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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS TO  
TWELFTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
CINCINNATI, OHIO  
OCTOBER 15, 1998**

I am delighted to join you at the twelfth National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. I only wish I could be there in person to thank the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect and all of you for your commitment to ending the tragedy of child abuse and neglect.

Child abuse is an issue that I have cared about for more than half of my life. I have looked into the eyes of so many children and have seen the devastating effects of abuse and neglect. And I have worked with adults who were once abused themselves, and haven't found a way to stop that vicious cycle.

Thanks to the hard work of so many of you -- and the commitment of my husband and his Administration -- we have made significant progress in our efforts to strengthen the child welfare system. Perhaps our greatest victory was coming together across party lines to pass the landmark Adoption and Safe Families Act. With this law we strike a better balance between family preservation and the well being of the child. And we say once and for all that the health and safety of our children will always be our first concern.

This was an extraordinary accomplishment. But as you well know, our work is far from done. We must continue to move forward: By implementing the laws we've passed; by giving more support to judges; by helping children who have aged out of the foster-care system; and by stopping abuse before it ever happens. Only then will we create a world in which all children grow up free from violence, with parents who love and support them; and with the opportunities they need to reach their god-given potential. With all of you leading the way, I know we can make this possible.

Thank you for all you have done -- and will continue to do -- on behalf of America's children. I hope you have a wonderful conference.

we offer support for all women, children and families. If there was a single issue more difficult to solve, it would be the one that builders of the world have led of the past. We must now work to end child abuse, to banish violence and to ensure that all children -- and especially girls -- to empower the women of this country to participate fully in the life of our nation.

We are pursuing our goals of a more equitable world that is full of hope, a time ripe for change. It is a positive and a time when the many dictatorships have given us freely elected governments. For the first time in our history, as for the first time ever, we are a people enjoying the right to choose our own leaders, to form our own governments based on a constitution gathered by a free press, to speak our minds and to act in our own

**PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION**