

Dear Friends,

In this time of heightened international tensions and conflict, let us not forget the children. They are the innocent victims of our world's challenges and troubles. The theme for World Mental Health Day 2002 is *The Effects of Trauma and Violence on Children and Adolescents*. It is a subject that needs our immediate attention.

All children need stability, safety, and an environment that nurtures them for the future. Trauma and violence either within the home or outside can shatter trust, self-esteem, and hope. Prolonged and repeated traumatic experiences often result in serious mental health problems. We must find ways to protect our youngest citizens from harm. World Mental Health Day serves to educate families and communities around the world to recognize and help those who suffer from mental illnesses. Early intervention is always a good place to start. We must demand that resources be allocated for children's mental health to improve fragmented services and enable our little ones to grow up healthy and happy.

World Mental Health Day is a program of unlimited potential. Every time you share information with others, you are helping advance the World Federation's mission to create positive change.

You have our deepest appreciation for your continued efforts.

Sincerely,

Rosalynn Carter
Honorary Chair