

Be Real is back and better than ever!

Make *Be Real* Your Red Ribbon Week Theme



be real

alcohol, tobacco and drug-free kids

Be Real is back and better than ever!

**New web site, new prevention planning guide,
same award-winning message.**

The reviews are in. *Be Real* is not only winning awards for its materials and television public service announcements, educators are giving it high praise and planning another year of campaign activities. *Join them in helping our kids be real, drug-free.*

The *Be Real* campaign supplements and supports other drug prevention efforts by involving parents, youth and faith-based organization leaders, educators and community members in reaching kids ages 10 to 14. The statewide campaign was launched in 2001 and is managed by Prevention First Inc., a non-profit prevention training and resource organization with offices in Springfield and Chicago, Illinois. The *Be Real* message is simple and clear. Statistics show that most young teens in Illinois do not use drugs. Our goal is to spread awareness of this fact, build self-esteem and encourage healthy lifestyles for our kids.

The *Be Real* message is spread through television public service ads, which are distributed to every Illinois TV station. The ads feature real teens talking in their own words about what being real means to them. Watch for *Be Real* messages in movie theaters as well. Information on *Be Real* was also sent to every Illinois 5th through 8th grade teacher as well as the Boy and Girl Scouts, 4-H and educational associations including the Association of Illinois Middle Schools, Illinois Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers and the Illinois School Health Association.

You are needed to make *Be Real* messages part of teenagers' everyday lives. By making *Be Real* the theme for your Red Ribbon Week celebration you will reinforce and build upon other drug prevention messages, while implementing programs that are not only effective, but meet state learning standards.



Be Real Activities for Red Ribbon Week!

The following easy-to-implement activities and ideas will aid you in making *Be Real* the theme of your Red Ribbon Week observance. These ideas, however, can and should be used throughout the year to keep the *Be Real* prevention message on top of our kids' minds.

Encourage kids to get in the spirit of Red Ribbon Week by having students make their own red ribbons to wear all week. Designate a special *Be Real* day for everyone to wear red and hold an event such as a rally (see below). At the end of the week, recognize the individual or group that shows the most *Be Real* spirit during the course of Red Ribbon Week.

- ★ **Be Real Rally** Organize a youth rally at your school or in your community to promote *Be Real* and prevention messages. Rallies should showcase local kids who are being real, drug-free, as well as feature motivational and prevention speakers. Visit the Coordinating a *Be Real* Rally section of the web site at www.berealteens.com under Teachers/Youth Leaders or Prevention Providers for detailed steps on how to plan your rally.
- ★ **Be Real Mosaic** Divide students or classrooms into groups based on what being real means to them. For each day of Red Ribbon Week, designate a group to bring or take photos of themselves, their classmates or someone in the community, such as a family member, participating in an activity related to *Be Real*. As an alternative to photos, use student drawings, collages or other artwork. At the end of the week, collect the photos and artwork and create a mosaic showing the diverse talents and interests of students, their families and community members. Unveil the mosaic at your *Be Real* rally where it can serve as a "monument" to student potential for the rest of the school year.
- ★ **Be Real School Review** Have teachers share and discuss *Be Real* themes and what it means to be real to yourself, family, friends and community. Invite individuals or groups to create, rehearse and perform a *Be Real* poem, rap, song, skit, dance or cheer. Organize an all-school assembly where students showcase their *Be Real* creative expression.
- ★ **Be Real Wall or Bulletin Board** Throughout Red Ribbon Week, encourage teachers and youth leaders to celebrate the talents and personalities of students, by posting their photos, drawings, essays, drug-free pledges and other *Be Real* projects on classroom or school bulletin boards.
- ★ **Be Real Web Page** Work with your computer teacher and class to develop a *Be Real* page for your school's web site. Include information about what being real means to your school and details about *Be Real* activities and events. Create a link on your school's web site to the *Be Real* home page at www.berealteens.com.
- ★ **Be Real Parent Night** Contact your local substance abuse prevention provider or InTouch coordinator (see the Prevention Resources section of the *Be Real* web site at www.berealteens.com) to organize an education night for parents. They can assist you by providing the names of speakers who can effectively talk to parents on how to communicate with their children about avoiding drugs and the importance of recognizing teen's efforts and successes.
- ★ **Be Real Volunteer** Organize an after school volunteer project such as doing yard clean-up at a local nursing home or park or serving meals at a homeless shelter. Encourage each class to organize their own volunteer activities and recognize the group or individual who shows the most dedication to being real to their community.

To publicize your efforts, be sure to send an alert out to the media the day before your event and a follow-up release afterward (see the Promoting Your Efforts section of the *Be Real* web site at www.berealteens.com for more detailed information).



need help?

On the Internet

The best place to start is our web site at www.berealteens.com. Here you can find valuable information for teens, parents, teachers and youth leaders, and prevention providers.

Additionally, you can find a wide range of prevention resources that are free to Illinois residents through the Lura Lynn Ryan Prevention Research Library at Prevention First Inc. (PFI). This wealth of information can be accessed through PFI's web site at www.prevention.org.

In Your Community

InTouch is a collaborative network of agencies in Illinois that unite communities in preventing alcohol, tobacco and other forms of drug abuse. To find the InTouch coordinator in your area, visit the Prevention Resources section of the *Be Real* web site at www.berealteens.com.

The *Be Real* Drug Prevention Planning Guide can be found on our web site at www.berealteens.com.

The activities are based on the best practices known to work in keeping kids drug free. It includes everything you need to deliver an EFFECTIVE drug prevention message. On the site, you will find prepared lesson plans meeting state learning standards, resources for parents, cool and low-cost *Be Real* give-aways for kids, and ideas for working with the media and other organizations in your community.

PREVENTIONFIRST
I N C O R P O R A T E D