

Child Health Day

May 1, 1953

In the quarter century since President Coolidge issued the first Child Health Day Proclamation, through new medical and scientific discoveries and extensive public health work, our country has made tremendous advances in overcoming many of the great physical hazards which used to threaten children.

In the words of President Eisenhower, "We are now striving to make equally significant progress in understanding the nature of emotional health, in order that our children may grow into mature, responsible citizens of a democracy."

We know that children who do not get the chance to develop their fullest capacities in each stage of their growth run larger risks of growing into maladjusted, unhappy, and not fully productive adults.

All along the way we see evidence that the knowledge we have about child growth is not being fully applied. We see it in mounting juvenile delinquency rates, in a fantastically large national crime bill, in mounting numbers of emotionally disturbed, mentally ill people.

There is nothing that leads us to believe that people are born juvenile delinquents or criminals. And it is in their childhood that tendencies in these directions first appear.

If, as parents, we can understand more about the growth processes of childhood, we increase the chances that our children can develop the emotional and mental strength required to live happy, useful, and satisfying lives.

OVETA CULP HOBBY

*Secretary, U. S. Department of
Health, Education, and Welfare*

A PROCLAMATION

By the President of the United States
Of America

WHEREAS the Congress, by a joint resolution of May 18, 1928 (45 Stat. 617), authorized and requested the President of the United States to issue annually a proclamation setting apart May 1 as Child Health Day; and

WHEREAS the health and wholesome development of our children are matters of the deepest concern to all Americans; and

WHEREAS the stresses and strains of our times create many problems bearing on the spiritual and emotional health of our children and are reflected notably in juvenile delinquency; and

WHEREAS we have made tremendous advances in overcoming the most severe physical hazards of childhood, and are now striving to make equally significant progress in understanding the nature of emotional health, in order that our children may grow into mature, responsible citizens of a democracy:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the first day of May, 1953, as Child Health Day; and I urge all parents and young people, and all other individuals, as well as agencies and organizations interested in the well-being of children, to increase their understanding of the emotional, social, and spiritual growth of children, so as to apply this understanding in their day-to-day relations with the rising generation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the city of Washington this 20th day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-three, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and seventy-seventh.



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.