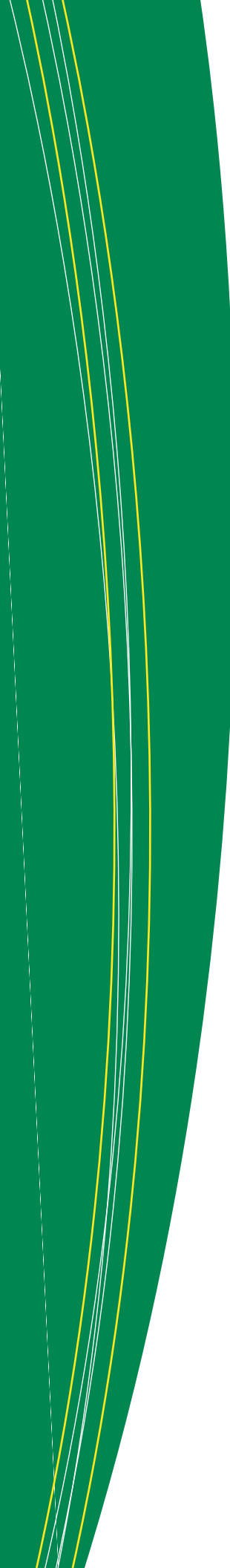


Texas Association Against Sexual Assault
GREEN RIBBON WEEK



Taking Action, Ending Oppression
RESOURCE PACKET



The 2009 Green Ribbon Week resource packet is a collection of tools and information designed to help you have a successful Green Ribbon Week in your community's schools. The things included in this packet are suggestions. You are free to use them in any way you see fit. We realize that Green Ribbon Week will look very different across the state. We encourage you to make your version of Green Ribbon Week engaging, fun and most importantly, educational. At the same time we suggest knowing your limitations - especially if this is your first time to host a Green Ribbon Week. Be realistic with your ambitions and expectations so you are not overwhelmed. Lay a solid foundation for growth and success so that Green Ribbon Week can be a part of your work year after year.

Included in this packet are:

- Preparation Timeline
- Sample Agenda
- Sample Activities
- Sample Announcements

If there are resources or information that you think would be helpful to include in future resource packets, please email your suggestions to Ted Rutherford at trutherford@taasa.org.

Preparation Timeline

February 2009

Early in the month:

- Schedule and plan a meeting regarding Green Ribbon Week with school administration
- Plan a meeting with individuals (teachers, STAR group, other campus organizations) who will help with the planning stage of Green Ribbon Week to discuss your initial plans and how to recruit student participants
- Lay out a sketch of potential activities that you would like to implement at your school or in your community

Mid-month (after initial meeting with administration):

- Begin recruiting student involvement for the various activities during Green Ribbon Week
- Schedule meetings with community leaders (if applicable) to ask for support and/or assistance in the planning of the week
- Send out an email to faculty letting them know of your intent to have Green Ribbon Week, ask for support and see if they have any suggestions or feedback to make the week successful

Late in the month:

- Finalize the outline for Green Ribbon Week; ensure that you have ample number of participants, if not, work with students, faculty and administration to generate more interest
- Have students create committees and designate committee chairs for the specific days/activities with which they would like to help during Green Ribbon Week

*****February 27—GREEN RIBBON WEEK BRACELET ORDER FORM DUE!!!!**

March 2009

Early in the month:

- Buy the supplies that you will need for the various Green Ribbon Week activities
- Have students assist in making a schedule of each day during Green Ribbon Week and the tasks that will be necessary in order to make that day a success
- Hand out the schedule to the students involved, and to school administration
- Send out an email to faculty with the finalized schedule for Green Ribbon Week

Mid-month:

- Begin advertising (via posters, announcements, etc.) about activities such as the poetry or poster contest and/or the “Green Out” event to generate support (if applicable)
- Plan a poster party with the students involved in Green Ribbon Week to make the posters that will be hung on campus during the week, ask students to do some research in advance to decide what will be written on the posters

One week prior:

- Hang a few posters around campus in preparation for Green Ribbon Week
- Late in the week send out instructions for teachers for any activities that they will be conducting in class (e.g., messages of peace pledge, STAR educational presentations)

Green Ribbon Week—March 30 – April 3, 2009:

- Hang posters on campus that Monday morning
- Have a great and successful week!

Sample Activities

This section of the packet contains reproducible materials and activity ideas for individual groups and schools to customize their own Green Ribbon Week.

Feel free to utilize as many or as few of the activities as you like. You can make copies of materials and distribute them as needed. Be creative in your approach and modify the activities and materials in order to best fit the needs of the school and the community.

If you have any questions or need additional instructions for any of the activities, feel free to contact Ted Rutherford, TAASA Youth Outreach Specialist at 1-888-91-TAASA, ext. 34, or trutherford@taasa.org.

Outreach and Education Ideas

Statistical/Informational Signs: Using butcher paper or poster board, create signs to hang around campus that contain statistics and information related to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Focus on including information that is especially relevant to the age group of the students in that particular school. Have the students involved think of creative, appropriate ways to make the signs eye-catching. Smaller signs can be produced by hand or on the computer to distribute to teachers or to hang in places where space is more limited (e.g., bathroom stalls).

Another option is to use sidewalk chalk and have students chalk various informational statistics and phrases around campus in areas where pedestrian traffic is common. Recent statistics on sexual assault can be found on our website (www.taasa.org) or the website for the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (www.rainn.org).

Teen Safety Cards: Prepare wallet-sized cards, using the template on our website, to distribute to students with their ribbons or bracelets or following the STAR presentations. These cards can be printed six to an 8 ½"x11" piece of cardstock or paper. To save money, solicit an area Kinko's or other printing company to print the cards for free. Encourage students to take as many of the cards as necessary to share with family and friends. It may be helpful to leave a supply of cards in the counseling office and nurses' office for students to pick up at their convenience. The template for the safety cards can be found on our website at www.taasa.org/star/green_ribbon.php. If you would like to include the phone number for your local rape crisis center, there is a place on the card for you to do that.

Critiquing Mass Media Messages: Critique messages from TV, radio, magazines, movies, billboards and other advertisements. Discuss with classmates how these messages may or may not reflect the principles of equality, respect, dignity and non-violence. You can have students bring their own examples, or you can provide examples for them. Here are some examples of what to look for and discuss:

- Examples of power and control such as women positioned in a way that makes them appear vulnerable and/or inferior to men
- Examples of the objectification of women and men

- Examples that support myths about sexual assault (e.g., victim blaming, “she was playing hard to get.”)
- Examples that enforce rigid, sexist gender roles
- Examples of respectful relationships built on equality

Another option is to select a current movie that deals with the issue of sexual violence and other related issues. (You may want to consult with a group of students who may have input on popular movies with such content.) Edit a clip or clips of the movie to be shown on the school closed-circuit television during a set class period or advisory. Ensure that the clip is reasonable in length (between 5 and 8 minutes is best) and does not have excessively graphic or offensive content. Prepare, in advance, discussion questions for the teachers to use with their classes following the viewing of the clip. These questions should involve the incidence of sexual assault or violence in the clip and the response students have to watching the clip. Distribute the questions to the teachers either the day before or that morning so the information is accessible to them. Below are some sample questions.

1. What are your overall impressions of the movie or clip? What did you like? What didn't you like?
2. Do the scene portrayed and the actions of the characters seem realistic?
3. How is it similar to or different from your own experiences?
4. What is the message in the movie or clip about relationships, or about how males and/or females are “supposed” to act?
5. How would you have acted differently if you were in the situation in the movie or clip? (Have students role play how they could have acted differently to give them a chance to practice.)

Toxic Tunes: Music is an important way we relate to and make sense of our world. We have songs that take us back to a great experience we've had, songs we listen to cheer us up and songs we listen to help us release our anger. The messages we receive through music can reach us in ways that presentations, conversations, and other media forms (TV, movies, etc.) can't. It is, therefore, important to examine the messages we receive about equality and respect, or the lack thereof, from the music we listen to. Have students pick out a few of their favorite songs (make sure to choose a selection of songs from different styles of music – rap, R&B, country, rock, etc.) and print out the lyrics. (You may want to have the students turn in the lyrics before you choose songs for the entire class to critique to check for inappropriate content.) Have the entire class listen to the song once through, then hand out the lyrics and play the song again, encouraging the students to follow along with the lyrics and really think about the message in the lyrics. Facilitate a discussion about the message of the lyrics. Below are some possible discussion questions.

1. Is there a strong statement made about gender roles (how men and/or women “should” act) in the song? If so, what is the possible problem or impact of believing that statement?
 2. What is some of the language used to refer to men and women in the song? Is the language respectful?
 3. What is the message about relationships or how people relate to one another? Again, does this message support respect and equality or put people down?
 4. Does anyone in the song seem to have power over another individual? How is the power used? How does the power difference affect the relationship?
- Do negative messages in the music we listen to affect the way we look at our

world and treat other people? What can you do to challenge negative messages in music? How can we find positive messages in the music we listen to? (It might be good to have the class generate a list of some artists whose messages seem to promote dignity and respect.)

Note: You are likely to have at least one student tell you that they don't listen to the lyrics – that they just like the music. Challenge them on this thinking. Music and lyrics are a powerful learning tool – remember how you learned your ABCs.

Students Taking Action for Respect Educational Presentations: Designate one day of the week to have STAR peer educators provide educational presentations on sexual violence to individual classes. Plan for the speakers to present for the entire day and have the teachers sign up to have a speaker in their class on a first-come, first-serve basis. This is an outstanding opportunity to generate interest in the STAR group and could potentially increase membership and participation.

Mix It Up Day: Designate one day as a “Mix It Up” day where students blur social boundaries by talking to different people or sitting at a different table during their lunch period. For more information about Mix It Up and free resources go to www.tolerance.org/teens.

Green Ribbon Pizza Party

Have a Green Ribbon Pizza Party to reward outstanding participation in a specific aspect of Green Ribbon Week. For example, reward the advisory class that has the most participants in the “Green Out” or who has the most students wearing their bracelets on a designated day. Keep in mind that the pizza party can also be a good opportunity for outreach and education.

Ending Oppression through Symbolic Expressions

Messages of Peace Pledge: Distribute green bracelets to every teacher in the school to pass out to their class during a designated class period or during advisory period. When the teachers pass out the ribbons to the students, have them read some statistics about sexual assault and the following pledge:

I pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about sexual harassment or any other kind of sexual violence. I will treat those around me with dignity and respect, and take a stand for fair treatment for all. I commit to doing my best to support those who experience sexual assault, not to blame them for being targeted for abuse, and to report sexual abuse to the proper authorities, so that everyone involved can get the help and support they need and deserve, as well as to help create a safe community for us all.

Ask students to write a message of peace to their peers – an encouragement to take action for respect and equality. Ask them to sign their name on the ribbon as a symbol of their commitment to the pledge. Students may simply sign their name on the ribbon if they do not feel comfortable writing a message.

After the ribbons have been completed, have them picked up from the classrooms or

delivered to a previously determined spot on campus where the ribbons will be tied or hung and displayed throughout the week. The ribbons could be tied on a podium or “tower,” on a fence outside of the school, or pinned to a bulletin board or other type of display case. Ideally it will be somewhere that students pass with frequency to allow them the opportunity to read the messages and keep the week on their mind. Create a poster that says “Messages of Peace.” You may also have a larger copy of the pledge on display (perhaps on a large poster board or banner) to remind the students of their commitment.

Art, Poetry, Essay and/or Slogan Contest

This section includes guidelines for a contest that can be organized by school teachers, student organizations or community members. This is an opportunity for creative expression through which students may share concerns and tell their stories using graphic art, essays, poetry, bookmark designs or a slogan to be used as a theme for the community’s ongoing efforts to prevent sexual violence. Possible themes include:

Fair treatment for all	Respect
Healthy relationships	Speaking out against sexual assault
Breaking gender stereotypes	School violence
Sexism	Acting for equality

Depending on the type of contest you choose to organize, prepare registration forms for the entrants detailing all specifications for their entry. Teachers can assist students in identifying areas of the school code of conduct that are pertinent to the theme of the contest, which may be included in the student’s work. Judges for the contest can be prominent members of your community, including the school principal, superintendent or the executive director of the local rape crisis center. If you don’t have a budget that allows you to purchase prizes for the contest, ask local businesses if they would be willing to donate a prize. For example, local restaurants may offer gift certificates or movie theaters may offer free movie passes.

Getting the Word Out

Make sure to target your audience with age-appropriate letters and flyers. Reach beyond the school and contact local newspapers, community newsletters and local youth organizations to help you spread the word. (See media section for more information on how to do that).

Releases

Be certain to provide students and parents with a media release form; this will allow you to keep all art and written entries for future use and will allow you to announce and recognize the artists publicly, if desired. In the release, include information about how materials might be used.

Recognition/Distribution

In addition to using local newsletters, newspapers or magazines, the entries could also be reprinted in youth organization newsletters and in your program’s future publications. Graphic designs could be used for bookmarks, mouse pads, agency calendars,

school book covers or banners. Remember, both the students and the schools deserve recognition. Groups such as Partners in Education and school parent networks may also help with recognition activities.

Another opportunity to allow the winners of the contest to showcase their work would be to host, for example, a poetry slam or an art exhibition. At the end of the week a poetry slam could be planned to provide the winners with an opportunity to share their work with their peers.

Organize a “Green Out”

Organize a “Green Out” to emphasize the importance of addressing sexual violence issues in high schools. For a “Green Out,” all students and school personnel are asked to dress in green, signifying unity and solidarity for the fight to end sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Another option would be to organize a teacher vs. student softball or basketball game, in which all of the participants and attendants are encouraged to wear green. Posters and other information can be displayed during the game and perhaps a portion of the proceeds from ticket sales could benefit the local crisis center. This could also be done during school hours by selecting a specific day during Green Ribbon Week to hold the Green Out.

Other Things to Consider:

- Print green t-shirts to sell as a fundraiser for your STAR program or rape crisis center
- Hand out green ribbon week bracelets to all participants of the green out
- Distribute information about services available at your local rape crisis center
- Distribute information about how the community can help end sexual violence

Partnership With Other Community Members

The “Green Out” may be a great opportunity to involve other local schools, colleges, agencies or businesses in Green Ribbon Week. Contact one of these other organizations and explain to them the premise of the week and the “Green Out.” Invite them to ask their students, employees, members, etc. to join you for the “Green Out” event. Announce their participation and thank them for their support of Green Ribbon Week.

Another Option: Go Pink

Two seniors in a high school in Canada organized over one hundred of their classmates to wear pink shirts to school a week after a new male student to the school was harassed for wearing a pink shirt. Take the idea of the “Green Out” and go pink, urging the male students in your school to wear pink on a given day as a gesture to challenge gender stereotypes.

It’s Scheduled...Now What?

Once you secure cooperation for the “Green Out” from school officials, be certain to let the press know about this display of support for Green Ribbon Week and the valuable partnership between the local rape crisis center and the host school. An activity like this makes a great visual for television cameras and for generating more awareness community-wide.

Other Creative Ideas

DISTRIBUTE:

- Brochures or flyers from your local rape crisis center with information about sexual assault and sexual harassment
- Pens and/or pencils with respect or anti-violence messages printed on them
- Bookmarks with statistics or prevention information about sexual assault or sexual harassment
- TAASA posters

SET-UP:

- Information booths or tables in the cafeteria one day during the week with representatives from the local rape crisis center, along with other community agencies
- Window displays in the library, main office and other locations on campus with pictures, statistics, and other information about sexual assault

ORGANIZE:

- Church bells ringing throughout town at an appointed time or on a specific day that week
- Pledges from adults and community leaders to observe Green Ribbon Week and to speak out against sexual violence; display their signed pledges along with the ribbon pledge that the student body made
- A social event involving community leaders, advocacy workers and/or survivors of sexual assault to share their stories with students or to open discussions about what the community can do to prevent sexual violence
- A career interest meeting (possibly at the local rape crisis center) for those interested in working in the anti-sexual violence field; plan opportunities for those individuals to shadow professionals who already work in that field
- A block party or fair at the school or in the community as a celebration of the commitment to prevent sexual violence in your community; be sure to have resources accessible for all those in attendance
- A school-wide drive to gather needed supplies for your local rape crisis center

OTHER:

- Initiate conversations about taking more efforts to increase prevention measures and to work toward ending violence in your school and across your community
- Thank public officials and civil servants who are advocates for sexual assault prevention for their work

Sample School Announcements

Day 1 Announcement

April is "Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month" in Texas. Each year, Green Ribbon Week is dedicated to learning more about sexual violence on school campuses and to learning the steps each of us can take in our daily lives to help stop it. The theme of the week is **Taking Action, Ending Oppression** which focuses us on the roles we have in creating an environment of dignity and respect in schools. You will have a chance to talk about the issues of sexual violence and what you can do about it through some activities in your classes and throughout the school this week.

Day 2 Announcement

One in five women and one in twenty men in Texas have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime, and most victims are assaulted by someone they know, including friends, acquaintances, dating partners, and relatives. Over 65 percent of reported sexual assaults involve victims who are under 18. Four out of five youth report experiencing sexual harassment in school at least once. Sexual violence is a crime that affects each of us, and it is important that we work to prevent it in our school and in our community.

Day 3 Announcement

Option 1-A good place to start addressing sexual violence is by talking about sexual harassment in our school. Sexual harassment is any behavior of a sexual nature that is unwanted, unwelcome and that occurs on a repeated basis. Verbal sexual harassment includes teasing, sexual jokes and spreading rumors. Physical sexual harassment includes touching, grabbing and pantsing. Written sexual harassment includes notes, letters, emails and text messages.

Option 2-Green Ribbon Week is an opportunity to talk about equality. When people look down on a person or group of people, it becomes easier to mistreat them. This can lead to much of the violence we face in our schools, from fights in the hallway to sexual harassment to sexual assault. We don't have to agree with or even like everyone, but it is important for us to respect them for who they are, regardless of their differences.

Day 4 Announcement

Option 1- Sexual assault, or rape, is a violent crime. According to the Rape, Abuse, and Incest Nation Network (RAINN) 44 percent of sexual assault survivors are under the age of 18. RAINN also reports that one in six women and one in 33 men will be the victim of an attempted or completed sexual assault in their lifetime. This means there is a very good chance that someone you know is a survivor. You have the power to change that. Take action!

Option 2-We know that rigid stereotypes about gender roles - what men and women are "supposed" to do and how they "should" act - create an environment where sexual violence is more likely to occur. Attitudes about what women can and can't do because of their gender, the roles men and women are supposed to take in relationships and using the word "gay" to put something down all create an environment of inequality, where people or groups of people are looked down on based on their gender or sexual orientation, putting certain individuals at a higher risk of being victims of violence. Take the time today to challenge your own beliefs and the attitudes of your peers when it comes to gender stereotypes.

Thank you for participating in Green Ribbon Week. Please let us know if you need any assistance in planning your activities. Don't forget to turn in your bracelet order by February 27. You can find an order form at www.taasa.org/star/grw. If you have any suggestions to make this resource packet more useful, send them to Ted Rutherford at trutherford@taasa.org.

Be sure to document your Green Ribbon Week activities. Take lots of pictures and feel free to share them with us. We would love to feature your efforts in a future edition of the STAR Newsletter.

Finally, start making plans now to attend the 2009 STAR Conference at Texas Woman's University in Denton. The conference will be June 12-14 and there is no cost to attend. This year's conference will focus of providing STAR teams with new tools for engaging youth. It is also going to be a lot of fun. See you at the conference!

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