



**For Immediate Release:**

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**Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) Recognizes Red Ribbon Week**

(Omaha, NE) – Red Ribbon Week is celebrated to show support for healthy, drug-free communities and lifestyles. This year's 26<sup>th</sup> annual Red Ribbon Week is October 23-31.

To help commemorate Red Ribbon Week, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Tobacco Free Nebraska program has updated its *Tobacco Free Times* publication.

The *Tobacco Free Times* publication targets 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. It's designed as a fun and interactive resource to engage students, while also informing them about the dangers of tobacco use. The *Times* was originally produced in 2005 and last updated in 2007. This year's edition is available electronically at:

<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/tfn/TFTimes11.pdf> and can be used either in its entirety or as individual pages.

"Tobacco is considered a gateway drug, meaning it's often the first drug used by kids," said Mary Crosby, Media Chairperson for the Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC). "We know that if we can keep kids from starting to use tobacco when they're younger they'll have a better chance of living a drug-free life."

MOTAC is a collaborative effort that focuses on keeping youth from starting to use tobacco, reducing access to tobacco products, and increasing awareness about the dangers of secondhand smoke. It's funded by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services/Tobacco Free Nebraska Program as a result of the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement.

For more information on tobacco prevention activities in Douglas County, please contact MOTAC at (402) 397-3309 or [info@motac.org](mailto:info@motac.org).