Ronald Reagan