

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



OJJDP Fact Sheet on Drug Programs

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency (OJJDP) has made fighting illegal juvenile drug use a priority during the past 2 years, designing programs to help all components of the juvenile justice system address the drug problem. The Office also has developed the National Drug Policy Board's strategy to eliminate drug use by high-risk youth. This strategy is based on two principles: zero tolerance and holding individuals, families and communities accountable. Below is a summary of OJJDP programs that can be used by State and local jurisdictions to help eliminate the demand for drugs.

Current OJJDP Programs

Promising Approaches for the Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment of Illegal Drug and Alcohol Use Among Juveniles. This program is designed to answer an important question: What works in preventing and treating drug and alcohol abuse among high risk youth? While many promising programs exist, it is important to develop program models that effectively address the factors that pose the greatest risks for youths' initiation or continued involvement in substance abuse. Once identified, these approaches will be tested in selected communities.

Effective Parenting Strategies for Families of High Risk Youth. This project will assess existing parenting programs to determine their effectiveness in reducing delinquency and juvenile drug use. Based on these assessments, operation manuals and training and technical assistance will be developed and provided to commu-

nity agencies to help them implement programs that teach parenting skills to parents of high risk youth.

Law Enforcement Handling of Juvenile Offenders. Police agencies confront many problems in handling serious juvenile offenders. This project will identify, develop, and test police strategies that work in handling such juvenile offenders, especially those who are involved in illegal drug use, sales, or trafficking.

Youth Drug and Alcohol Abuse: Introduction of Effective Strategies Systemwide. This joint project between OJJDP and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will help communities organize, develop, and coordinate drug prevention and intervention activities on a systemwide basis. It will provide training and technical assistance to help the system components (schools, civic groups, police, and courts) work together to plan and implement drug and alcohol abuse programs. As part of this effort, the Office sponsors State workshops to train juvenile and family court judges about substance-impaired driving offenses by juveniles.

SAFE POLICY. OJJDP sponsors several training seminars for law enforcement agencies. One of these, SAFE POLICY, trains policy-level teams of community leaders to join forces and coordinate efforts to improve school safety and eliminate illegal juvenile drug use. Each team must include a school superintendent, a police chief or sheriff, a chief prosecutor and a chief probation officer. The course stresses that all must cooperate to develop policies to fight illegal drug use.

Research on Drug Use Among Juveniles. OJJDP awarded five grants last year to reanalyze existing data to determine the extent and patterns of drug use by juveniles. The results will help practitioners develop effective drug abuse and prevention programs.

Research on the Etiology of Drug Abuse Among Ethnic and Minority Juvenile Populations. Five additional awards have been made to determine how many and what types of minority youth are involved with drugs, the nature of their drug use, and the role culture plays in promoting or preventing substance abuse.

Drug Testing Among Youth in Detention. Under this project, youths in detention centers in Florida are voluntarily undergoing urinalysis to help researchers assess the relationships among drug and alcohol abuse, crime, and exploitation. It will determine the relative value of using drug testing as a predictor of treatment needs, crime and drug abuse among youth referred to a detention facility.

Boys Clubs. OJJDP is working with the Boys Clubs of America (BCA) to involve youths—who are at risk of using drugs—in Boys Clubs drug prevention activities. With funding provided by OJJDP, 75 Boys Clubs in 10 major cities are reaching out to bring at-risk youth and first-time juvenile offenders into the Club. Through this targeted outreach program, the Boys Clubs are training teams—consisting of two youths, one BCA staff member, and a community representative or parent—how to say no to drugs and how to become role models for other youth in their communities. The program emphasizes family involvement.

a clear, concise "no to drugs" message, positive peer pressure, and improving communication between parents and youths.

Juvenile Gang Suppression and Intervention Program. Youth gang members are increasingly linked to illegal drug activities, weapons, and crimes. OJJDP developed a half-million-dollar initiative to help law enforcement and communities combat this problem. Besides assessing existing programs, the Office will develop and test approaches for preventing and suppressing juvenile gang activity.

National School Safety Center. OJJDP helps educators, law enforcers, judges, lawyers, and civic and business leaders work together to keep schools safe through the National School Safety Center (NSSC). Efforts include a program to help urban school districts develop a strategy—based on recommendations of leaders from 15 urban school districts—to keep drugs, gangs, weapons, and violence out of their schools. The Center also has developed a series of award-winning public service announcements and posters, warning young people of the dangers of drugs and negative peer pressure.

Serious Habitual Offender Community Action Program (SHOCAP). This is a comprehensive systemwide planning and development program to assist the primary juvenile justice system components (police, probation, prosecutor, social service, school, and corrections) focus additional attention and resources on juveniles who repeatedly commit serious crimes. It stresses information sharing for more informed sentencing dispositions. Jurisdictions that used the SHOCAP approach have reduced their crime frequency and patterns of serious, habitual juvenile activities, and reduced pretrial delays, plea bargaining, case dismissals, and sentence reductions.

New OJJDP Programs

OJJDP has or is about to launch several new programs addressing various aspects of drug use among high risk youth. These include:

State and Local Training Regarding OJJDP Discretionary Programs and the Coordinating Block Funds for Drug Programs for High Risk Youth. This is a two-part training effort to encourage State and local jurisdictions to coordinate their juvenile justice efforts and to develop effective, systemwide programs. OJJDP will hold several regional seminars across the Nation to acquaint SAG members and juvenile justice practitioners with OJJDP's discretionary initiatives and to suggest methods of coordinating the two efforts.

Testing for Illegal Drug Use. This demonstration program will determine the types of drug use among detention populations and support the expansion of existing testing programs. This project will identify existing testing programs, summarize drug use among detention populations based on test results, and develop operational manuals for drug testing in detention facilities.

Education, Employment, and Tuition Program: A Public/Private Venture. This program will promote joint efforts between the public and private sectors to provide employment, training, and educational support to high risk youth who remain drug-free.

Drug Abuse Prevention and Intervention in Public Housing. This project will demonstrate effective strategies for reducing the supply and demand for illegal drugs among high risk youth in public housing sites. The program will assess current supply and demand strategies; design operations manuals on the most promising strategies; and develop training and technical assistance materials. These promising strategies will be implemented in five demonstration public housing sites.

Training for Juvenile Justice Decisionmakers: High Risk Youth. This program will enhance the role of law enforcement, court personnel, and other appropriate decisionmakers in processing drug-related cases and in reducing the use of illegal drugs by youth in the community. Training in substance abuse prevention, interven-

tion, and treatment programs will be provided for the Drug Enforcement Administration's Demand Reduction Coordinators as well as the Law Enforcement Coordinating Councils in the U.S. Attorneys' Offices.

Legal Consequences of Drug Use. To stress to young people that they will be held accountable for using illegal drugs, OJJDP is developing a drug curriculum to teach juveniles about the laws and consequences relating to drug use. This project is being developed through the Office's Law Related Education (LRE) program, a national education program that teaches elementary and secondary students about laws and legal responsibilities. The focus of the drug curriculum is individual accountability and consequences for involvement with drugs. It initially will be tested in nine States and 90 schools before being introduced next year to all schools participating in the LRE program.

For further information about these programs, contact the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 633 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20531, or the Office's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20850, or call toll free 800-638-8736.

The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program Offices and Bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.