



CHCC's Project Alliance Presents National Red Ribbon Week: October 23-31, 2021

Saco, ME – October 7, 2021 – The Coastal Healthy Communities Coalition (CHCC)'s Project Alliance presents National Red Ribbon Week, taking place October 23-31, 2021. Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention and awareness campaign.

Red Ribbon Week began in 1985 after the murder of a DEA special agent Enrique Camarena. Special agent Camarena joined the DEA to make a difference, and even though he was just one person, he believed it was possible. After his death, parents and youth in communities across the United States began wearing red ribbons or red badges in honor of Special agent Camarena's battle against illegal drugs and as a symbol of their commitment to raise awareness about the drug problems in America. This movement has snowballed into what we know now as National Red Ribbon Week.

National Red Ribbon Week serves as a movement to mobilize communities, parents, and schools to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention programs and activities. This national campaign has come up with a pledge to help spread awareness and provide advocacy to the drug problems in America. The pledge is as follows, "I pledge to be drug, alcohol, and tobacco free and lead a healthy and positive lifestyle. I pledge to tell others about the dangers and consequences of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse. I value my life and the lives of my friends and families."

During this week, the Project Alliance Coalition will be providing schools with resources to educate youth on drug use and its effects, holding community events, and getting people to sign the pledge to be drug free. CHCC will be offering a showing of a movie called "Like" to review the impact of social media on mental health and youth. This screening will be offered from October 14–October 20, 2021 to promote discussions in the classroom or around the dining room table. As part of the national awareness campaign, community members are encouraged to **wear red on Wednesday, October 27**, in support of being drug-free. To learn more about getting involved in National Red Ribbon Week, email Morgan Bates at mbates3@une.edu. Or visit the CHCC/Project Alliance Coalition website at www.chccme.org

Coastal Healthy Communities Coalition (CHCC) is a non-profit, comprehensive community health coalition working to create healthier communities in Northern York County, Maine. Under the auspices of the University of New England, CHCC leads several public health initiatives to achieve social, policy, and environmental changes, including Project Alliance/substance misuse, lead poisoning prevention, and SNAP-Ed nutrition. CHCC's community outreach programs occur in the Saco, Arundel, Biddeford, Buxton, Dayton, Hollis, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Old Orchard Beach areas.