



# American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

BACKGROUND

April 17, 1986

C. Everett Koop, M.D., Sc.D.  
Surgeon General  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Room 710-G  
Hubert H. Humphrey Building  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Koop:

On behalf of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the nation's most prestigious organization of qualified practitioners of marital and family therapy, with over 13,000 members, I am honored to inform you that you have been selected to receive the AAMFT Distinguished Leadership to Families Award for 1987. This award, which carries a \$1,000 cash prize, is presented to individuals who provide exceptional leadership in service of American families. As a physician, and president of AAMFT, I am particularly pleased to have participated in your selection for this, our highest honor.

The award will be presented at AAMFT's 45th Annual Conference scheduled for October 29-November 1, 1987 in Chicago with an expected attendance of 4,000 practitioners of marital and family therapy. We would be honored to have the opportunity to endorse your work on behalf of the American Family. Recent past recipients of this award include Rep. George Miller, Alex Haley, Rosalyn Carter, and Governor Mario Cuomo.

As Surgeon General, you have been realistic, honest, and straightforward in your position on AIDS. Your mission to increase public understanding of this disease and to change society's behavior through information and education is one that AAMFT strongly endorses. Your repeated message that we are "fighting a disease, not a people" is one that needs to be heard. We see the stand you have taken in this regard as nothing short of heroic. At our conference this year, we will have several presentations on AIDS, including a day-long Institute, a plenary session, a Task Force report, and a Safe-Sex Luncheon. Our members are also actively involved in supporting your efforts by working to develop models for counseling and supporting persons with AIDS and their families.

We also applaud your outstanding career as a pediatric surgeon, one who has devoted his life to children and their families. We especially appreciate your pioneering efforts to include parents as partners in the care of their ill children. Over the last 30 years, you have repeatedly emphasized that sex education must include the teaching of

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responsibility and values. As systems thinkers, we realize that this affects the entire society.

You speak eloquently and effectively on the importance of families both to individual family members and to our continued development as a healthy society. Your speeches inform us of the importance of viewing the family as a system--as a whole. Your approach consistently recognizes the need to consider the family as a unit and to promote care for the other family members in addition to care for the ill family member. Your leadership has improved the welfare of families and has brought these issues to the awareness of millions of Americans.

Our 1987 conference in Chicago, "Family Therapy Works." will focus on the health care delivery crisis facing our nation's families with a focus on preventive treatment measures that work. We invite you to share your views on health policy and the family.

Our conference consistently receives widespread coverage in the national media--print, broadcast, and wire services. I can assure you that our public relations department will work very hard to assure maximum coverage of your participation.

Our conference will be held at the Chicago Hilton & Towers Hotel. It is a stipulation of this award that you be present at the Presidential Banquet on the evening of Friday, October 30, 1987, 7:00pm -10:30pm to receive the award and to give an acceptance speech, approximately 30 minutes in length.

Our Conference Director, Diane Sollee, will contact your staff the week of April 22nd to answer any questions you may have and to discuss your decision and scheduling.

We salute your work on behalf of the American Family and look forward to your participation in our conference.

Sincerely,



W. Robert Beavers, M.D.  
President, AAMFT