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Contact: Amber Jensen, Prevention Media Specialist
Phone: 701.328.8747

Red Ribbon Week is an Ideal Time to talk to Children about Alcohol

(Bismarck, North Dakota) – Have you ever had a moment when you didn't know what to say to your child(ren) about alcohol? Take time out during **Red Ribbon Week** to visit www.parentslead.org to find tips, tools and suggestions on how to start the conversation today. Red Ribbon Week is an alcohol and drug prevention awareness campaign taking place Oct. 21-28, 2012.

Parents are the number one influence in a child's life! Having ongoing conversations with your child(ren) is an effective way to prevent underage drinking. Parents LEAD (*Listen, Educate, Ask, Discuss*) provides information on how to start the conversation at any age. Parents can sign up for monthly emails based on their child's age, ask Dr. Query a question, follow a blog and Facebook page, take a parenting style quiz, browse resources, and much more.

"The Parents LEAD website includes tips for communicating with toddlers all the way through the college/young adult years," said Dr. Sharon Query, 4-H youth development specialist for the NDSU Extension Service. "It is our hope that Parents LEAD will help families with children of all ages prepare for educated, targeted conversations on the topic of underage drinking."

Families can also participate in the 'National Red Ribbon Week Photo Contest' by using this year's theme: "The Best Me Is Drug Free." Families can take the theme and decorate their door, mailbox, fence, etc. and take a family picture in front of the decoration and upload to www.RedRibbon.org. The family with the most votes in their region wins an iPad2 and \$1,000 for their school!

The Parents LEAD program is a collaborative effort between the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), the North Dakota University System (NDUS), the North Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the North Dakota State University Extension Service.

The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Prevention Resource and Media Center also has materials to assist parents, schools, community groups, businesses, and faith-based organizations in hosting substance abuse prevention activities during Red Ribbon Week. To browse their resources, visit www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention.

For more information on the Parents LEAD project, please visit www.parentslead.org.

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