



SADD Campaigns and Activities: Red Ribbon Campaign

The purpose of the Red Ribbon Campaign is to present a visible commitment to a safe, healthy and drug-free lifestyle. The campaign is designed to accomplish the following:

- to create awareness concerning the problems related to the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs
- to support the decision to live a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Red Ribbon Week began in 1988 in honor of DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, who was kidnapped and killed in Mexico in February of 1988. Agent Camarena, then 37, had uncovered a multi-billion dollar drug scam in which he suspected officers of the Mexican Army, police forces and government. As he left his office one day, five men appeared at his side and kidnapped him. His body was found one month later in a shallow grave; he had been tortured and beaten.

The first Red Ribbon Week was proclaimed in 1988 by the U.S. Congress in support of Agent Camarena and the cause he gave his life for -- combating drugs. The week is marked by the wearing of a red ribbon to send the message: Live drug-free!

National Red Ribbon Week is the last week of October. SADD chapters are encouraged to celebrate Red Ribbon Week to symbolize their commitment to a healthy, drug-free lifestyle and to create awareness of the problems related to the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

The following is a list of a variety of activities your chapter may conduct in conjunction with Red Ribbon Week.

- Paint the Town Red - Erect banners and exhibits in your school and in other community locations explaining the symbolism of the red ribbon.
- Encourage your city's mayor to officially proclaim Red Ribbon Week. Plan a community-wide celebration that includes fun activities, live music, games and food. Emphasize that everyone can have fun without drugs.
- Decorate your community with red ribbons. Tie them on parking meters, tree branches and park benches.
- Distribute red ribbons to students and school personnel and ask them to wear the ribbons all week.
- Give out small prizes, such as Hershey's Kisses or Smarties, to people caught wearing red ribbons later in the week.
- Show a video at your school about the danger of tobacco, alcohol and other drug use.
- Invite a member of the DEA in your area to speak to the students about the dangerous consequences of using drugs and the legal implications.
- Visit your middle school and elementary schools and speak to the students about the red ribbon and ask them to wear one as a commitment to be drug-free.
- Bring a bag filled with several items including cigarettes, vitamins, wine cooler bottle, candy bar, juice box, apple, chewing tobacco, snuff, etc., when you visit the middle school and elementary school. Pull out one item at a time and ask students if it is a drug or not. Reward kids with a treat for their correct answers.
- Give out red ribbons and lollipops during your city's Halloween celebration.