



“How to Conduct... Program & Project” Series It’s as Easy as 1, 2, 3!

Number 5

Red Ribbon Program

How to Conduct a Red Ribbon Program



Step 1: Learn about the program.

The Story Behind the Symbol

Enrique “Kiki” Camarena grew up in a dirt-floored house with hopes and dreams of making a difference. Camarena

worked his way through college, served in the Marines and became a police officer. When he decided to join the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, his mother tried to talk him out of it. “I can’t **not** do this,” he told her. **“I’m only one person, but I want to make a difference.”** The DEA sent Camarena to work undercover in Mexico investigating a major drug cartel believed to include officers in the Mexican army, police and government. On Feb. 7, 1985, the 37-year old Camarena left his office to meet his wife for lunch. Five men appeared at the agent’s side and shoved him in a car. One month later, Camarena’s body was found in a shallow grave. He had been tortured to death.

In honor of Camarena’s memory and his battle against illegal drugs, friends and neighbors began to wear red badges of satin. Parents, sick of the destruction of alcohol and other drugs, had begun forming coalitions. Some of these new coalitions took Camarena as their model and embraced his belief that one person can make a difference, and wore red ribbons.

Since the first Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988, the campaign has reached millions of U.S. children. The Georgia PTA encourages local units to join statewide and local coalitions made up of community activists, law enforcement officials, local and state government officials, parents and youth to combat drug and alcohol abuse in your community.

Facts You Should Know

What is the biggest deterrent to kids using drugs and alcohol?

It’s Parents!

Look at the facts: Children who learn from their parents or caregivers about the dangers of underage drinking, drugs and other harmful substances are less likely to use those substances. Statistics say that parents who talk to their children about the risks of drugs are 36% less likely to smoke marijuana than kids who don’t. 50% less likely to use inhalants. 56% less likely to use cocaine. 65% less likely to use LSD. In other words, you have the power to keep the child you love safe, healthy and drug-free. You are the most powerful influence in your child’s daily life. But anti-drug parenting strategies rarely are instinctive, even for the best of parents. Finding the right words and the right approach can be hard. It is the hope of Georgia PTA that information included in this program can help you put your good intentions into action. **You can do something and you can start right now.**

The National Red Ribbon Campaign, held each year the last week in October, calls attention to the devastating effects of drug and alcohol abuse on individuals, families and communities. Businesses, schools, law enforcement officials, service organizations, religious institutions, governments, sports teams and individual citizens will demonstrate their commitment to drug-free, healthy lifestyles by wearing and displaying red ribbons and participating in visible and effective drug awareness programs. In accordance with our Purpose, “To develop between educators and general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education,” it is our sincere hope that your school will participate in the Red Ribbon Campaign. Educate and celebrate, **Real Life is Drug Free!**

More Facts you should know about drug abuse

- Many students are missing the message about cigarettes. 24% of students thought cigarettes posed only a limited threat to health. 4% said there is no health risk in smoking.
- **35.3% of Georgia high school students smoke, one of the highest in the nation.**
National average: 28.4
- **21.7% of Georgia high school students use smokeless or spit tobacco, one of the highest in the nation.** National average: 11.6%.
- Children now under 18 and live in Georgia who will ultimately die prematurely from smoking: 187,000.
- The use of two deadly legal drugs – alcohol and cigarettes, continues to rise among teens.
- Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined-and thousands more die from other tobacco-related causes, such as fires caused by smoking.
- 76% of 8th grade students say they could get cigarettes fairly or very easily if they want some.
- Marijuana is fairly easy to find. 24% of teenagers say they know where they could buy marijuana in an hour or less.
- Inhalants – substances such as glues and aerosols – are more popular among younger teens than older teens.
- Poor grades are correlated with increased use of alcohol. Alcohol is implicated in more than 40% of all academic problems and 28% of all dropouts.
- Alcohol kills 6.5 times more youth than all other illicit drugs combined.
- The brain does not finish developing until a person is around 21 years-old, so the risks of losing memory and learning capacity as well as slowing the capacity for good judgment can be severely affected by the use of alcohol at early ages.
- Alcohol is a factor in the 3 leading causes of death among 15 to 24-year olds: motor vehicle crashes, homicides and suicides.
- Alcohol use is the number one drug problem among young people.
- Youth who drink before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who begin drinking at age 21.
- Youth who try marijuana at age 14 or younger, 8.9 become dependent on illicit drugs as adults.
- Marijuana accounts for three-fourths of teen drug use. Overall, marijuana is the most popular drug among users of all ages, though more than half of users said they had also tried cocaine, heroine or other illegal drugs.

Step 2: Planning a Red Ribbon Program.



Things to think about when planning your program:

1. Consider the needs of the school population. What is the particular concern or problem.
2. Consider the people-power you have to support your efforts.
3. Consider financial needs.

The Goals of the Red Ribbon Campaign are to:

- ✓ **Build individual and school community awareness regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and addiction.**
- ✓ **Open the doors of communication between students and teachers, children and parents, youth and police about the dangers of substance abuse and the commitment to a safe and healthy lifestyle.**
- ✓ **Increase support for those who make a commitment to a drug-free lifestyle.**
- ✓ **Promote prevention of substance abuse through education and awareness.**
- ✓ **Encourage the school community collaboration in addressing prevention planning and activities.**
- ✓ **Support ongoing prevention planning and activities within the school community.**

Helpful Hints:

- Plan Red Ribbon Week activities and programs early. Be sure to include the principal or PTA liaison in your planning.
- Design your budget to include dollars specifically for Red Ribbon activities and programs. You will see that many of the suggested activities included have little or no cost at all.
- If you plan to have special speakers, contact them as soon as possible.
- Students enjoy and look forward to daily Red Ribbon Week activities. Publicize what you will do each day. Announcements and a calendar of events very helpful.
- Engage and inform teachers and staff. They can encourage participation and interest. You'll find that they enjoy the week also!

Step 3: Conduct and evaluate the program.



Early September:

1. Define Goals and Objectives with your Committee Chair and Board Members. Your chair may be someone specifically assigned to conduct Red Ribbon activities or part of the Youth Safety and Protection Committee Chair responsibilities.
2. Notify or recruit committee members to help with activities.
3. Organize a meeting to determine Red Ribbon activities. Be mindful of budget and people-power needed.
4. Discuss all activities with the principle before further planning or publicizing.
5. After you've made your plans, prepare an assignment list and delegate the various tasks to committee members. Include Activity, Date, Resources needed, Volunteers needed.
6. Identify funding sources and develop the time line.
7. If you plan to have a speaker, contact him/her as soon as it is cleared with the principle.
8. Identify any community resources that may be helpful and interested in participating in Red Ribbon activities. Will they donate materials such as ribbons, candy, stickers, etc? Will they display red ribbons in their place of business?
9. If you plan to use any school facilities such as the gym, parking lot, etc. make sure the time and date is noted on the school's master calendar.
10. If your budget allows, you may want to order a reusable banner to hang inside or outside your main entrance. *Real Life Is Drug Free* banners may be ordered for approximately \$25.

October:

1. Complete and follow up on the activities.
2. Prepare a calendar of daily events for faculty, staff, and students if appropriate.
3. If speakers or outside guests are participating, give them a reminder call of the time and date.
4. Ask principal to notify teachers if instruction time will be interrupted for speaker, balloon release, etc.
5. Identify any students you will need to help make announcements, hang signs, etc.

6. Prepare an announcement the Friday before Red Ribbon week to explain the "What and Why" of the recognition. Remind or explain Monday's activity. What to wear, bring, do, etc.
7. Prepare daily announcements for each day of the week for student or staff member to read. Include facts and/or information about drug abuse, etc. and a reminder of the next activity.
8. Gather the materials you will need for the week Such as red ribbons, banners, microphone, etc.
9. After the Red Ribbon Week activities, the committee chair should prepare a report for next year's committee. Be sure to include a timeline for the activities, a budget, copies of all forms, expenses, resources and materials.
*Remember to send thank you notes to businesses that made donations, speakers, etc.
10. Evaluate Red Ribbon Week activities:
 - Were objectives met?
 - Was this a worthy achievement?
 - What additions/deletions should be made next year?
 - Did we maintain our focus?

Sample Red Ribbon Week Activity Sheet as conducted by a middle school:

Monday: Have school decorated with red ribbons. A.M. Announcement. Today's Theme: How many times to say NO to DRUGS! Contest begins for students to estimate of how many red-hot tamale candies are in the large clear jar, located at the main entrance with paper, pens, and forms provided. Winner to be announced on Friday. Distribute red ribbons to each student and staff member when entering the cafeteria.

Tuesday: A.M. Announcement. Today's theme: Don't Be a Dum-Dum. Volunteers pass out Dum-Dum Suckers to each student when entering the cafeteria at lunchtime and ask them "Not to be a Dum-Dum."

Wednesday: A.M. Announcement. Today's theme: Honor the Pledge. Students are asked to personally commit to a safe and healthy drug-free lifestyle by signing a pledge. Each student is given a red pencil.

Thursday: A.M. Announcement. Today's Theme: Be a Smartie. Don't Use Drugs! Volunteers pass out Smartie candies when entering the cafeteria at lunchtime and ask them to "Be a Smartie!"

Friday: A.M. Announcement of winner of tamale contest. Today's theme: Truth or Dare! Police officer speaks to the legal consequences of using drugs at afternoon assembly.

Red Ribbon Week
A Week of Activity – Years of Prevention

Sample Pledges for Red Ribbon Week

I Pledge

To lead a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

I will say NO to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

I will help my friends say NO.

I pledge to stand up for what I know is right.

I pledge to have respect for others.

I have better things to do than drugs.

Signature

Date

THE PLEDGE

I pledge allegiance to myself and who I want to be

Cause I can make my dreams come true if I believe in me.

I pledge to stay in school and learn the things I need to know

To make the world a better place for kids like me to grow.

I pledge to keep my dreams alive and be all I can be.

I know I can, and that's because I pledge to stay DRUG FREE.

Signature

Date

DRUG-FREE PLEDGE

I pledge to lead a healthy, Drug-Free lifestyle.

I will say NO to Alcohol.

I will say NO to Tobacco.

I will say NO to other drugs.

I will help my friends say NO.

I pledge to stand up for what

I know is right

And remain Drug-Free.

Signature

Date

OUR FAMILY CONTRACT

I respect my family's values about alcohol and other drugs and I want to maintain a healthy and safe lifestyle. Therefore I agree to the following:

- 1. I will not smoke cigarettes.**
- 2. I will not drink alcohol or make a decision about drinking until I am of legal age.**
- 3. I will not use any drugs.**

If this contract is broken:

(Discuss consequences with your child and fill in below. You may want to seek professional advice if consequences are not effective.)

First time: _____

Second time: _____

Third time: _____

Son's or Daughter's Signature

Date

Parents' Signatures

Red Ribbon Week

A Week of Activity – Years of Prevention

Suggested Activities

1. Red Ribbon Decoration Day. Start the week off by wearing on Red Ribbons and decorating your school or community with a Red Ribbon motif.
2. Distribute red ribbons to students, making sure they understand what the ribbon represents.
3. Rallies and other special events such as balloon release, human and/or paper chains around school, etc. can be conducted before or after school in order to avoid interrupting instruction time. Incentives may be provided to encourage attendance: Free ice cream, soft drink, or another item from the cafeteria. The best of all...homework passes! Remember to include after school program students
4. Launch your program with the release of red balloons – as many as possible.
5. Kick-off Red Ribbon Week in conjunction with homecoming, an important home football game
6. or another popular community event.
7. Form a student chain to spell the words "DRUG-FREE" and have it photographed from the air or have students circle the school, locking hands to signify that they are banding together to keep the school drug-free. Try to get local press coverage for either event.
8. Schedule a "Band Against Drugs" musical assembly.
9. Coloring sheets can be downloaded from redribbonworks.org to use for an elementary school coloring contest.
10. Have students write their own "Recipes for Success" to remain drug-free.
11. Middle and high school students enjoy "give-away's." Many candies can be purchased in large quantities and are relatively inexpensive. Try to find candy that you can tie into a Red Ribbon theme. Some ideas are: Dum-Dums – Don't be a Dum-Dum. Don't use Drugs!
Red Twister licorice – Don't get twisted up with Drugs!
Smarties – Be a Smartie. Don't use Drugs!
Red suckers – Don't be a Sucker. Don't use Drugs!
12. Cute theme related temporary tattoos are inexpensive and can be ordered from companies that specialize in Red Ribbon products.
13. Be creative with daily themes. Choose a catchy theme and build on it.
Try these: Heroes Are Drug Free, Drugs Bug Me, Drugs Don't Work Here, Drugs Lie. Believe It!, EZ2B Drug Free, I Am the Ant-Drug, I'd Rather Eat Bugs Than Be on Drugs, Live clean. Hug Life, Smoking Bugs Me, Working To Keep Kids Off Drugs, You Are The Anti-Drug. Speak Loud. Be Heard, Drugs Make Me See Red.
14. Involve the whole family in your Red Ribbon celebration with a Family Fun Night, complete with games, booths and other activities.
15. Host a special Red Ribbon Food Day in the school cafeteria, serving as many red foods as possible (for example, red apples, watermelon, pizza, spaghetti sauce, tomato juice, etc.).
16. Sponsor "Hugs Not Drugs Day," by inviting younger students to bring in their favorite stuffed animal.
17. Sponsor a contest - essay, poster, poem, theme song, etc. - for Red Ribbon Week.
18. Red Ribbon Halloween Bash/Sporting Event Finish off your Red Ribbon Celebration with a weekend sports activity such as a football or basketball game -- and a "Say Boo To Drugs" Halloween Party.
19. Provide bookmarkers to decorate with a "Say NO to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs" themes.
20. Make or buy wristbands with an anti-drugs theme. Younger students may enjoy making them out of pre-cut construction paper. Wristbands can be purchased for middle and high school students.
21. Stage a "Car Caravan" and decorate cars with red ribbons and caravan to the site of a rally, game, dance, etc.
22. Sponsor a "Slam-Dunk – Drugs Are Junk," basketball game during Red Ribbon Week.
23. Encourage students to write and then sign their own personal pledges to live drug free.

24. Design Red Ribbon Week banners to hang in front of the school or in a prominent place inside. Ideas for banners include: "Drug Free and Proud" imprinted with student signed hand prints, "Hand in Hand Let's Take a Stand" with red student signed hand prints or "Take a Stand on Drugs" with red student signed footprints.
25. For younger students, have a coloring contest where they paint or color in a picture with a prevention theme. For older students, have them design and complete their own prevention painting.
26. Invite all students to sign their names on red ribbons and send them to Washington as a symbol of unity and concern for others.
27. Use your school mascot or choose a special Red Ribbon Campaign mascot to dress up and spread your message throughout the school.
28. Conduct a Red Ribbon program for parents with skits, songs and other student performances.
29. Decorate the hallways for the Red Ribbon theme; include things like red paper chains or student handprints cut from red paper.
30. Set up mock cemetery headstones with the names of celebrities and community members who have died as result of personal substance abuse or the substance abuse of others.
31. Organize a pep rally with contests between grades for the best anti-drug cheer.
32. Cut strips of red construction paper, have the students sign each strip and link together. Display the chain with the following slogan "Don't Break the Chain – Be Drug Free".
33. Organize drug education programs and integrate alcohol and other drug information into all curriculums during Red Ribbon Week.
34. Offer half-price admission at a home ball game to anyone wearing a red ribbon.
35. Light candles at half-time and spend a moment of silence to remember those students who have lost their lives to drugs and alcohol or the substance abuse of others, repeat the pledge to be drug-free.
36. Hand out red suckers to students, faculty and staff. Use the slogan "Lick the Drug and Alcohol Problem."
37. Host a Drug-Free Party at the end of Red Ribbon Week. Students can play volleyball and basketball, watch videos, participate in contests, have pizza and dance.
38. Give prizes to students who still have their red ribbon on the Friday of Red Ribbon Week or have drawings throughout Red Ribbon Week requiring that to win students must be wearing their red ribbon. Prizes could be donated from local businesses.
39. Have daily intercom messages that highlight the campaign activities for the day or deliver a message about the harmful effects of drug use.
40. Make paper bricks, have each student put his or her name on one as a pledge to be drug free. Build a wall to "join together to be drug free."
41. Ask art classes to make "Drugs are Garbage" signs for the trashcans at school and around town.
42. Develop and play drug awareness games at school such as trivia contests, Jeopardy, bingo, scavenger hunt for "Red Ribbon Clues" or "Beat the Clock." Remember the after-school programs!
43. Have a student sponsor a teacher and check to see that the teacher wears his or her red ribbon every day.
44. Sponsor a Red Day or Red Rally where everyone is encouraged to wear red – red socks, red hats, red shirts, maybe even red face paint. Give an award to the class with covered in the most red.
45. Ask students to participate in "Give Drugs the Slip Day" with everyone wearing slippers.
46. Hold a "Sock It To Drugs Day" and ask everyone to wear the craziest socks they can find.
47. Make a "Boot Out Drugs Day" with everyone wearing boots.
48. Invite students to wear headbands or bandannas for a "Band Against Drugs" theme.
49. Ask students to wear the craziest ties they can find for a "Tie One On Against Drugs" event.
50. Wear clothing inside out for a "Don't Let Drugs Turn You" Day.
51. Have a "Living Drug-Free Is No Sweat" day with everyone wearing sweat clothes to school.
52. Ask everyone to wear sneakers for "Don't Let Drugs Sneak Up On You" day.
53. Wear clothes backward for "Turn Your Back On Drugs" day.
54. On "Shade Out Drugs Day," suggest that everyone wear sunglasses.
55. Have a "Red Head Day" and encourage students to wear something red on their heads.
56. Request that participants donate one can of food each for your "We Can All Say No To Drugs!" program. Then give the cans to a local agency that serves families in need.

57. Plan a "Walk Out On Drugs" walkathon and give the money you raise to your favorite prevention organization.
58. Hold a "Red Ribbon Run For Fun" marathon to reinforce your commitment to healthy living.
59. Decorate bags with red ribbons and prevention messages for use in local stores during Red Ribbon Week.
60. Decorate every door in your school with messages that promote a drug-free lifestyle.
61. Distribute Pledge Cards that invite each participant to make a personal pledge to be drug-free.
62. Hold a "Sock It To Drugs Day" and ask everyone to wear the craziest socks they can find.
63. Announce a "Be Vested Against Drugs Day" and have everyone wear vests.
64. Make a "Boot Out Drugs Day" with everyone wearing boots.
65. Use student baby pictures for a giant collage entitled, "Born To Be Drug Free."
66. Use the theme, "Drugs Are Unbearable!" and give out gummy teddy bear candies.
67. Have your own BYOB Banana Split party. Ask students to bring their own bananas.
68. Put on skits that portray the message, "Users Are Losers."
69. Let each student write his or her own reasons for being drug free on a red ribbon.
70. Create posters to put up in the classroom and around the school that state the negative effects of drugs.
71. Involve local businesses. Ask them to offer a special give-away for any customer wearing a Red Ribbon that day -- a can of soda, a special discount, etc.
72. Decorate against drugs. Decorate your school or a special area with red ribbons, banners, posters and other items that display drug prevention messages.
73. Invite students to wear headbands or bandannas for a "Band Against Drugs" theme.
74. Ask students to wear the craziest ties they can find for a "Tie One On Against Drugs" event.
75. Tie a Red Ribbon onto every car in your parking lot or neighborhood.
76. Hold a Poster Contest, awarding a prize to the creator of the best drug prevention message poster.
77. Party at a "Red Ribbon Sock Hop" at which everyone must wear red socks.
78. Invite prominent drug prevention experts to come speak at your school or organization.
79. Allow students to write and then sign their own personal pledges to live drug free.
80. Design Red Ribbon Celebration Banners to hang in front of your school or in a prominent place inside.
81. Go national. Invite all students to sign their names on red ribbons and send them to Washington as a symbol of unity and concern for others.
82. Have a "Living Drug-Free Is No Sweat" day with everyone wearing sweat clothes to school.
83. Write a theme song with drug prevention messages to use in your Red Ribbon Celebration.
84. Ask each student to write a poem on a Red Ribbon Celebration theme. Post poems in the classroom and around the school.
85. Plan a school or community prevention mural to be created during your Red Ribbon Celebration. Offer a prize for the best prevention theme or idea to be used for the mural.
86. Have a contest for the best drug prevention slogan to use for your group's Red Ribbon Week Celebration.
87. Reach Out To Others Day Use this day to connect with others -- those who have already committed to a drug-free lifestyle and those who have not.
88. Rally In Red Day Add energy to your Red Ribbon Celebration by holding a Rally and inviting everyone whom attends to wear red. Include a speaker from the community if possible.
89. Make A Pledge Day Set aside one day for students to make or renew their pledge to live drug-free. Use plenty of posters and other announcements to create excitement and increase participation.
90. Red Ribbon Recognition Day Hold a special ceremony, program or assembly to recognize those who have made this special commitment to live drug-free. Also recognize students and adults who helped make your Red Ribbon Week Celebration an exciting and meaningful event for your school and community.

CELEBRATE RED RIBBON WEEK
October 23 - 31

Red Ribbon Week
A Week of Activity – Years of Prevention

Resources for Drug Awareness and Education
Drug Awareness Programs

Phone Numbers and Websites

www.pta.org
National PTA, click Drugs and Alcohol, click
National PTA Common Sense
Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education
www.prideyouth.com
Students Against Destructive Decisions
(Formerly Students Against Driving Drunk)
1-800-787-5777
www.saddonline.com
Department of Education Partnership
for Family Involvement in Education
www.pie.ed.gov
American Council for Drug Education
1-800-488-3784
www.acde.org
Department of Education: Safe & Drug Free
Schools
1-800-624-0100
www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDGFS
National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids
202-296-5469
www.tobaccofreekids.org
Partnership for a Drug-Free America
www.drugfreeamerica.org
Parents: The AntiDrug
www.theantidrug.com

**Books on Parenting
and Parenting Issues:**

Kids Are Worth It! Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline, Barbara Coloroso
Reaching Up for Manhood: Transforming the Lives of Boys in America,
Geoffrey Canada
It Takes a Village and Other Lessons Children Teach Us, Hillary Rodham Clinton
How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk, Adele Faber and
Elaine Mazlish
Uncommon Sense for Parents With Teenagers,
Michael Riera, Ph.D
Positive Discipline, Jane Nelsen, Ed.D
Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls, Mary Pipher
You and Your Adolescent: A Parent's Guide for Ages 10 to 20, Lawrence Steinberg and
Ann Levine
The Measure of Our Success-A Letter to My Children and Yours, Marian Wright Edelman
Battles, Hassles, Tantrums & Tears: Strategies for Coping With Conflict and Making Peace at Home, Susan Bechman and Jeanne Holmes
Ten Talks Parents Must Have With Their Children About Drugs & Choices, Domimonic Cappello, Xenia G. Becher

♥Keeping Your Kids DRUG-FREE♥

**♥It's not pestering♥It's parenting♥ Know what your children
are doing♥ Be involved ♥Set limits♥ Praise and reward good
behavior♥ Ask questions♥ Ask who♥Ask what ♥Ask when♥
Ask where♥ Keep lines of communication open♥
First, YOU LISTEN♥ Then you talk♥Take the time!♥**