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National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), the sudden and unexpected death of apparently healthy babies, is the major cause of death of infants between the ages of one month and one year. Between 5,000 and 6,000 babies die of SIDS annually in the United States. Most die unobserved in their sleep. Despite two decades of aggressive biomedical and behavioral research, supported in large part by the Federal government, the exact cause of SIDS remains elusive. From what we have learned through research, choking, neglect, infection, and heredity have been ruled out as probable causes, and today the syndrome is attributed to a combination of subtle physiological deficiencies in the infant.

The parents and families of SIDS victims frequently experience intense and traumatic grief, often accompanied by unwarranted feelings of guilt that can result in psychosocial and even physical problems. It is extremely important that the facts about SIDS be widely disseminated and understood in order to banish myths and misconceptions. By working together, parents, schools, private and voluntary organizations, and government at all levels can bring about a greater public understanding of this tragic syndrome.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 322, has designated the month of October 1985, as "National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of October 1985, as National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month.

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

Ronald Reagan