

The White House

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Prevention: Creating a Path to a Healthier and Stronger Nation

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The concept of substance abuse prevention is a simple one: the most efficient and cost-effective way to reduce the damage caused by drugs and alcohol, is to prevent abuse and addiction before it starts. However, translating that concept into actionable objectives and measurable results is a difficult task that many of our National, state, local, and tribal partners have been perfecting for



years. It is in celebration of these outstanding and ongoing efforts, and in recognition of all of the Americans' lives that can be improved through prevention that I stand with President Obama in commemorating National Substance Abuse Prevention Month.

Millions of Americans struggle with substance abuse and the negative consequences of their addiction also impact their families, friends, neighbors, and communities. In fact, substance abuse touches every sector of our society, straining our health care and criminal justice systems – costing the U.S. as much as \$193 billion annually in recent years. Prevention is the key to reducing this financial burden and building healthy and safe communities across the country.

Put simply, it makes more sense to stop drug use before it begins to generate addiction and crime than it does to warehouse people in prisons.

We know that prevention works. Recent research has shown that each dollar invested in an evidence-based prevention program can reduce costs related to substance use disorders by an average of \$18. Community programs have been effective in encouraging prevention at the local level and parents can serve as positive role models by talking with their children about the

dangers of drug use. Through effective prevention programs we can decrease emergency room visits, and lower rates of chronic disease, improve student achievement, and enhance workforce readiness. All of these actions are vital at a time when the country is working tirelessly to recover from a lagging economy. However, this is also the ideal time to get personally involved.

Join your friends and neighbors by getting involved today:

- Talk with your kids, students, athletes about the benefits of avoiding drugs and alcohol
- Eliminate unused or expired prescription drugs in your medicine cabinet to reduce illicit use or substance abuse
- Learn what community resources or coalitions are located near you and see how you can participate.

Visit the prevention website for more information about ONDCP's prevention efforts, including the Drug-Free Community Support Program and the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, and read the President's National Substance Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation.

www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp

County of San Diego
Health and Human Services Agency



ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES

Prevention Program

The prevention strategy focuses on four primary countywide initiatives:

- The Underage Drinking Initiative (1995), which addresses underage drinking issues in our communities and across the Border .
- Methamphetamine Strike Force (1996), which addresses the personal, community and environmental impact of methamphetamine.
- The Marijuana Initiative (2005) to focus on youth use of marijuana.
- The Prescription Drug Task Force (2008) to address the illicit use of prescription drugs in the region.

Providing a targeted focus on these issues allows the County to develop long term, strategic and sustainable prevention plans for each initiative, provides coordination and shared resources where possible, and provides flexible prioritization in each region regarding how each initiative will be tailored to individual community needs.

Some of accomplishments include:

- Developed a Prescription Drug Abuse plan
- Created a Methamphetamine Report Card
- Created the Countywide Law Enforcement Task Force on Underage Drinking and DUI.
- Worked with community members to pass permanent alcohol-free beaches.
- Worked with Tijuana officials to establish and allocate funds to reduce problems of U.S. youth drinking in Tijuana
- Created a street fair vendor policy prohibiting the sale of drug paraphernalia or any item that promotes the use of illicit drugs including video games and pro-marijuana-themed merchandise.