



**NATURAL HIGH'S**

**RED RIBBON WEEK**

**TOOLKIT**

October 23-31

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**A TOOLKIT FOR EDUCATORS**

NATURALHIGH.ORG



Natural High is a youth drug prevention and life skills program that provides easy, effective, and fun resources for educators, mentors, and parents to use with kids.

Our flexible curriculum offers videos, discussion questions, and activities. It can be used to meet a variety of needs, from brief 10-15-minute discussions to project-based work that takes place across multiple days or class periods.

## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS TOOLKIT

• About Natural High .....	3
• How to Use Our Curriculum .....	6
• Red Ribbon Campaign History .....	9
• Social Media Posts .....	10
• Drug-Free Pledge .....	11
• My Natural High Coloring Page .....	13
• Red Ribbon Week Activity Ideas .....	14
• Ways to Get Parents Involved .....	15
• Red Ribbon Week Parent Letter .....	16
• Morning Announcements Scripts .....	17
• Grades 4-12 Lesson Plan .....	19
• Fentapill Lesson .....	33
• Printable Resources on Fentanyl .....	38
• Red Ribbon Merch/Promo Items .....	39

# ABOUT NATURAL HIGH

## BACKGROUND ON NATURAL HIGH

Natural High is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering young people to make good choices and live life well.

Our name 'Natural High' refers to the feeling that comes from finding passions, interests, and talents and cultivating those activities in life that truly inspire us.

Research shows that if young people discover their passions and are directly engaged in a compelling way by people they look up to and trust, they are more likely to make positive life choices and much less likely to choose drugs and alcohol.

## NATURAL HIGH HISTORY

Natural High was founded by entrepreneur Jon Sundt, who lost both of his brothers to drug addiction. After the loss, Jon became determined to turn this experience into positive change and made the decision to spend the rest of his life helping young people make better choices.



What started in tragedy has now grown into a movement bringing hope and positive results to thousands of families.



Watch Jon's story in the Natural High Storyteller Library at [NaturalHigh.org/Storyteller](https://NaturalHigh.org/Storyteller)

## NATURAL HIGH MISSION

Our mission is to inspire and empower youth to find their Natural High and develop the skills and courage to live life well.

# ABOUT NATURAL HIGH

## NATURAL HIGH METHOD

At Natural High, we believe in the power of storytelling. Our online video-based prevention and life-skills program features more than 50 cultural influencers, educators, and peer role models who share personal stories of perseverance, resilience, and making positive choices.

Each storyteller video is paired with ready-to-use discussion questions and activities that help educators and parents engage students in meaningful conversations about substance use and healthy decision-making.

We use powerful stories and practical skills to help young people discover what inspires them. When they focus on these positive pursuits, they are better prepared to make healthy decisions and avoid risky behaviors.



**YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A PREVENTION EXPERT TO TEACH THE CURRICULUM. IT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY ADMINISTERED BY:**

- SAP Advisors
- Science, Health and P.E. Teachers
- Classroom Teachers
- Counselors
- Nurses
- Community Liaisons
- School Resource Officers
- D.A.R.E. Officers
- Parents
- Student Leaders

# THE NATURAL HIGH CURRICULUM

The Natural High curriculum is a highly adaptable collection of teacher resources and student materials that can be customized to meet the needs of students from grades 4-12. Each lesson is built to spark meaningful conversations and help students build skills they can use for life.

## WE OFFER:

- Ready-to-use lessons with videos, discussion questions, and activities
- Skills-based curriculum focused on purpose, decision-making, and goal-setting
- Student-driven, cross-curricular learning that builds literacy, critical thinking, and academic skills across subjects
- Free access for educators with no cost or subscription required
- Flexible implementation that fits any classroom schedule
- Research-aligned approach grounded in positive youth development

## OUR PROGRAM IS SIMPLE AND CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN 3 EASY STEPS:

**STEP 1**  
**WATCH**  
A NATURAL HIGH VIDEO



**STEP 2**  
**DISCUSS**  
TOGETHER AS A GROUP



**STEP 3**  
**GO DEEPER**  
THROUGH FUN ACTIVITIES



### 1. WATCH:

Students watch a short, engaging video featuring a Natural High storyteller. Each video introduces a key concept, skill, or mindset that helps students make healthy choices.

### 2. DISCUSS:

Teachers use simple, ready-to-go discussion questions that invite students to reflect, share their perspectives, and connect the lesson to their own lives.

### 3. GO DEEPER:

Students complete quick, practical activities that help them apply what they've learned, through role-play, goal-setting, and critical thinking exercises.

# OUR CONTENT AND CURRICULUM

Natural High is an inspirational program with strong video content that supports kids in finding their natural high and learning the skills they need to make healthy decisions.

The curriculum helps students understand the dangers of drugs and alcohol and gives them practical strategies to handle peer pressure, build confidence, and stay focused on their goals so they can make choices that support their future.



The curriculum builds key skills and strengths that research shows are essential for positive youth development, with a focus on practical strategies students can use right away.

## NATURAL HIGH'S CURRICULUM FOCUSES ON THESE THEMES:

- Discovering purpose and what motivates them
- Understanding peer influence and the power of role models
- Challenging false beliefs and making informed choices
- Practicing refusal strategies with confidence and respect
- Setting goals and staying focused on their future

## GOALS:

Enduring Understandings:

1. I can identify what gives me purpose and motivation.
2. I understand how peers and role models can influence my choices.
3. I can use facts and critical thinking to make healthy decisions.
4. I know how to say “no” in a way that is confident and respectful.
5. I can stay focused on who I want to become and make choices that align with my goals.

## GOALS CONTINUED:

### Essential Questions:

1. How can discovering my purpose help me make healthy decisions?
2. How do peers and role models influence my choices?
3. How can I confidently say no and stay true to my goals?

### Performance Tasks:

The learning activities include a variety of formative assessments including:

- Discussions
- Question generation
- Role-play and practice scenarios
- Short reflections and goal-setting exercises
- Optional extension activities to connect learning to real life
- Mini teaching and sharing lessons





# THE RED RIBBON CAMPAIGN<sup>®</sup>

## WHAT IS RED RIBBON WEEK?

Red Ribbon Week is a time for schools across the country to engage students in critical dialogues about the importance of making positive life choices and avoiding drug and alcohol use.

The Red Ribbon Campaign is the largest and oldest drug prevention campaign in the nation. Natural High puts together new lesson plans and content for grades 4-12 specifically for The Red Ribbon Campaign each year.

To learn more about the Red Ribbon Campaign, visit [RedRibbon.org](https://www.RedRibbon.org).

## WHY WAS RED RIBBON WEEK STARTED?

The Red Ribbon Week Campaign was created to honor Enrique “Kiki” Camarena. He was a special agent who worked for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In 1985, he was kidnapped by drug traffickers in Guadalajara, Mexico. His murder and death brought anger to the community and was a catalyst for the Red Ribbon Campaign. In 1988, the National Family Partnership coordinated the first National Red Ribbon Week.

Together in Kiki’s honor, parents and youth in communities nationwide began wearing Red Ribbons as a symbol of their commitment to raise awareness around his killing and the destruction caused by drugs in America.

## WHEN IS RED RIBBON WEEK?

Red Ribbon Week takes place each year from October 23-31. This doesn’t always fall on a Monday through Friday, so some schools and communities choose the M-F week before or after.

# SOCIAL MEDIA

Media campaigns can be a powerful force for social change. In general terms, they have great potential to raise awareness of an issue, enhance knowledge and beliefs, and reinforce existing attitudes.

Natural High encourages educators and schools to help spread the word online. Show us what you're doing to celebrate Red Ribbon Week by using #LiveNaturallyHigh. See the examples below, copy the language you want to use on your school's site or social media, and start spreading the message!



We will be re-sharing your social media posts/photos and youth projects with the hashtag #LiveNaturallyHigh on Natural High's social media channels.

Reminder: It's a good idea to get parent consent if you share on your school's social media page.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS:

Join me in celebrating Red Ribbon Week. Our kids have the right to grow up drug free and thrive – and we have the responsibility to make that happen. Take the pledge:

[NaturalHigh.org/pledge](https://NaturalHigh.org/pledge)

I'm a teacher/parent/caregiver who believes in a thriving future for my students/kids. Join me in celebrating Red Ribbon Week® (October 23-31)

Join us as we celebrate Red Ribbon Week from October 23-31. Thousands of schools across the country use this valuable time to engage students in critical dialogues about the importance of making positive life choices and avoiding drug and alcohol use.

# INSPIRE TEENS TO SAY ‘YES’ TO LIFE

A pledge is an easy, formal promise that has been proven to change behavior. Research shows that people who publicly pledge to do something are 80% more likely to follow through than those who don't. The reason public pledges work is simple — they create social pressure.

Have your students take the pledge to live naturally high at [NaturalHigh.org/pledge](https://NaturalHigh.org/pledge)

## TAKE THE PLEDGE TO LIVE SUBSTANCE-FREE

Signing a pledge, and including friends, a teacher, a parent or guardian, can help keep students accountable for making good decisions.

NATURALHIGH.ORG/PLEDGE

### IDEAS FOR USING THE PLEDGE:

- Have students submit their pledge online at [NaturalHigh.org/pledge](https://NaturalHigh.org/pledge)
- Post pledges around school to show participation in your campaign.
- Download and print the pledge on the next page.
- Distribute the pledge to parents at school events, PTA meetings, or other community events.

**I PROMISE TO SAY “YES” TO LIFE  
AND “NO” TO AN ARTIFICIAL HIGH**

**MY NATURAL HIGH IS**

---

**I PLEDGE TO LIVE NATURALLY HIGH BECAUSE**

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**TAKE THE PLEDGE**

Learn More at [NaturalHigh.org](http://NaturalHigh.org)  
#LIVENATURALLYHIGH



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DRAW YOURSELF DOING YOUR NATURAL HIGH

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IS MY NATURAL HIGH

# RED RIBBON WEEK ACTIVITY IDEAS

1. Set up a Natural High selfie booth. Print out the "[My Natural High is...](#)" page and have students write down their natural high to display in the photo.
2. Use the 'Live Naturally High' theme to create a Poster Contest.
3. Plant the Promise: Celebrate by planting red flower bulbs which bloom in the Spring and serve as a reminder of the importance of a drug free life.
4. Get your PTA involved.
5. Have "wear red" day at school and other spirit days during the week.
6. Incorporate prevention curriculum into classes each day using our lesson plans.
7. Schedule a speaker to speak to the students about the risks associated with drug use.
8. Participate in the Red Ribbon theme contest [redribbon.org/theme/contest/](http://redribbon.org/theme/contest/)
9. Create a classroom wall of student contributed 'natural highs'.
10. Use red material or plastic red cups to spell out the Red Ribbon theme in the school chain link fence.
11. Make small red bows for all students and staff members; wear the red bow everyday during Red Ribbon Week®. Students who wear it every day win a prize.
12. Deliver a drug prevention message every day during the morning announcements. If you have video broadcast announcements, show a Natural High Storyteller video each day during the morning announcements.
13. Create a "Wall of Pledges" on a giant piece of poster paper in the main hallway. Anyone who takes the "Pledge" signs his/her name on the poster.
14. Purchase a [Pledge banner](#) from the Natural High store for students to sign.
15. March around the school grounds chanting the Red Ribbon Theme or organize a walk-a-thon.
16. Schedule a student screening of a [Natural High Storyteller video](#) or the fentanyl PSA at an assembly.
17. Participate in National Prescription Take Back Day in October. Find your local collection site at [DEATakeBack.com](http://DEATakeBack.com)

# 4 WAYS TO GET PARENTS INVOLVED

- 1 Copy and paste Red Ribbon Week info into a parent letter to send home with homework.
- 2 Send the Live Naturally High pledge home with students so parents/caregivers can take the pledge too, demonstrating their commitment to maintaining an open dialogue about the dangers of substance use and the benefits of a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.
- 3 Assign students to watch a Natural High Storyteller video at home with their parent/caregiver and use the discussion questions to have a conversation about drugs and alcohol.
- 4 Get your PTA involved. Have them sponsor an event during Red Ribbon Week.

## PRINT THE NEXT PAGE OR COPY AND PASTE THIS PARENT LETTER.

Changes and edits to this document are welcomed and can be edited directly in Google Docs at the [link](#) below. You will be prompted to make a copy first and may then make your own edits.

NaturalHigh.org/parent-letter



October, 2025

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Did you know that 13 is the average age when kids try alcohol and drugs for the first time? Armed with the right information and concrete strategies, we can support our kids in making good choices.

Each year, National Red Ribbon Week is celebrated from October 23 - 31. Schools and youth support organizations across the country use this time to engage students in dialogues about the importance of making positive life choices and avoiding the temptation to use drugs and alcohol.

This year, your classroom teacher is using the Natural High Red Ribbon Week curriculum. Natural High is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering young people to make good choices and live life well.

Natural High's free, award-winning curriculum is the perfect tool for adult mentors to engage middle school and high school students in:

- Practicing strategies that support making good decisions
- Identifying their passion – aka their 'natural high'
- Developing life skills to help them thrive

Research shows that if young people discover their passions and are directly engaged in a compelling way by people they look up to and trust, they are more likely to make positive life choices and much less likely to choose drugs and alcohol. Natural High supports youth in leading strong and healthy lives by sharing stories of courage, resilience, and the importance of solid relationships with peers and mentors.

We encourage you to talk with your children about what they are learning and discussing. Here are a few prompts to help you get the conversations rolling and engage with your child at home:

- What is one thing you learned with Natural High that surprised you?
- What is one thing you learned that you think I should know?
- What do you think concerns me most when it comes to you and drugs and alcohol?

Thank you for supporting your child as they work through the curriculum. We are excited for your child's involvement and welcome any questions and feedback. For more information or to find a variety of videos and resources to use for starting family conversations, please visit the Natural High website at [www.NaturalHigh.org](http://www.NaturalHigh.org).

Sincerely,

# MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each day read one of the following scripts to celebrate Red Ribbon Week and spread facts on drugs. If you have video announcements, you can use the Natural High script below and show a Storyteller video, or visit [this page from RedRibbon.org for audio-only announcements](http://this.page.from.RedRibbon.org.for.audio-only.announcements).

## DAY 1: SELF-AWARENESS

Good morning! Welcome to the first day of Red Ribbon Week. This year we're focusing on five skills that help you make healthy choices and live drug free.

Today is about self-awareness. That means figuring out what gives you purpose and motivation. We'll watch "The Science of Joy," a short video that explains how doing the things you love, like skating, music, or sports, actually releases natural chemicals in your brain that make you feel good. You don't need drugs for that.

(Show "Science of Joy" video)

What's YOUR natural high?

## DAY 2: SOCIAL AWARENESS

Welcome to day two of Red Ribbon Week!

Today we're talking about social awareness, or how the people and role models around us influence our choices.

We'll hear from muralist Paul Jimenez. He shares how surrounding himself with positive influences and focusing on his passion helped him live drug free and stay true to his dreams.

(Show Paul Jimenez video)

Who inspires you to make positive choices?

# MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS

## DAY 3: RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

We're halfway through Red Ribbon Week. Today is about responsible decision-making, which means looking past false assumptions and using real facts to guide your choices.

In fact, did you know....(Choose [one of the stats](#) below for your school's age group)

- 80% of 8th graders disapprove of regular marijuana use.
- 68% of high school seniors disapprove of regular marijuana use.

Let's hear from Olympic sprinter Queen Harrison. She talks about how making the right decisions on and off the track helped her reach her goals without letting drugs get in the way.

(Show Queen Harrison video)

What's one smart choice you can make today?

## DAY 4: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS/REFUSAL SKILLS

Good morning! Today we're focusing on refusal skills. That means learning how to stand up for yourself and say "no" with confidence.

Basketball pro Mike Conley Jr. will share how he built the confidence to stay true to his values, even when he faced pressure. His story proves that you can be strong, stay drug free, and earn respect.

(Show Mike Conley Jr. video)

How will you stand strong today?

## DAY 5: SELF-MANAGEMENT

It's the last day of Red Ribbon Week! This week you've learned five skills that will help you make healthy choices for life.

Today is about self-management, which means thinking about your future self and making choices that help you get where you want to go. World champion boxer Danyelle Wolf will share how discipline and focus helped her reach her dreams while staying drug free.

(Show Danyelle Wolf video)

What's your natural high and how will it help your future self?

# RED RIBBON WEEK

## LESSON PLANS AND VIDEO PLAYLIST FOR GRADES 4-12

Follow along with our suggested 5-day sequence, or choose your own adventure.

### HOW IT WORKS

STEP 1  
**WATCH**  
A NATURAL HIGH VIDEO



STEP 2  
**DISCUSS**  
TOGETHER AS A GROUP



STEP 3  
**GO DEEPER**  
THROUGH FUN ACTIVITIES



## DAY 1 LESSON PLAN



### THE SCIENCE OF JOY AND 'HIGHS'

#### SELF-AWARENESS

Learn how the brain reacts to different highs (natural and artificial). Our whiteboard videos make this science super straightforward and engaging. We suggest you start with video 1 below, or you can watch all 3 (9 min total) – they're short and will keep the conversation flowing.

STEP 1  
**WATCH**  
2 MIN 48 SEC



#### WAYS TO WATCH

Go to [naturalhigh.org/playlists/the-brains-response-to-artificial-and-natural-highs/](https://naturalhigh.org/playlists/the-brains-response-to-artificial-and-natural-highs/)



# RED RIBBON WEEK

## STEP 2 DISCUSS

10-15 MIN



## DAY 1 LESSON PLAN: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### THE SCIENCE OF JOY AND 'HIGHS'

Self-Awareness



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO:

#### Question #1:

What's something you love doing that makes you feel proud or alive?

#### Question #2:

How does having a passion help protect you from risky choices?

#### Question #3:

Why is it important to know what feels rewarding or exciting to you?

# WHAT'S YOUR NATURAL HIGH?

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

10–15 minutes

### Materials

Paper (print the [included template](#) on the following pages in black/white or color)

Markers/Pencils/Pens

### Activity Description

Take a moment to think about what gives you a natural high. It could be something you love to do or are just starting to explore. Then, proudly share it.

It's a way to show who you are and what inspires you.

### Suggested Steps

1. Take a moment to reflect. What's one thing you do that makes you feel excited, peaceful, strong, or free?

2. Grab a piece of paper (or the template) that says:

"\_\_\_\_\_ Is My Natural High"

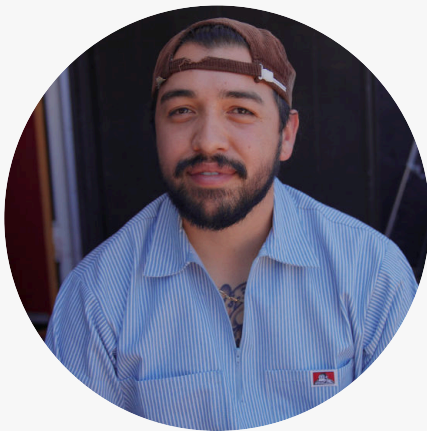
3. In the big blank space above the sentence, show us what it is!

- Draw it
- Write about it
- Add symbols or designs
- Make it yours



# RED RIBBON WEEK

## DAY 2 LESSON PLAN



### PAUL JIMENEZ - MURALIST

#### SOCIAL AWARENESS

Every choice you make shapes your future, including who you spend time with. The people around you matter. They can lift you up or lead you in the wrong direction. Positive influences are important. When you choose friends and role models who reflect your values, you are building a clearer picture of the person you want to become

#### STEP 1 WATCH

6 MIN 31 SEC



#### WAYS TO WATCH

Go to [naturalhigh.org/storyteller/paul-jimenez](https://naturalhigh.org/storyteller/paul-jimenez)



# RED RIBBON WEEK

## STEP 2 DISCUSS

10-15 MIN



## DAY 2 LESSON PLAN: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PAUL JIMENEZ - MURALIST

Social Awareness



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO:

Question #1:

Who do you look up to and why?

Question #2:

Paul admitted he used to get high to fit in, but it didn't feel right. Have you ever felt that same pressure to go along with friends, even when you didn't want to?

Question #3:

How can YOU be a positive role model?

# WALK IN THEIR SHOES

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

10–15 minutes

### Materials

Paper and pen/pencil

Optional: whiteboard or projector for sharing responses

### Activity Description

In this activity, you'll think about someone you admire and imagine what it would be like to spend a day in their shoes. You'll reflect on what makes them a good role model and how you might follow their example in your own life.

### Suggested Steps

1. Pick someone you look up to. It can be a friend, family member, coach, teacher, athlete, or artist — anyone whose choices and actions inspire you.
2. Take a few quiet minutes to respond to the prompts below. Write your answers on a piece of paper.
  - *If I walked in [Name]'s shoes for a day, I'd learn to...*
  - *They influence me because...*
  - *One way I can follow their example is...*
  - *What's one quality of a role model that matters most to you, and how can you build that into your own life?*



# RED RIBBON WEEK

## DAY 3 LESSON PLAN



### QUEEN HARRISON - OLYMPIC RUNNER

#### RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Sometimes we assume that everyone is doing it, but that is not true.

Most young people choose to live drug free. When you learn the facts instead of going along with what you think others are doing, you start to see things more clearly. Misinformation can twist your view, but when you shift your perspective, the real picture becomes clear. Understanding the truth helps you make smarter choices that reflect who you really are.

STEP 1  
**WATCH**  
5 MIN 55 SEC



#### WAYS TO WATCH

Go to [naturalhigh.org/storyteller/queen-harrison](https://naturalhigh.org/storyteller/queen-harrison)



# RED RIBBON WEEK

STEP 2  
**DISCUSS**  
10-15 MIN



## DAY 3 LESSON PLAN: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**QUEEN HARRISON - OLYMPIC RUNNER**

Responsible Decision-Making



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO:

Question #1:

What's a myth you've heard about drugs or alcohol?

Question #2:

How does it feel to know most teens actually don't use them?

Question #3:

Why is it important to know the truth?

# WHAT YOU BELIEVE VS. WHAT'S TRUE

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

10–15 minutes

### Materials

Internet access

Kahoot! quiz link: [bit.ly/social-norms-kahoot-quiz](https://bit.ly/social-norms-kahoot-quiz)

### Activity Description

A lot of people think “everyone” is vaping, drinking, or using drugs, but that’s usually not true. In this activity, you’ll take a quick Kahoot! quiz to see what you believe about teen behavior, and compare it to what the research actually says.

You might be surprised by how much most teens aren’t doing.

### Suggested Steps

1. Join the Kahoot! Quiz: Use the link or the game code your teacher gives you to join the Kahoot!
  - Start the quiz here: [bit.ly/social-norms-kahoot-quiz](https://bit.ly/social-norms-kahoot-quiz)

The quiz will ask questions like:

- How many teens actually drink alcohol?
- What percent of students vape regularly?
- What do most teens really do at parties?

2. Think about your answers. As you play, notice:

- Which answers surprised you?
- Which ones matched what you expected?
- Why do you think so many people get this wrong?

**Note:** The data used in this quiz comes from the **2024 Monitoring the Future survey**, based on national results from **12th grade students**. You can explore the full report here:

<https://monitoringthefuture.org/data/bx-by/drug-prevalence/#drug=%22%22>

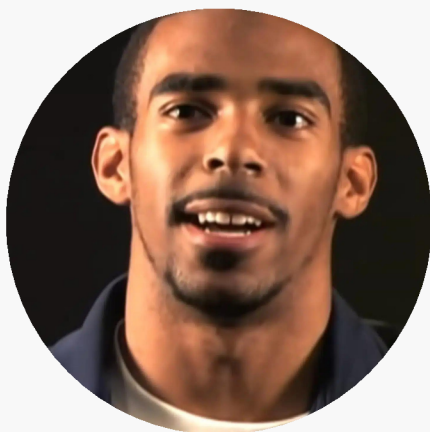


# RED RIBBON WEEK

## DAY 4 LESSON PLAN

### MIKE CONLEY JR. - BASKETBALL PLAYER

#### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS



It is easier to make good choices when you have a plan.

Knowing how you will respond in tough situations helps you stay calm and confident. Learning to say no puts you in control. When you speak up and stay true to yourself, you make choices that reflect who you are and what you believe in. Refusal skills help you set strong boundaries, even when it is hard. They are what hold everything together.

#### STEP 1

#### WATCH

3 MIN 1 SEC



#### WAYS TO WATCH

Go to [naturalhigh.org/storyteller/mike-conley-jr](https://naturalhigh.org/storyteller/mike-conley-jr)



# RED RIBBON WEEK

STEP 2  
**DISCUSS**  
10-15 MIN



## DAY 4 LESSON PLAN: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**MIKE CONLEY JR. — PRO BASKETBALL PLAYER**

Relationship Skills



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO:

Question #1:

Why is it hard to say no sometimes?

Question #2:

What are ways to say no with confidence?

Question #3:

How can values help guide your choices?

# PRACTICE = PREPARED

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

10–15 minutes

### Materials

Paper (review the 10 refusal types on the following pages)

Markers/Pencils/Pens

### Activity Description

Sometimes you might feel pressure to do something that doesn't feel right, like trying a vape, skipping class, or making fun of someone.

That's called peer pressure, when you feel pushed to do something just to fit in. It can be spoken or unspoken, and it's not always obvious. Maybe someone says something directly, or maybe it's just a look or being left out.

Either way, it can be tough. But there are lots of ways to say no and stay true to yourself. This activity will help you figure out how.

### Suggested Steps

1. On the next page, you'll see a list of 10 ways to say "no". These are called refusal skills: different strategies you can use when someone tries to pressure you into doing something you don't want to do.

2. Take a few minutes to read through the list. Which one feels the most natural or easiest for you to use? As you read, ask yourself:

*"Which one of these would I actually use in real life?"*

3. Come up with 1 or 2 things you could say if someone pressures you to do something you don't want to do.

Write them down on a piece of paper. These are your go-to phrases if someone ever pressures you to do something you don't want to do.

These can be real excuses, quick one-liners, or anything that helps you say no. There's no right or wrong answer, just pick one that feels like it fits your personality or would be easiest to try.

Try to memorize them or hang them somewhere you'll see often, like your notebook, locker, or mirror, as a reminder that you always have a way to say no.



## 10 Types of Refusal Skills

Use these strategies when you feel pressured to do something you don't want to do. Everyone has a way that feels most natural. Find the one that works **for you!**

### 1. Say 'No Thanks'

Say no politely but firmly. Make eye contact.

- Example: 'No thanks, I'm not into that.'

### 2. Give a Reason, Fact, or Excuse

Give a real or made-up excuse.

- Example: "I can't. My parents will be awake when I get home and they'll ground me." or 'I have a game tomorrow.'

### 3. Use Humor

Make a light joke to deflect.

- Example: 'No way, I need all my brain cells!'

### 4. Change the Subject / Suggest an Alternative

Redirect the conversation.

- Example: 'Let's go get food instead.'

### 5. Walk Away

Physically remove yourself.

- Example: Say 'No' and leave.

### 6. Broken Record

Repeat your 'No' calmly.

- Example: 'No, I'm good. Nope. Still no.'

### 7. Cold Shoulder / Ignore

Don't respond or change who you're talking to.

- Example: Look away and pretend to be busy texting.

### 8. Avoid the Situation

Don't go where you know there might be pressure.

### 9. Have an Escape Plan

Set a signal with a parent/friend to call or pick you up.

- Example: You feel uncomfortable, so you text a code word to your parent who then calls and says they need to pick you up.

### 10. Strength in Numbers

Stay close to friends who also say no. It's easier together.

- Example: You bring a friend with you that will also refuse if peer pressure arises.



# RED RIBBON WEEK

## DAY 5 LESSON PLAN

### DANYELLE WOLF - CHAMPION BOXER

#### SELF-MANAGEMENT

Your values, identity, and support system help you stay strong and make healthy choices.

When you focus on the person you want to become, it helps you make better choices today. Your values and goals can guide you through stress and pressure. Life is a puzzle, and each choice is a piece that helps you build a life of purpose, passion, and pride — drug free.



STEP 1  
**WATCH**  
3 MIN 41 SEC



#### WAYS TO WATCH

Go to [naturalhigh.org/storyteller/danyelle-wolf](https://naturalhigh.org/storyteller/danyelle-wolf)



# RED RIBBON WEEK

STEP 2  
**DISCUSS**  
10-15 MIN



## DAY 5 LESSON PLAN: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**DANYELLE WOLF – CHAMPION BOXER**

Self-Management



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO:

Question #1:

Who do you want to be in 5 years?

Question #2:

What choices would help that future-you become real?

Question #3:

Who in your life helps you stay true to your values?

# A LETTER FROM YOUR FUTURE SELF

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

10–15 minutes

### Materials

Paper

Marker/Pencil/Pen

### Activity Description

It's easy to get caught up in today, but what if you could hear from the version of you that's already made it?

In this activity, you'll imagine your future self living the life you want and write a letter to the person you are right now. Think of it like advice from your biggest supporter: you.

### Suggested Steps

1. Write a short letter from your future self to your current self. Picture the future you as someone who has reached your goals and is living a life you're proud of.

In your letter, include:

- Advice your future self would give you
- What you're doing now that's helping you reach your goals
- What might get in the way or hold you back
- How your future self would cheer you on to stay focused and strong



# FENTAPILL LESSON

## TIME NEEDED

30-40 minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Digital Projector

Access to YouTube (if you choose)

Kahoot! (if you choose)

## DESCRIPTION

Kids need to learn the facts about fake prescription pills. The DEA seized 60+ million fake prescription pills in 2024, and they found that [5 in 10 pills](#) were laced with lethal amounts of fentanyl (aka "fentapills"). In this lesson, which can be done all at once or in different segments, students will review a short educational video and/or information sheet on the risks of fentanyl and take a quiz on the life-saving facts.

## SUGGESTED STEPS

Step 1: Watch the video about Fentapills from the organization Song for Charlie.

Link to video: [bit.ly/fentapill-SFC](https://bit.ly/fentapill-SFC)

Step 2: Read this to the class (or have a volunteer read it):

Fentanyl is a potent prescription synthetic opioid drug approved by the FDA for pain relief and anesthetic. Prescription opioids are powerful drugs with a high risk for dependency. Fentanyl is 80-100 times stronger than morphine. A potentially lethal dose of fentanyl is as small as 2 grains of salt.

While you should be concerned about all substance use, fentanyl is different because it's so deadly. According to data from the Center for Disease Control, in 2020 there was a 560% increase in overdose deaths fueled by fentanyl. In the illicit drug market, fentanyl is being mixed with other drugs, such as cocaine, oxycodone, and Adderall. Criminal drug networks are flooding the market with fake pills and other drugs laced with fentanyl. Kids aren't intentionally looking for fentanyl, and they're unaware it's been added to the substances they're seeking. As a result, the surge in fentanyl is claiming many young lives through poisoning at a staggering rate.

Next, show the Fentanyl Fact Sheet (English and Spanish), found at [bit.ly/NHFentapillFacts](https://bit.ly/NHFentapillFacts), and ask for volunteers to read the different fact points to the entire class.

Discuss: Break students into pairs or small groups of 3-4, and show these questions on the screen, or write them down:

- ***What's surprising or shocking to you about what you just learned?***
- ***What do you think is the most effective way to inform students about the dangers of Fentanyl and Fentapills? What doesn't work?***
- ***Why do you think some kids would still take the risk of taking pills – even if they don't know what's in them?***

### Step 3: Quiz Time

Give students 5-10 minutes to read the [Fentapill Fact Sheet](#) and learn the content. Then take the quiz. You can either do this online quiz using Kahoot!, [bit.ly/fentapills-quiz](https://bit.ly/fentapills-quiz), or we've created a quiz you can simply print out on the following page.

A few notes about Kahoot

- Before hosting a Kahoot! session, test for possible connectivity issues at your venue at least a few days beforehand. This will give you time to work with your IT team to fix any issues discovered.
- The number of players in your Kahoot! session will be the number on the plan you have. Free educator Kahoot! accounts allow for up to 40 players per game. Create a free educator account at [Kahoot.com](https://kahoot.com).
- You can host and play any of the Natural High Kahoot! games, but you are unable to duplicate and/or edit our games.

## DIG DEEPER WITH NATURAL HIGH'S FENTANYL PSA

Natural High produced a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to address awareness for kids, educators, parents, and caregivers on the dangers of fentanyl. Some content in this film may not be appropriate for kids under 11, so please watch ahead of time to see if it will be appropriate for your class.

[Watch the fentanyl PSA here.](#)

The PSA is a 6-minute short film that can be shown to a classroom or in a full assembly. We encourage you to watch the film as a group and have a discussion using our [Film Screening Guide](#) and toolkit.

## HAVE STUDENTS CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION AT HOME

Resources for parents and caregivers on fentanyl:

- A guide for parents: How To Talk To Kids About Fentanyl can be found here in English and Spanish at [bit.ly/NHFentanylConvoGuide](https://bit.ly/NHFentanylConvoGuide)
- A parent send-home letter can be found in a Google doc at [bit.ly/fentanyl-letter](https://bit.ly/fentanyl-letter). Feel free to make a copy and edit for your own purposes.

# FENTAPILL QUIZ KEY

Printable quiz on following page

1. How many people died from drug poisoning in 2023?  
d. More than 100,000 people
2. Fake pills are easy to identify.  
False
3. There are 2 types of fentanyl: Pharmaceutical fentanyl and \_\_\_\_?  
b. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF)
4. What is Nalaxone?  
b. A life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose from opioids
5. Illicitly-made fentanyl is mixed with which drugs?  
d. Fentanyl has been found in all of these and more
6. Why is fentanyl found in other drugs?  
d. All of the above
7. How many fake pills out of 10 are found to contain a lethal dose of fentanyl?  
d. 5
8. What are some worrying signs of potential overdose?  
e. All of the above
9. What does fentanyl smell like?  
d. Nothing
10. Kids have died from taking a pill they were promised to not have fentanyl.  
True
11. If you have a friend who might have ingested fentanyl, you should:  
b. Call 911 immediately
12. If someone takes a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl, they have no chance for survival.  
False

# FENTAPILL QUIZ

1. How many people died from drug poisoning in 2023?
  - a. None
  - b. More than 1 million people
  - c. Only a few thousand
  - d. More than 100,000 people
2. Fake pills are easy to identify.  
True or False
3. There are 2 types of fentanyl: Pharmaceutical fentanyl and \_\_\_\_?
  - a. Synthetic fentanyl
  - b. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl (IMF)
  - c. Placebo fentanyl
  - d. Cartel fentanyl
4. What is Nalaxone?
  - a. A new cryptocurrency
  - b. A life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose from opioids
  - c. An illegal drug
  - d. A fake word
5. Illicitly-made fentanyl is mixed with which drugs?
  - a. Adderall
  - b. Xanax
  - c. Oxycodone
  - d. Fentanyl has been found in all of these and more
6. Why is fentanyl found in other drugs?
  - a. It's cheaper to make
  - b. It's more addictive
  - c. It's more powerful
  - d. All of the above

7. How many fake pills out of 10 are found to contain a lethal dose of fentanyl?
- a. 4
  - b. 1
  - c. 8
  - d. 5
8. What are some worrying signs of potential overdose?
- a. Falling asleep or losing consciousness
  - b. Choking or gurgling sounds
  - c. Limp body
  - d. Discolored skin (especially in lips and nails)
  - e. All of the above
9. What does fentanyl smell like?
- a. Bleach
  - b. Roses
  - c. Chocolate
  - d. Nothing
10. Kids have died from taking a pill they were promised to not have fentanyl.  
True or False
11. If you have a friend who might have ingested fentanyl, you should:
- a. Wait it out
  - b. Call 911 immediately
  - c. Hope for the best
12. If someone takes a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl, they have no chance for survival.  
True or False

# FENTANYL

## RESOURCE LIST

[NATURALHIGH.ORG/FENTANYL-RESOURCES](https://NATURALHIGH.ORG/FENTANYL-RESOURCES)

### FENTANYL FACT SHEET

A printable infographic (paper size: 8.5" x 14") with everything you need to know about Fentanyl. Available in English and Spanish.



### FENTAPILL FACT SHEET

A printable infographic (paper size: 8.5" x 14") with everything you need to know about fake pills, AKA “fentapills”. Available in English and Spanish.



### GUIDE: HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KID ABOUT FENTANYL

A 1-page PDF downloadable guide with fentanyl information and conversation starters for parents and caregivers. Available in English and Spanish.



### FILM SCREENING GUIDE

Our guide provides everything you need to share this critical short film with your kids, students, and community – including ideas for showing the film. Available only in English.





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Your purchase will further the mission to help students make more thoughtful decisions about the choices they make for their future, and all proceeds from our store go directly to our efforts to reach more students and more schools.