

Red Ribbon Week Theme:



MacArthur High School Red Ribbon Week will be celebrated the week of October 15-19

What is Red Ribbon Week?

The answer to this question is a little more complicated than one might think. To understand what **Red Ribbon Week** is, it is important to know that it is **NOT a prevention program**.

Red Ribbon is an Awareness Campaign

Red Ribbon Week is an **awareness campaign** observed annually the last full week in October, Due to the testing schedule MacArthur will be celebrating the week of October 15-19, 2007. We regard **Red Ribbon Week** as the "kick off to a year of prevention in our schools and in our communities."

The best **Red Ribbon Celebration** efforts highlight and support the continuing prevention efforts occurring, on and off campus, throughout the year.

Throughout the week students, parents and teachers are engaged in a variety of activities designed to demonstrate a commitment to youth and prevention.

The focus is on developing and supporting ways to prevent youth from **using illegal drugs or legal drugs illegally.**

We Know That:

- Early and continued prevention efforts are crucial if we are to prevent youth from using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.
- Affordable, effective treatment programs are absolutely necessary if we are to help those who need to overcome their substance abuse related problems.
- It is important to include youth in the development and implementation of school and community based prevention programs, activities and events.

In order to understand the value of **Red Ribbon Week** in our school we must first recognize what Red Ribbon won't do.

The **Red Ribbon Celebration** will not (nor is it intended to) single-handedly fix the drug problem. There is not a single approach to prevention that can eliminate a problem so complex.

The **Red Ribbon Celebration** does provide opportunities to raise awareness and draw attention to the need for prevention including the kinds of services and programs that do exist.

Red Ribbon Week began after the brutal murder of Drug Enforcement Administration Agent, Enrique "Kiki" Camarena in 1985.

After **Kiki Camarena** was murdered by drug traffickers, the Red Ribbon campaign began with one primary mission - **to reduce the demand for illegal drugs and illegal use of legal drugs.**

The first national Red Ribbon Week was proclaimed by congress in 1988. President Ronald and First Lady Nancy Reagan served as the first Honorary Chairs!

The Story...

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. These coalitions also adopted the symbol of Camarena's memory, the red ribbon.

The National Family Partnership organized the first Nationwide Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988. Since that time, the campaign has reached millions of U.S. children.

In 1997, the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse began committing resources to ensure the continuation of the Red Ribbon Campaign in Texas, as well as the hopes and beliefs behind this grassroots effort to protect children from the dangers of alcohol and other drugs.