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## National Adoption Week, 1987

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Theodore Roosevelt captured a vital truth years ago when he said, "We cannot as a Nation get along at all if we haven't the right kind of home life." "The right kind of home life" is exactly what adoption is all about; during National Adoption Week we do well to remember that and to encourage this loving, proud, and beautiful way to create or enlarge families.

The family is something all of us need. Wholesome family life is not only the basis for stable communities and a strong country but also the best way ever devised to nurture, raise, and love children and to instill in them confidence, compassion, and understanding of right and wrong. Family life is a precious gift, and it is something adoption affords both children and parents in a truly special way.

In recent years many Americans have been discovering adoption and all its blessings, but for many it remains an untapped opportunity. Thanks to the efforts of devoted citizens, though, much progress has taken place in finding permanent homes for thousands of children, including some of the more than 30,000 youngsters with special needs across our country who await adoptive families. These children are older, or have emotional, physical, or mental disabilities, or are of minority heritage, or are sibling groups who cannot be separated. These wonderful children have a great deal of love to offer their adoptive families.

What is required of people considering adoption is the ability to love and the desire to help children. Adoption of children by their relatives or their step-parents has always been common, but in recent years we have begun to see the benefits of adoption by single, foster, and handicapped parents, as well as by parents with biological children. Members of the military have also shown great interest in adoption.

Many single women have realized that adoption is the best solution to crisis pregnancy. Often under the most difficult circumstances, they have rejected abortion and given their babies the gifts of life and of a loving adoptive home. Many dedicated Americans help these expectant mothers during and after pregnancy, but all of us, as individuals and as a Nation, need to do much more to support and encourage the brave women who heroically choose life.

During National Adoption Week and throughout the year we should do all we can to make adoption a true national concern. There is much that each of us can do to foster awareness of adoption—in schools, churches, businesses, communities, and government. The new report by the Interagency Task Force on Adoption will help us find innovative ways to encourage adoption and eliminate barriers to it, and that is good news for everyone.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 97, has designated the week of November 22 through November 28, 1987, as "National Adoption Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of November 22 through November 28, 1987, as National Adoption Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 19th day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

*Ronald Reagan*