



Did You Know? October 2020

Be Happy. Be Brave. Be Drug Free: Red ribbons have been a symbol of living a drug free life. This movement began in 1985 after the tragic murder of Enrique (Kiki) Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration Agent who dedicated his life to the battle against illegal drugs. Loved ones of Kiki began wearing red badges of satin as an act to remember both Kiki and his fight. A year later, the first country-wide Red Ribbon campaign was held in 1986, and annual Red Ribbon week celebrations began in 1988. Acting as a catalyst to promote drug education and awareness, the Red Ribbon Campaign has been able to reach millions of US families since its inception. This year's theme focuses on the importance of living a healthy life, and encourages youth and families to engage in health positive activities. The current state of the pandemic makes this year's campaign even more important, as mental health concerns and substance use have been on the rise.

- **The Red Ribbon Week Campaign (October 23rd-31st):**
 - Is the largest and longest running drug-use prevention campaign.
 - Reaches over 80 million people each year.
 - Hosts several activities and ways for you to get involved. Visit www.redribbon.org for more information.
- **An important goal of prevention is to greatly reduce the instances of risk factors in a child's life and increase the instances of protective factors.**
 - A risk factor can be defined as a characteristic, condition, or behavior that increases the chance of negative outcomes (i.e. the possibility of a disease, substance use or injury.)
 - A protective factor can be defined as a characteristic, condition, or behavior that is associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes. Protective factors can also reduce the negative impact of a risk factor.
- **The National Institute on Drug Abuse shares:**
 - The more risk factors/unhealthy situations and behaviors a child is exposed to, the more likely the child will turn to substance use later in life.
 - The severity of risk factors may change during certain stages in development (i.e. peer pressure during the teenage years.)

- **Some protective factors that aid in the prevention of substance use include:**

Good family communication	Strong parent-child bonds and support	Non-parental adult role models	A sense of belonging in school and the community
Engagement in extracurricular activities	Maintaining good physical fitness	Clear and consistent rules	Good coping skills and problem-solving skills

What You Can Do:

- **Family Fun:** Our Facebook and website have several fun activities for the whole family to enjoy. Participating together can help create positive family bonds and strengthen protective factors listed above.
- **Wear A Red Ribbon:** Wear a red ribbon and show your commitment to living a drug free life. Use the ribbon as a conversation starter, and invite others to join the movement!
- **Be A Resource For A Child:** Whether you are a parent, a teacher, a counselor, an aunt, an uncle, a neighbor, a friend, etc. be a positive role model and a support system for a child. As much as we may try, it is nearly impossible to eliminate all potential risk factors from a child's life. So it's paramount that we aim to be the most successful influence during their development. You can make a difference.

Information obtained from: www.drugabuse.gov; www.redribbon.org; youth.gov

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The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.eccpasa.org