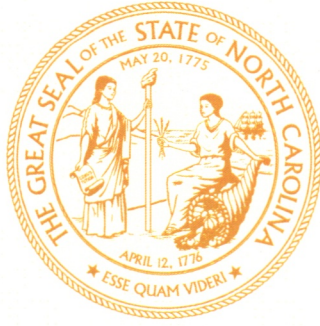




State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

NATIONAL SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION MONTH

2026

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, substance use prevention is essential to the health, safety, and well-being of each person, family, and community across North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, prevention reduces alcohol, tobacco, opioid, and other substance misuse through evidence-based education, early intervention, positive youth development, and community collaboration; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina has trained more than 9,000 people through youth and parent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug education programs and through school-based alternatives to suspension; and such programs support healthy decision-making; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina funds prevention programming in all 100 counties and supports more than 90 community coalitions working to reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug misuse statewide; and

WHEREAS, prevention professionals, educators, health care providers, law enforcement, recovery advocates, faith leaders, parents, and youth work together to strengthen protective factors, reduce risks, and promote healthy lifestyles; and

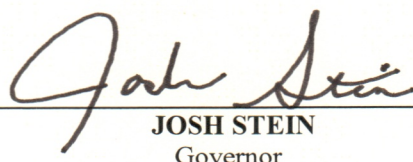
WHEREAS, National Red Ribbon Week, the oldest and largest drug-prevention awareness campaign in the United States, observed annually during the week of October 23 – 31 with the 2026 national theme of “Make a Difference. Be a Hero. Stay Drug Free,” chosen through a student contest and affirms that living drug-free is an everyday act of leadership, courage, and positive influence, and that the role models young people most often follow are their own peers; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina advances safe storage and disposal of alcohol and prescription medications by distributing more than 11,000 lockboxes and 15,000 disposal kits, supporting nearly 200 take-back events collecting more than 1,200 pounds of unused medications, and conducting campaigns reaching approximately 6.5 million residents; and

WHEREAS, overdose prevention initiatives – including overdose education, distribution of 36,226 naloxone kits, 3,706 overdose reversals, and 1,183 referrals to treatment – show that prevention improves health, strengthens families, reduces crime and health care costs, and can save up to \$14 for every dollar invested;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim October 2026 as “NATIONAL SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION MONTH” in North Carolina and commend its observance.




JOSH STEIN
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-fifth day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-sixth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifty-first.