

October's Healthy Habits Campaign Message is:
Take responsibility for a drug free life!

Being aware of beneficial and harmful substances is important for kids and adults alike. Students need to learn about the importance of living drug free and how to use common household products and medications safely. This information can help them make healthy and safe choices about the world around them and the situations they face.

Turn this page over to find ideas for including drug prevention messages into your morning/afternoon announcements, and for other school-wide drug use prevention activity ideas.

The messages to focus on this month are:

- **Common things we find around the house can hurt us if we're not careful.** Even things that seem healthy can be harmful, if we don't use them the right way. Be sure to follow the guidance of an adult or the directions on the package when using things like cleaning products or when taking common medications, like for a headache or cold.
- **Drugs are bad for our bodies, minds, and friendships.** Using drugs like cigarettes, and alcohol can have immediate effects that make our bodies hurt, our minds fuzzy, and put our friendships at risk.
- **Making safe choices is the responsible thing to do.** Knowing about whether substances you encounter are helpful or harmful, and how to use helpful substances safely, can do a lot to help keep you healthy. Making safe choices is one important way to take responsibility for your health.

For more information about helping students stay drug free, take a look at:

- National Institute on Drug Abuse: <http://drugabuse.gov/infofacts/infofactsindex.html>
- Partnership for a Drug Free America: <http://www.drugfree.org/>
- Chatham Drug Free: <http://chathamdrugfree.org/>

Morning/Afternoon Announcements Ideas

Use these announcements throughout the month to call attention to October's healthy habit. Use the messages below or ask your students to write some for you.

- This month our healthy habits campaign message is: "take responsibility for a drug free life". You will be learning how to stay safe and drug-free.
- It's drug-free month, there are lots of reasons to stay drug free, one is:
 - Drugs don't feel good. They can make you clumsy, make you feel sick, and make it harder for you do fun things like play sports.
 - Drugs hurt your body. A puff of a cigarette hurts your lungs making you cough; a sip of alcohol hurts your liver and can make you feel nauseous and give you a headache.
 - Drugs hurt your mind, making it harder to remember things, harder to learn, and harder to do the things you like to do.
 - Drugs can hurt your friendships. People make bad decisions when they're doing drugs, decisions that can make it hard to stay friends.
- It is drug free month and the character trait of the month is responsibility, but what do these things have in common? Well, one way to take responsibility for your health and happiness is to say 'no' to drugs.
- Responsibility and health go hand in hand. When you're faced with a tough decision, try to do what you think is right and what will keep you healthy.
- Not only does being responsible keep you healthy, it's cool to be responsible! When you act responsibly, you show that you are smart, trustworthy, and independent.

Other drug use prevention activities:

- Participate in Red Ribbon Week activities.
- Post students' pledges to live a drug free life in the hallway or on a bulletin board.
- Hold a door decorating or posting making contest with the theme-*why I will live a drug free life*.
- Hold a family games night or a volunteer opportunity for the school community to engage in together. Positive interactions with family and at school can help buffer the negative influences that students face. For more information about increasing "protective factors" in youth see:
<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/AdolescentHealth/connectedness.htm>
- Invite a speaker from Chatham County Schools, the Chatham County Public Health Department, or Chatham Drug Free to talk with parents/caregivers and/or staff about youth drug use in the county and what they can do to prevent it.