



2008 drug control strategy

Office of National Drug Control Policy March 2008

With the release of his first National Drug Control Strategy in 2002, the President set the ambitious goal of cutting drug use among young people by 25 percent over five years. Through a balanced approach that emphasized prevention, education, and treatment, as well as enhanced law enforcement and international cooperation, youth drug use has declined 24 percent since 2001 – 860,000 fewer young people using drugs today than six years ago. In addition, teen marijuana use is down 25 percent, Ecstasy use has dropped by more than half, and youth use of methamphetamine has plummeted 64 percent.

To build on this progress, the 2008 National Drug Control Strategy outlines a comprehensive response to combating drug use in the United States. Through a three-pronged approach, we have focused our efforts on stopping drug use before it starts, intervening and healing America's drug users, and disrupting the market for illegal drugs.

Stopping Drug Use Before It Starts

The Strategy continues to utilize such effective tools as the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, non-punitive random student drug testing programs and workplace drug testing programs, and drug-free community coalitions.

- During his 2004 State of the Union Address, President Bush emphasized the need for random student drug testing, and the Nation has seen remarkable results. To date, more than 80 school districts have received Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education grants to develop or maintain random testing programs in more than 400 schools.
- In recent years, prevention efforts have been expanded to include a greater focus on prescription drug abuse. While illicit drug use among youth has declined, prescription drug abuse has not. In this year's Strategy, we encourage parents to monitor the quantities of their prescription drugs, control access to them, and set clear rules for teens about all drug use.

Healing America's Drug Users

Recognizing that addiction to substances is a treatable disease and that recovery is possible, the Administration's Strategy supports innovative and effective programs designed to help expand treatment options, enhance treatment delivery, and improve treatment outcomes.

- The Strategy highlights how screenings, brief interventions, and referrals to treatment, can break the cycle of addiction by helping to identify Americans who are at risk for substance abuse disorders, particularly those who are unaware of or reluctant to acknowledge the consequences of drug using behavior.
- The Strategy also seeks to heal America's drug users by expanding access to treatment in public health settings, the criminal justice system, and in sectors of society where resources are limited. The Access to Recovery program has extended comprehensive treatment services and support to 190,000 Americans who may have otherwise gone without treatment, exceeding its 3-year goal.

Disrupting the Market for Illegal Drugs

Every day, 732,000 sworn officers in our Nation are on the street closing down open air drug markets, dismantling drug trafficking organizations, and seizing meth labs, marijuana grow houses, and the illicit proceeds of the drug trade. Indeed, domestic and international law enforcement efforts play a crucial role in making our national drug problem smaller. The Strategy outlines the Administration's plan to aggressively attack and disrupt illegal drug markets.

- In 2007, supply reduction efforts resulted in significant disruptions in the availability of methamphetamine and cocaine in 38 major American cities. The Strategy outlines how to build on this progress by working with Mexico, Colombia, Afghanistan, and other critical international partners.

