

RED RIBBON WEEK

2026 TOOLKIT



WELCOME

WHAT IS RED RIBBON WEEK?

Red Ribbon Week (RRW) is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention campaign, created to honor the life of DEA Agent Kiki Camarena. Held each October, it brings schools, families, and communities together to promote healthy, drug-free choices.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

RRW creates opportunities to talk openly with young people about substance use and making healthy choices. It turns prevention into something positive, visible, and community-driven.

WHO IS IT FOR?

RRW is for everyone who plays a role in prevention, especially youth, families, schools, and community partners. Everyone can help spread the message and support healthy choices.

WHERE CAN I FIND RESOURCES?

LRADAC is one avenue for local Red Ribbon Week resources and support. Additional resources are available through the DEA, National Family Partnership, local coalitions, and other prevention organizations.

RED RIBBON WEEK

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- ☐ Play the daily educational videos.
- ☐ Include RRW in the morning announcements.
- ☐ Decorate a paper or fabric cape & talk about how heroes stay healthy and safe.
- ☐ Invite a speaker or have a staff member speak about substance use – it's never too early to have age appropriate conversations.
- ☐ Hold a talent show, allowing students to share skills or hobbies that make them feel like a hero.
- ☐ Have students or teachers lead a positive skit.

SHORT CLASSROOM VIDEOS:

- Day 1: What is RRW
- Day 2: Friends Who Choose Positive Win Big
- Day 3: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds
- Day 4: The Hidden Strength Behind Saying No!
- Day 5: Why Being a Hero Every Day Matters



– Fresburg Cartoon

RED RIBBON WEEK

FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS:

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- ☐ Invite students and clubs to lead activities.
- ☐ Have a student read daily facts on morning announcements.
- ☐ Decorate halls and doors with positive and substance free facts and messages.
- ☐ Host a pep rally! Submit a video to the news about how your school supports RRW.
- ☐ Have a speaker come, or invite students to present information.
- ☐ Connect classroom content to substance use prevention education.
- ☐ Create a class/school contest.
- ☐ Encourage students to participate in the local youth contest.

RED RIBBON WEEK

YOUTH CONTEST

**STUDENTS, USE YOUR VOICE AND CREATIVITY TO ANSWER:
*YOU'RE THE HERO, HOW WOULD YOU SAVE TOMORROW
FROM SUBSTANCE MISUSE?***

Submit:

- Artwork (drawings, paintings, posters)
- Poems, written pieces
- Music, songs, videos
- Other creative expressions

Submissions cannot include explicit language or offensive materials.



PRIZES: \$75, \$50, \$25



DEADLINE: November 1, 2026

Submit your entries!



**Or email your entry to
lradacevents@gmail.com**

LRADAC SERVICES

PRESENTATIONS & TRAININGS

For youth, adults, and the community about substances & health:

- ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs) 101
- Healthy Choices & Assertive Communication
- Media's Influence
- Managing Stress
- Substance Specific: alcohol, opioids, cannabis, nicotine, etc.

INFORMATION & BROCHURES

Printed materials provide clear, accessible information about alcohol, nicotine, other drugs, and health to support awareness, education, healthy choices, and meaningful conversations.

OPERATION PREVENTION

An educational initiative aligning with national education standards with a primary mission to combat substance misuse.

Specifically targets the prescription opioid, fentanyl, and heroin epidemic by educating youth and adults about the science behind addiction.



**Request
LRADAC Services**

www.lradac.org/prevention



RED RIBBON WEEK

**MON
OCT 26**

RALLY IN RED

Wear all red to celebrate living healthy!

DOUBLE UP AGAINST DRUGS

Dress like a twin with a friend!

**TUES
OCT 27**

**WED
OCT 28**

TEAM UP TO BE DRUG FREE

Wear your favorite jersey or team attire

BE A HERO

Dress like your favorite superhero

**THURS
OCT 29**

**FRI
OCT 30**

SAY BOO! TO DRUGS

Wear Halloween colors or a costume

QUICK FACTS

FOR EVERYONE:

Mental health: Using drugs can make mental health symptoms like depression and anxiety worse.

Not using is the norm: Most youth don't use substances – 3 out of 4 choose not to.

You're not alone: There is always someone that you can talk to if you are feeling overwhelmed or isolated.

Brain development: The brain keeps developing until about age 25, so using substances before then increases the risk of addiction.

Substance use disorder: A medical condition when someone can't control use of alcohol, drugs, or other substances, even when it harms their health (physical, mental, emotional), or their relationships (family, friends, school, work).

RED RIBBON WEEK FOR FAMILIES:



ACTIVITIES:

- ☐ Try some bonding activities that you haven't done in a while: playing games, exploring a park, etc.
- ☐ Discuss and practice healthy choices & activities
- ☐ Fill out and complete the Red Ribbon Week Bingo Card throughout the week.
- ☐ Ask each other silly, get to know you questions
- ☐ Use the Connected Conversations question sheet to spark meaningful conversations together

CONNECTED CONVERSATIONS:



- Take this week as an opportunity to have conversations with your child about substance use
- Keep communication open
- Create a safe environment

START THE CONVERSATION

CONNECTED CONVERSATIONS

Regular conversations help children and teens feel comfortable coming to you with questions, concerns, and tough situations. You don't need all the right answers—just being willing to listen can make a difference.

Use these questions to start meaningful conversations with your family during Red Ribbon Week and beyond.

- What was the best part of your day today? What made it so good?
- What was something that annoyed, frustrated, or stressed you out today?
- If you could change one thing about your day, what would it be?
- What is something you're really looking forward to right now?
- Who is someone you really enjoy spending time with, and what do you like about them?
- What do you think makes someone a good friend?
- Have you ever felt like you had to go along with something because everyone else was doing it? What happened?
- What is something you wish adults understood better about being your age?
- When you're having a rough day, what usually helps you feel better?
- What is something you're proud of yourself for lately?
- What are some things you think people do when they're trying to fit in?
- What is something you wish we did more often as a family?
- What is one thing I can do as your parent that would make it easier for you to talk to me about difficult things?



MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



WWW.REDRIBBON.ORG

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BE A HERO. STAY DRUG FREE.

DESIGN YOUR CAPE



RED RIBBON WEEK

BINGO CARD

Fill out this bingo card with healthy actions and check them off as you go!

	Do something outside for 30 minutes		Eat a balanced breakfast	
Read a book		Get 8 hours of sleep		Share something that's been worrying you
Make a list of things you're grateful for	Play a board or card game		Move your body/Exercise	
	Make dinner at home together			Put the screens away for an evening
Write a kind note & give it to someone			Share a realistic goal that you have for the month	