Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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A joint proclamation was issued today by the Director, Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs which will designate the week of May 12, 1996 Alcohol-Related Birth Defects Week, announced Ada E. Deer, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

Michael H. Trujillo, Director, Indian Health Service and Ada E. Deer, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs signed a proclamation directing BIA and IHS to continue to promote the concept of Alcohol Related Birth Defects prevention in all BIA, IHS, tribal and urban programs. During the week of May 12, 1996 BIA offices, and IHS facilities should plan programs and activities to observe the occasion throughout the country.

"The American Indian youth are the Indian community's single most important resource for the future," said Ada Deer. "As a social worker and educator Indian children are always my primary concern. I directed much of my time and energy to actively promote programs and activities that would improve the health and life style of these children." "Our Indian children deserve entry into this world free of any defects resulting from alcohol consumption during pregnancy."

This proclamation requests all BIA and IHS employees support in American Indians and Alaska Natives efforts to prevent alcohol and other drug related birth defects.