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Be a Piece of the Puzzle: Pledging, Promising and Hoping-- Red Ribbon Week 2011

Are you seeing red at school and around town? Red tulips, red shirts, red banners... Well don't be alarmed--October 22nd - 31st is Red Ribbon Week at Vernonia schools. Grades K-12 will be participating in a week of activities highlighting issues of self-harm through, bullying, abuse of alcohol and prescription drugs and the resistance to illegal use of drugs. Activities are planned to increase character building,

pride, and the achievement of living healthy and safe. The goal is to build awareness in our youth to refuse to harm themselves and give hope to those whom want to stop.

This week serves as a vehicle for communities and individuals to take a stand for the hopes and dreams of our children through a commitment to drug prevention and education. An opportunity to make a personal commitment to live drug free lives with the ultimate goal being the creation of drug free America. Vernonia schools have a long history of celebrating Red Ribbon week as you can see from the smattering of red tulips on the front lawn of Washington Grade School that bloom in April. Each one was planted as a



promise. The hope will be to plant new promises at the new school site to continue our pledge to a healthy and safe school.

The Vernonia Prevention Coalition works closely with the school staff and administration. VPC purchased incentives for youth to win, banners to hang and ribbons to wear that highlight Red Ribbon Week. Elementary, middle school and high school students will be participating in an assembly and encouraged to sign pledges. In October 2010, over 350 students made a pledge and created a community puzzle that was hung in the lunch room as a reminder through April. However, this year they will be offered a challenge. Any student will be challenged collect other pledges from family and community members as a show of support for their efforts.

This year student volunteers of OSSOM, (Operation Safe Students on the Move) will stand up with all students of Vernonia 47J to help create a collective voice on the issue of choosing a healthy lifestyle to ensure strong minds for the future. Over 25 students have volunteered to help with the week. Last year OSSOM's students, along with the VPC, planned a full week of events in April highlighting dangers of underage drinking. This amazing week included full blown Healthy Fair where over 500

students and staff participated in this interactive event. On the heels of that success, the group has already begun planning for a week of activities for April 2012.

While Red Ribbon Week is celebrated in October, the VPC and OSSOM is dedicated year around to continue our efforts to speak up, speak out and speak often about the dangers to kids experimenting during their brain developmental years. They signed contracts to be a collective voice to encourage those who have started experimenting to stop and provide resources for those whom can't stop on their own.

The members of the VPC pledge their support to the students of Vernonia School District. Our promise to the citizens of Vernonia is to help develop and influence positive norm changes. Lastly, it is our hope that we empower people in developing safe and healthy neighborhoods through collaborative planning, community action, policy advocacy and enforcement. Red Ribbon week is a call to action year round and for generations to come.

Want to sign a pledge and be a piece of the puzzle? Contact DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director @ 503 369-7370 or DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov.

2001 Vernonia Prevention Coalition Sector Representatives				
Position	Name	Sector	Contact	Affiliation
Chair	Josette Mitchell	Government	(503) 429-4232	COV Mayor
Vice Chair	Pete Weisel	School	(503) 429-3521	VHS Councilor
Exec. Board	Dr. Ken Cox	Media	(503) 429-5891	VSD Superintendent
Exec. Board	Sgt. Shaun Carnahan	Police	(503) 429-4232	COV Police
Board Member	Mark Brown	Faith	(503) 961-5281	Vernonia Comm. Church
Board Member	Ashley Swanson	Prevention	(503) 396-2074	Public Health Foundation of Columbia County
Board Member	Heidi Brown	Business	(503) 429-2787	Grey Dawn Gallery
Board Member	Gina Fields	Parent	(503) 429-6306	Parent
Board Member	Lee Anne Krause	Youth Serving	(503) 816-9810	Kiwanis
Board Member	O.S.S.O.M.	Youth	(503) 429-3521	VSD 47J
Board Member	George Tice	Civic Org.	(503) 880-1627	Lions Club
Board Member		Health Serv.	Seeking Representation	
	Heather Lewis	Contractor	(503) 429-4677	Resource Coord.

VPC Mission:
To develop safe and healthy neighborhoods through collaborative planning, community action, policy advocacy and enforcement.

VERNONIA PREVENTION COALITION

5th Tuesday Community Coalition Meeting at the VCLC 6:30-8:00 PM

November 29th
January 31st

For more information contact:
DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director
503-369-7370
DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Are you feeling desperate, alone or hopeless? Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call will be routed to the nearest crisis center to you.

Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1

WE ARE DOING IT

VERNONIA'S VOLUNTEERS AND VICTORY CELEBRATION

Saturday November 5th

The Chamber and the Vernonia Prevention Coalition have joined together to put a different twist on the Annual Awards Potluck.

We want to **CELEBRATE** and Recognize all the effort each organization and individual has contributed to the **Livability** of this **Community**.

We will be recognizing individuals, businesses or organizations for **Outstanding Service** to the community in the following categories: Business, Government, Youth Serving, Youth, School, Faith Based, Media, Health, Law, Parent, Civic, and Other Prevention Service.

BUT this year, we **ALSO** want to provide **YOU** the opportunity to honor the person or member that most **EMBODIES** your group's **MISSION**.

LOCATION
VERNONIA SCHOOL CAFETERIA

TIME
6-8PM

CONTACT:
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