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Alaska Schools Celebrate Healthy Choices Through Red Ribbon Week Door Decorating Contest

October 2, 2026, Anchorage, Alaska — The Alaska Department of Health, in collaboration with Governor Mike Dunleavy, invites schools across Alaska to participate in the Third Annual Red Ribbon Week Door Decorating Contest and show how healthy choices can make a difference in their schools and communities.

Red Ribbon Week, observed October 23 - 31, is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention campaign. This year's theme, "Make a Difference. Be a Hero. Stay Drug Free.," encourages young people to recognize that choosing to live drug-free is an act of leadership and courage and that their everyday choices can have a positive influence on others.

The 2026 theme was created by Griswold Middle School student Ava Tackett of Griswold, Connecticut, with guidance from her health teacher, Kristen Butremavic. Tackett developed the theme around the idea that young people can be heroes to others by making healthy choices and inspiring their friends and families to do the same.

"Being a hero can start with the choices we make every day and the example we set for the people around us," said Alaska Department of Health Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. "This year's Red Ribbon Week theme reminds Alaska's young people that they have the power to make a difference in their schools, families, and communities. Through this contest, we want students to have fun, be creative, and recognize that choosing a healthy, drug-free life is one way they can lead and inspire others."

Teachers and students are encouraged to bring the theme to life by decorating classroom doors with original artwork and messages showing what it means to make a difference, be a hero, and stay drug-free. Door decorating is among the school activities recommended by the national Red Ribbon Campaign to engage students in prevention education.

[Read Governor's Proclamation.](#)

Prizes

- An Amazon gift card for the winning door design in each age group, and other special prizes

- Featured doors on Alaska Department of Health social media channels

How to enter

- Submit photos or videos of decorated doors by October 31, 2026, using the Department of Health's online submission [form](#).
- Additional Red Ribbon Week resources and activities for schools and families are available at <https://www.redribbon.org/resources>

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