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# **The Reagan Record on The Family and Traditional Values**

**White House Office of Public Affairs**





# The Reagan Record

September 8, 1988

The Reagan Record

on

THE FAMILY AND TRADITIONAL VALUES

Index page

SUMMARY STATEMENT.....1

HIGHLIGHTS.....1

THE RECORD

White House Working Group on the Family.....3

Executive Order on the Family.....3

Child Care.....4

Economic Expansion.....7

Tax Reform.....8

Education.....8

Welfare Reform.....12

Drug Abuse.....14

Crime and the Family.....15

Abortion.....16

Adoption.....17

Family Life.....18

Pornography.....19

Foster Grandparents.....21

School Prayer, Equal Access, Year of the Bible.....22

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## THE FAMILY AND TRADITIONAL VALUES

### SUMMARY STATEMENT

The family is the basic building block of American society. President Reagan's leadership has brought the family back into the center of social policy. The pro-family accomplishments of this Administration are among the most important legacies President Reagan will leave to the American people.

As President Reagan said in his 1986 State of the Union address, "As we work to make the American dream real for all, we must also look to the condition of America's families."

### HIGHLIGHTS

White House Working Group/Executive Order on the Family -- The President appointed a White House Working Group on the Family which advises him on policies to strengthen the family. He issued an Executive Order directing that "the autonomy and rights of the family are considered in the formulation and implementation of policies by Executive departments and agencies."

Child Care -- Under the Reagan Administration, the Federal Government is providing almost \$7 billion a year to child care assistance and Head Start, and is studying how best to provide additional help to families with children. Working parents use a wide variety of child care arrangements, most of them informal. The Administration supports a child care policy that allows parents to choose among diverse child care options, including the informal home situations and church operated programs that many working parents use.

Economic Expansion -- The record peacetime economic expansion has been a boon to America's families. Family income rose 11 percent from 1982 to 1986. Black family income rose even more -- 14 percent during this period.

Education -- The Reagan Administration has taken steps to put parents back in charge of their children's education. The Administration has supported parental involvement, parental choice, and the restoration of family values in American education.



Welfare Reform -- The President has advanced welfare reforms that strengthen, not weaken, the family; and that encourage, not discourage, work.

Drugs -- Drugs have a devastating impact on the families. First Lady Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign and the return of traditional values have helped change attitudes about drugs among our youth.

Crime -- The Administration's aggressive anti-crime policies are building a safer America for America's families. The rate of violent crime committed in America has dropped by over 20 percent since 1980.

Abortion -- President Reagan has supported efforts to limit Federal funding for abortion and abortion-related services, and has supported pro-life legislation.

Adoption -- As an adoptive parent, the President has a special interest in finding loving, permanent homes for America's waiting children. He appointed an Interagency Task Force on Adoption which made recommendations on removing barriers to adoption.

Pornography -- The President supported and signed the Child Protection Act of 1984, created the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography and endorsed its report. The Department of Justice created a National Obscenity Enforcement Unit which has achieved important successes in obscenity prosecution.

Equal Access -- President Reagan supported and signed the Equal Access Act in 1985 which requires that public secondary schools grant equal access to student groups who wish to meet for religious, political, or philosophical purposes, if the school allows other types of student groups to meet.

School Prayer -- The President has continued to support a Constitutional amendment to permit voluntary school prayer.



## THE RECORD

### White House Working Group on the Family

- o "The family," President Reagan has said, "is the foundation of society." To strengthen that foundation, he appointed the White House Working Group on the Family in February 1986 to prepare a report detailing policy recommendations for preserving and improving the quality of family life in America.
- o In November 1986, the Working Group issued its first report. Calling for public sector efforts to strengthen the family and emphasizing that "a pro-family policy must recognize that the rights of the family are anterior, and superior to those of the state," the report endorsed several key policy principles. These included:
  - Recognizing that parents have the primary responsibility for rearing and caring for their children;
  - Promoting adoption as a positive alternative to abortion; and
  - Emphasizing that school curriculum material should not undermine family values, but should reinforce the values and ideals most parents strive to impart to their children.

### Executive Order on the Family

- o The President endorsed the Working Group's report. To put the report's principles into effect, the President issued an Executive Order on September 2, 1987, directing that "the autonomy and rights of the family are considered in the formulation and implementation of policies by Executive departments and agencies."
- The Order directs every Federal agency to review its regulations and policies for their impact on the family. The agencies are to review whether their policies erode the family's stability or income; weaken marriages; undermine the rights of parents in educating and supervising their children; or substitute government activity for the rightful functions of families.



- Before submitting proposals for new regulations or statutes, agency heads are now required to certify that they have made this assessment. Beginning this year, the Office of Policy Development and the Domestic Policy Council within the White House will submit to the President an annual report with specific recommendations for governmental action to safeguard the family.
- o The President has also asked the Congress to consider including a family impact statement in each piece of legislation describing the effect it will have on the family.

### Child Care

- o Child care problems exist, but there is not a national availability crisis requiring a program to build Federally regulated child care facilities. That perception might exist, but the reality is one of only spot shortages of certain kinds of child care (such as infant care, sick child care, and after school care), and shortages of a sufficient variety of child care options that meet the needs and preferences of working parents. The heart of any truly pro-family policy must be parental choice -- allowing parents to choose the care they want for their children.
- o Many of the mothers now working outside the home do so as a result of opportunities created by the Reagan economic expansion. Women have gained over half of the more than 17 million new jobs created since the current expansion began in 1982.
- o The participation of mothers with children in the labor force is increasing. The percentage of women with children under six in the labor force is 57 percent, compared with 47 percent in 1980. The percentage of women with children under 14 in the labor force is now 63 percent, compared with 45 percent in 1975.
- o It is important to recognize that these figures include mothers who work part-time and less than the full year. The percentage of married mothers who work full-time outside the home was 29 percent in 1986.
- o State, Local, and Private Child Care Initiatives -- Child care needs can best be met through the efforts of state and local governments, the private sector, and community groups. There is considerable activity at the state and local government level and it is increasing. All states now provide some kind of child care assistance.



- o In addition, employers, community groups, and unions are acting in ever increasing numbers to address the child care concerns of employees. Since 1980, the number of large corporations providing child care services has risen from 500 to 3,400. An even greater number offer one or more work practices, such as flextime, to assist parents to care for their children.
- o Federal Support for Child Care -- The Federal government plays a significant role in assisting in child care and development. Federal child care assistance programs and Head Start provide nearly \$7 billion a year to child care. They are designed for various purposes, from helping all working parents with tax credits, to breaking the welfare cycle by enabling welfare recipients to take jobs, to assisting child development by linking child care with food and education programs. The Reagan Administration has sought to ensure that Federal assistance programs benefit families, not bureaucracies.
- o The Federal government assists child care and development through the following agencies (FY88 estimate):

Dept. of Treasury -- (tax credits for child care; favored tax treatment for employees, employers, and non-profit day care centers).....\$3,988 million

Dept. of Health and Human Services -- (Head Start).....1,206 million

Dept. of Health and Human Services -- (six other programs).....711 million

Dept. of Agriculture -- (four food assistance programs).....801 million

Dept. of Defense -- (child care in military installations).....69 million

Dept. of Education -- (four main programs).....66 million

Dept. of Housing and Urban Development -- (two programs).....48 million

Small Business Administration -- (three programs).....20 million

Dept. of Labor -- (six programs).....10 million



General Services Administration -- (child  
care in Federal buildings, FY 87).....1 million

Dept. of Commerce, Dept. of the Interior,  
Appalachian Regional Commission -- .....1 million

- o Child Care Challenges -- Although considerable concern has been raised about a "shortage" of child care, a Department of Labor task force reviewed the most up-to-date data and found no evidence in support of the contention that there is a general, national shortage of available child care services.
- o The Administration supports a child care policy that allows parents to choose from among a wide variety of child care options, including the informal home situations and church operated programs that most working parents use.
- o President Reagan supports a proposal to give low-income working families up to \$1,000 in refundable tax credits. Unlike the current deductions, this tax credit would be available to families where only one parent works. The plan would strengthen families and provide tax relief for families that truly need help.
- o Most children of working parents are cared for in their own or other homes. Nearly half of children under five are cared for by relatives and family members while their mother works. Only a small fraction are cared for in organized centers such as licensed day care centers. A Census Bureau study of child care in 1984-85 for children under five years old with working mothers found:
  - 68 percent were cared for in homes (31 percent in the children's homes; 37 percent in other homes);
  - Eight percent were taken care of by the mother while working;
  - 14 percent were cared for in day/group care; and
  - Ten percent were taken care of in nursery school or preschool.



### Economic Expansion

- o The United States is now in the midst of the longest peacetime economic expansion in its history, with no end in sight. Although the benefits of economic growth ultimately accrue to all Americans, families in particular have benefited.
- o Real median income, in 1986 dollars, rose from \$26,618 in 1982 to \$29,458 in 1986, an 11 percent increase.
- o Black families enjoyed an even greater gain -- 14 percent from 1982 to 1986.
- o As a consequence of rising real incomes, the number of people living in poverty fell by almost three million between 1983 and 1986, from 35.3 million to 32.4 million.
- o The unemployment rate, 5.4 percent overall in July 1988, has dropped especially for married-couple families. For example, although the unemployment rate for adult men was 5.1 percent in July 1988, the unemployment rate for married men (spouse present) was just 3 percent. Similarly, while the unemployment rate for adult women was 5.7 percent, the rate for married women (spouse present) was just 4.1 percent.
- o Economic expansion and declining unemployment have not been accompanied by high inflation, as with many past expansions. This means that rising family incomes are not eaten away by inflation.
- o The decline of inflation and interest rates has made housing for families more affordable. Whereas in 1982 the middle income family had just 70 percent of the income needed to buy a median priced home, by June 1988 the same family had 111 percent of the income needed.
- o Economic expansion, rising incomes and lower unemployment have led to declining numbers of lower-income families and rising numbers of middle- and upper-income families. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the percentage of lower-income families declined from 35.4 percent in 1983 to 31.7 percent in 1986, while the percentage of middle- and upper-income families rose from 64.6 percent to 68.3 percent.



### Tax Reform

- o A major goal of the Reagan Administration's tax policy has been to ease the tax burden on families. Although many aspects of tax policy affect families indirectly through their impact on business and the economy, many provisions have a direct impact on families.
- o The Reagan Administration reduced both average and marginal income tax rates for virtually all taxpayers, with the largest percentage reduction in tax liability for those with low to moderate incomes. The vast majority of families now pay just 15 percent of taxable income.
- o The Tax Reform Act of 1986 increased the personal exemption from \$1,080 to \$2,000 in 1989, adjusted for inflation thereafter. It restored much of the value the exemption lost to inflation in the 1970s and eased the tax burden on families with dependent children. At \$8,000 for a family of four, the personal exemption has been restored to approximately its inflation-adjusted value in 1972.
- o The Tax Reform Act also increased the standard deduction for married couples filing joint returns from \$3,670 in 1986 to \$5,000 in 1988, adjusted for inflation thereafter.
- o The earned income credit, which gives additional tax relief to low income working families with children, has been increased and adjusted for inflation.
- o Taken together, these provisions have raised the income tax threshold for a family of four filing jointly (including earned income credit) from \$9,783 to \$15,116. No Federal income tax is paid on income below this level. The effect of these revisions is virtually to relieve the working poor of all Federal income tax liability.
- o More than four million Americans were removed from the Federal income tax rolls altogether and 11 million taxpayers, who previously itemized, can now use the standard deduction thereby achieving greater fairness and simplicity.

### Education

- o The Reagan Administration has taken the side of parents in American education. It has supported parental involvement and parental values, and has urged that parents be allowed to choose the best schools for their children. Reagan Administration policy has been guided by "the 3 Cs" -- Content, Character, and Choice.



- o As the President noted on April 26, 1988:

"Successful reform won't come about from the top down. Central planning doesn't make economies healthy and it won't make schools work, either. How can we release the creative energies of our people? By giving parents choice. By allowing them to select the schools that best meet the unique needs of their children. By fostering a healthy rivalry among schools to serve our young people. Already the 'Power of Choice' is revitalizing schools that use it across the nation."

- o Choice -- The idea of allowing parents greater flexibility in determining which schools their children will attend -- choice -- has lately been gaining public favor, despite opposition from much of the organized education establishment.

- The latest Gallup Poll shows that 71 percent of the American people back choice; the strongest supporters of vouchers are minority and poor parents. This is not surprising because some of our large city school systems work so poorly that as many as 40-60 percent of minority students drop out, and those that do graduate too often are unprepared for work or college. In one large city with a majority of minority students, the schools were declared "educationally bankrupt" and are being taken over by the state.

- Parental choice was also strongly endorsed by the National Governors Association report on education, Time for Results.

- o The Administration proposed -- through vouchers, Compensatory Education Certificates (CECs), and tuition tax credits -- to allow parents more choice of schools. Despite support for choice from parents (particularly minority and poor parents), Congress has rejected these proposals.

- Vouchers -- Under the Administration's proposal, funds could have been directed to parents of children selected to participate in compensatory education programs covered by Chapter 1. Stipends averaging \$600 could have been applied to the cost of the public or private school program of their choice.

- CECs -- This modified voucher proposal would have allowed parents of disadvantaged children to secure compensatory services outside the local school district if the district agreed.



- Tuition Tax Credits -- The Administration's proposal would have provided a full income tax credit equal to the cost of college tuition for families with taxable incomes of \$40,000 or less and a partial credit for families with taxable incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000.
- o The Administration has also proposed expanding magnet schools to more school districts. Magnet schools give parents greater choice among public schools because they admit students based on their interest and that of their parents in the particular instructional focus and nature of the school, rather than the district in which they live. In the FY89 budget, the Administration has proposed \$115 million for magnet schools -- a 60 percent increase from FY 1988.
- o In Chapter 1, a compensatory education program for educationally disadvantaged students, the Administration has sought to increase parental involvement by providing more specific guidance to school districts with regard to written policies for parental involvement. Congress responded by incorporating into law a greater emphasis on parental involvement and promoting family/school partnership programs. The President signed into law the Omnibus Education Act of 1988 containing these changes on April 22nd.
- o In bilingual education, the Reagan Administration proposed to increase local choice in selecting the most appropriate method of bilingual instruction. Congress moved significantly toward the Administration's position in changes incorporated in the newly reauthorized bilingual education programs.
- o Choice produces success.
  - District 4 in New York's East Harlem, in the early 1970's, ranked at the bottom of New York City's 32 districts. Then the district allowed parents to choose for their children from among a wide variety of newly-restructured schools.
  - As a result, teacher morale rose sharply and student performance dramatically improved. Today, 63 percent of its students read at or above grade level. The district now ranks 18th in the city in reading.



- o Content -- The Reagan Administration has developed information for parents that respects their values and offers specific help in the education of their children. These publications include:

What Works I and II -- a compilation of two decades of research on effective education practices for parents, teachers, and educators. Over 500,000 copies have been distributed;

Schools Without Drugs -- a handbook on drug prevention which led a national movement to eliminate drug use in schools. Over two million copies of this book have been distributed;

Becoming A Nation of Readers: What Parents Can Do -- recommendations to parents on how to help their children become proficient readers;

Schools That Work -- a handbook for parents, teachers, and educators that offers strategies for educating disadvantaged students;

AIDS and the Education of Our Children -- a guidebook on AIDS education for parents, teachers, and students. Over two million copies of the book have been distributed;

First Lessons -- a guidebook for parents and teachers on effective elementary school practices;

James Madison High School -- a model secondary school curriculum which includes Secretary of Education William Bennett's views on instruction in seven core academic subject areas (a similar book on elementary schools will be released this fall); and

American Education: Making It Work -- an assessment of the progress made in American education reform since the publication of A Nation At Risk.

- o Character -- The Reagan Administration has supported parents in urging that traditional values such as honesty, loyalty, and respect for the law be taught in school.
- o Americans want these traditional values taught in our schools.
- A 1987 Gallup Poll found that nearly 60 percent of adults thought that courses on values and ethical behavior should be taught in the public schools.



- A 1986 Time poll found that 70 percent of adults thought that values instruction should be included in sex education courses.
- Most Americans would agree with Teddy Roosevelt who said, "To educate a man in mind but not in morals is to create a menace to society."
- o Research shows that traditional values are important for fostering success in education and life.
  - Values are important for student performance -- A 1986 study of 12,000 high school students found that students with more traditional values perform significantly better in school. Students who value the work ethic, who attach a high importance to education, and who are religious, outperform students who do not have these values. Students whose parents value education and who have a strong concern for their children's behavior, outperform students whose parents do not have these values.
  - Students' and parents' values are directly related to teenage sexual behavior. For example, a recent study of never-married high school girls found that teenagers whose parents are concerned about them are less likely to be unwed mothers; teenage girls who believe that it is acceptable to have a child before marriage are much more likely to become unwed mothers; and teenage girls who believe that they do not control their future are much more likely to become teenage mothers.

#### Welfare Reform

- o In his 1986 State of the Union Address, President Ronald Reagan drew attention to the problems of poverty and welfare in America:
 

"In the welfare culture, the breakdown of the family, the most basic support system, has reached crisis proportions -- in female and child poverty, child abandonment, horrible crimes and deteriorating schools. After hundreds of billions of dollars in poverty programs, the plight of the poor grows more painful. But the waste in dollars and cents pales before the most tragic loss -- the sinful waste of human spirit and potential."



- o To reorient public assistance to its proper goals of meeting needs and reducing dependency, the President proposed a major change in the welfare system, one that would provide opportunities for those now dependent on welfare to develop into productive workers in self-reliant families and strong, supportive communities.
- o The President believes that it is time to learn from the mistakes of our centralized welfare system by implementing a new national strategy that stresses grass roots participation, state and local initiative, and creative ideas for reducing dependency and strengthening economically self-reliant families.
- o The cornerstone of the President's welfare reform initiative is to give states broad flexibility to test innovative alternatives to the current welfare system by allowing states to get waivers of existing rules for receipt of Federal funds. The Federal Government would remain an integral part of this strategy by ensuring that the proposed demonstrations are designed to meet needs and reduce dependency, while maintaining the current level of Federal financing.
- o Although Congress failed to enact this legislative initiative, President Reagan pursued this strategy as far as possible under existing law by creating the Interagency Low-Income Opportunity Advisory Board in the White House. This group coordinates existing welfare policy and to promote state and local welfare experimentation that emphasizes family-strengthening principles. Over a dozen state governors have already accepted the President's call for State reform by applying for greater state demonstration authority.
- o The President has proposed additional family-strengthening welfare proposals.
  - Work and training activities for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients would be reformed and expanded to promote self-sufficiency and reduce welfare dependency. Proposals include early intervention to prevent long-term dependency by encouraging teenage recipients to remain in or return to school, and by including mothers of young children in work and training activities. These reforms would strengthen the financial viability of families now on welfare.



- Child support enforcement activities would be strengthened and extended. To ensure that children receive adequate support from absent parents, states would be required to establish mandatory guidelines for determining support amounts.
- Minor parents receiving AFDC would be required to live with their parents' to qualify for assistance. Young mothers who live with their parents are more likely to finish school and less likely to be dependent on welfare.

### Drug Abuse

- o President Reagan has emphasized traditional values and the American family as essential to success in the crusade for a drug-free America.
- o The President's and Mrs. Reagan's leadership and dedication to a drug-free America have inspired families, churches, and schools to work together in community-based efforts to "Just Say No." There are thousands of grass roots parent groups and thousands more youth groups which reflect the Reagan's courage and determination not to tolerate illegal drug use anytime, anywhere, by anybody.
- o The Administration's willingness to invest in the future is helping to foster a safer, drug-free America. Millions of Americans share the President's commitment and the result is fewer Americans using illegal drugs, more lives saved and reduced drug-related family problems. For example:
  - The percentage of high school seniors who use marijuana on a regular basis dropped from one in nine in 1980 to one in 30 in 1987.
  - Regular cocaine use among high school seniors dropped by one-third in 1987, from 6.2 percent to 4.3 percent, the lowest level since 1978.
- o The increase in the number of American youth saying no to drugs coincides with rising SAT scores, declining rates of teenage pregnancy, and a dramatic downturn in accidental deaths related to alcohol and drug use.



- o An integral part of President Reagan's crusade for a drug-free America is a call for all sectors of society to join with the Federal Government in doing all in their power to eliminate drug use.
  - School systems have developed and implemented awareness, education, and alternative activities. Nationwide efforts range from providing educational materials to encouraging support from community groups and corporate America.
  - The Department of Education prepared and released a practical handbook, What Works: Schools Without Drugs, for use by school officials, teachers, and parents. Over two million copies have been distributed.
  - Private sector initiatives have included major international corporations and small businesses sponsoring information campaigns, specialized information networks, and drug information hotlines. Many Fortune 500 companies have established drug-free workforce policies.
  - The collective contribution of the nation's media to awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, especially among teenagers, has taken the form of a massive public service campaign. An example is the National Media Advertising Partnership for a Drug-Free America which is coordinating a national effort involving donations in excess of \$1.5 billion in television and newspaper advertising in support of drug prevention and awareness.
- o The President and Mrs. Reagan join the majority of the public in recognizing the goal of a drug-free society will be reached only when Americans reject the presence and use of illegal drugs in their families and communities. To work toward a drug-free America, the Administration will continue strong efforts to stop illegal drugs through strong law enforcement, international cooperation, treatment, and research.

#### Crime and the Family

- o The Reagan Administration's aggressive anti-crime policies are helping to foster a safer America for our families. According to the National Crime Survey, the rate of violent crime has dropped 20 percent since 1981; 6.3 percent in 1986 alone.



- o Very soon after President Reagan took office in 1981, he announced the formation of the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime. Among the 68 recommendations made in the report was a recommendation to study the problem of family violence in depth.
- o The Attorney General appointed a Task Force on Family Violence in 1983 and in 1984 Attorney General Edwin Meese received their report. Major recommendations were to:
  - Consider family violence a crime;
  - Educate the public about this serious and often secret crime; and
  - Recognize prevention and early intervention as the best ways to stop violence and to build healthy families.
- o The Administration funded an important study (popularly known as the Minneapolis Study) which has had a profound impact on law enforcement policy. Many police departments now recommend arrest as the preferred policy in response to domestic violence.
  - The study tested common police responses to domestic violence (sending the abuser away for a cooling-off period; mediating the dispute and counseling the couple; and arresting the abuser), and found that arresting the abuser greatly reduced the rate of recidivism.

### Abortion

- o The Reagan Administration has done much to restrict Federal funding of abortions. However, it must be noted that short of the Supreme Court reversing its decision in Roe v. Wade, 4,000 abortions a day or 1,500,000 abortions a year will continue in this nation.
- o On June 8, 1988, President Reagan transmitted to Congress the Pro-Life Act of 1988. The bill would make the Hyde Amendment permanent and government-wide. The Hyde Amendment, a pro-life provision, is currently included annually in the Appropriation Act for the Department of Health and Human Services and prohibits the use of Federal funds for abortion, except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the baby were carried to term.



- o The President endorsed an amendment to the 1989 District of Columbia budget, as he did for the 1988 budget, which would restrict both Federal and local funds from being used for abortions.
- o The Administration issued regulations in February 1988 to implement the 1970 Title X family planning program's prohibition against funding programs where abortion is a method of family planning.
- o With the President's leadership, the Administration cut off American funds from overseas organizations which support or promote abortions.
- o Effective October 1, 1988, the Department of Defense will prohibit military hospitals from performing abortions unless the life of the mother is in danger. The practice of allowing doctors to perform abortions when the patient pays for the abortion will be discontinued.
- o The Administration held widely attended conferences on alternatives to abortion in May and November 1984 at the White House. These meetings brought leaders of national groups together to hear presentations by Administration officials and representatives of model organizations which help women with crisis pregnancies.
- o The Reagan Administration has had an "open door" to all pro-life organizations. The President has met repeatedly with pro-life leaders to discuss ways to restore legal protection to unborn children. The President has raised the visibility of the issue of abortion through many speeches, statements, and proclamations.

#### Adoption

- o "Family life is a precious gift," the President said in his National Adoption Week Proclamation in 1987, "and it is something adoption affords to 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."



- o There are 37,000 children now in foster care in America for whom adoption is considered the best plan. Of these waiting children, about 60 percent are of "special needs" -- with physical or emotional disabilities, belong to sibling groups, are minorities, or are older children.
- o There are an estimated 270,000 to 300,000 children in foster care in America. Three-quarters of the children are in foster care because they have been emotionally or physically abused and neglected by their parents or guardians. Thirty-nine percent remain in foster care two or more years.
- o At President Reagan's direction, an interagency task force thoroughly reviewed the issue of adoption, including Federal and state laws on adoption, and reported their findings and specific recommendations to him.
- o In their report, "America's Waiting Children," released to the public in May 1988, the task force offers numerous suggestions on how to encourage infant adoption as an alternative to abortion for pregnant women, as well as how to further encourage adoption of "special needs" children and adolescents who are awaiting a permanent family. The report identifies various steps that can be taken at the state and local level to remove barriers to adoption.
- o In his 1988 State of the Union Address, the President told the Congress, "I pledge to you tonight, I will work to remove barriers to adoption and extend full sharing in family life to millions of Americans, so that children who need homes can be welcomed to families who want them and love them."

#### Family Life

- o The Reagan Administration replaced the Carter Administration teen pregnancy program with the Adolescent Family Life Program (AFL), a value-based, family and community centered demonstration program. Over 60,000 teens are served annually in the \$10 million AFL program which:
  - Provides compassionate alternatives to abortion for pregnant teens (including health, educational and social services);
  - Promotes adoption as a positive option for unmarried pregnant teens;
  - Requires parental involvement in addressing issues surrounding teen sexuality and pregnancy;



- Promotes adolescent abstinence from premarital sexual activity and upholds sexuality in the context of marriage; and
- Involves the community, including local charitable, voluntary and religious organizations.
- o The Supreme Court sustained the constitutionality of the AFL program on June 29, 1988. The Court, in upholding AFL, ruled that it is constitutional for the values the program asserts to coincide with religious values, and for the program to make awards to entities that are religiously affiliated.
- o The Department of Health and Human Services issued a regulation in February 1988 to implement Title X's prohibition against funding programs where abortion is a method of family planning. This regulation would restore the program to its original purpose of being a pre-pregnancy family planning service that is unentangled with abortion. (When Title X was enacted in 1972, abortion was still illegal in most states.) The new regulation requires Title X grantees to provide assurances that:
  - They will not provide counseling and referral for abortions as a method of family planning;
  - They will not promote abortion or assist a woman in obtaining an abortion; and
  - They will maintain physical and financial separation from abortion-related activities.

### Pornography

- o To meet the threat posed by the explosive growth of the obscenity and child pornography industry, the President in 1984 counterattacked. The President signed the "Child Protection Act of 1984" which recognized child pornography as a uniquely tragic and distinct criminal offense. The Administration also created the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography.



- o In July 1986, the President endorsed recommendations made in the Final Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography. These included the establishment of a new office within the Department of Justice, the National Obscenity Enforcement Unit, to train law enforcement officials at the Federal, state, and local levels on the techniques of successfully prosecuting obscenity traffickers; on the involvement of organized crime in obscenity production and distribution; and on the preparation of a comprehensive legislative package.
- o Since the Administration created the National Obscenity Enforcement Unit in 1986, it has achieved several important successes in obscenity prosecution:
  - The first Federal conviction against "dial-a-porn" companies, which resulted in the permanent shut-down of 38 telephone lines in 12 major cities nationwide;
  - The first use of the Federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute in an obscenity case, eliminating a multi-million dollar mid-Atlantic obscenity ring by obtaining forfeiture of its assets and jailing a principal violator;
  - The indictment on October 7, 1987, of Reuben Sturman, identified by the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography as perhaps the world's largest distributor of obscenity, on charges of operating a racketeering enterprise since 1973 for the purpose of nationwide distribution of obscene material.
  - By the end of fiscal year 1987, seven months after the creation of the Unit, obscenity indictments had risen 800 percent and child pornography indictments had risen 80 percent from the previous year.
- o The President transmitted to Congress on November 10, 1987, the Child Protection Obscenity Enforcement Act. The Act closes numerous loopholes in current Federal law, mandates stiffer penalties for the production and distribution of obscenity and child pornography, prohibits so-called "dial-a-porn" services, and makes it a criminal offense to transmit obscene matter by way of cable television. The sale of obscene materials or child pornography on Federal lands will become a felony, and the mere possession of such materials on Federal property will be a misdemeanor.



- o More than half the states have held, or have agreed to gather their Federal, state, and local prosecutors and law enforcement officials for training seminars on the prosecution of obscenity and child pornography violations conducted by the National Obscenity Enforcement Unit and United States Attorneys. Several thousand officials have already received such training.

#### Foster Grandparents

- o President Reagan's philosophy of partnership between the Federal Government and local and state governments has been practically demonstrated through the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP). First Lady Nancy Reagan has been actively promoting the Foster Grandparent Program since 1967.
- o FGP has provided fertile ground for the application of the President's emphasis on volunteerism.
- o Since 1965, the FGP program has provided an opportunity for older Americans to make a contribution to children with special needs, through attention, care, and love.
- o At the beginning of the Reagan Administration in 1981, there were 208 FGP projects in the United States, with 16,900 FGP volunteers serving 50,700 children. In 1987, there were 252 FGP projects in the nation, with 26,600 active volunteers serving 66,500 children.
- o In 1988, Mrs. Reagan launched an initiative encouraging those in the FGP to be involved in working with at-risk youth in drug awareness and education. The First Lady found a link in FGP that is a natural extension of the grandparents' role in caring for troubled youth.
- o Partnerships between ACTION and state and local governments have resulted in the funding of 2,400 volunteer service years, and state and local governments have increased their support of the FGP program by 35.5 percent. This is reflected in dollar contributions increased from \$12.3 million to \$16.4 million.
- o The Foster Grandparent Program has also formed partnerships with the private sector. President Reagan has long believed that "our nation is built on self-reliance and compassion." In the Reagan years the private sector has increased FGP support by 170 percent. In dollars, the increase is \$2.5 million to \$6.7 million.



### School Prayer, Equal Access, Year of the Bible

- o School Prayer -- President Reagan said on January 30, 1983:  
 "I happen to believe that one way to promote, indeed to preserve, those values we share is by permitting our children to begin their days the same way the Members of the U.S. Congress do--with prayer. The public expression of our faith in God through prayer is fundamental--as a part of our American heritage and a privilege which should not be excluded from our schools."
- o On May 17, 1982, President Reagan sent to the Congress proposed language for a Constitutional amendment to restore voluntary prayer in public schools. As President Reagan said in 1984, "I know one thing I'm sure most of us agree on: God, source of all knowledge, should never have been expelled from our children's classrooms. The great majority of our people support voluntary prayer in schools."
- o In 1984, the Senate voted 56 to 44 in favor of a school prayer amendment -- short of the two-thirds needed to pass a Constitutional amendment. Despite enormous popular support for voluntary school prayer, the House Democratic leadership has kept the school prayer bill in committee, not allowing it to reach the floor for a vote.
- o Equal Access Act -- One of the most important successes of this Administration was the passage of the Equal Access Act, signed by President Reagan on August 11, 1985. As President Reagan said in 1985, it "made sure that student religious groups have the same rights as other student groups."
- o The Equal Access Act requires that public secondary schools grant equal access to student groups who wish to meet for religious, political, or philosophical purposes, if the school allows other types of student groups to meet. The Act is designed to remedy discrimination against these types of student speech, particularly religious speech. The Act was initiated in response to an increasingly widespread tendency of school administrators to prohibit students from meeting for religious speech purposes.
- o Year of the Bible -- President Reagan proclaimed 1983 as the "Year of the Bible," stating that "Because the Bible has made such a unique contribution in shaping the United States and at the request of the 97th Congress of the United States, I have proclaimed 1983 as the 'Year of the Bible.'"