



The 2012 National Drug Control Strategy: Building on a Record of Reform

Executive Summary



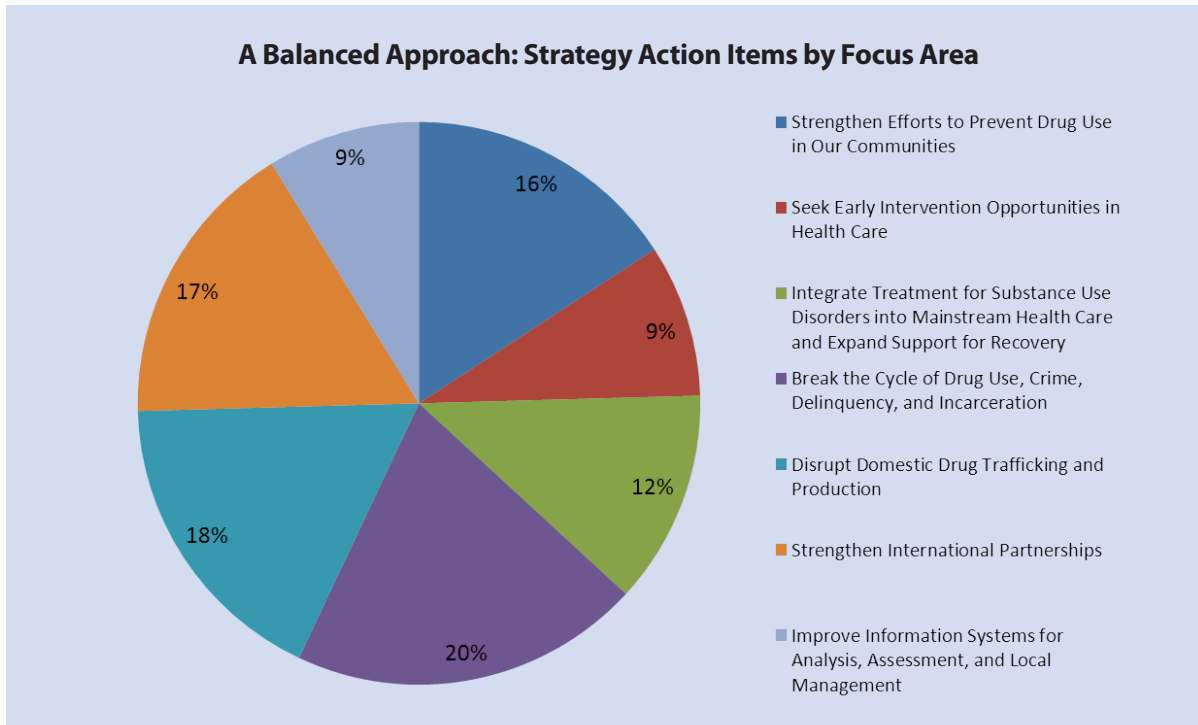
A 21st Century Approach to Drug Policy

The Administration's inaugural *National Drug Control Strategy*, published in 2010, charted a new direction in our efforts to reduce illicit drug use and its consequences in the United States. The *Strategy* pursued a mainstream approach to the drug problem—an approach that rejects the false choice between an enforcement-centric “war on drugs” on the one hand and the notion of drug legalization on the other. Science shows that drug addiction is not a moral failing on the part of the individual—but a disease of the brain that can be prevented and treated. As a result, the *National Drug Control Strategy* employs a balance of evidence-based public health and safety reforms, focusing on seven core areas:

- Strengthening efforts to prevent drug use in our communities;
- Seeking early intervention opportunities in health care;
- Integrating treatment for substance use disorders into health care and supporting recovery;
- Breaking the cycle of drug use, crime, delinquency, and incarceration;
- Disrupting domestic drug trafficking and production;
- Strengthening international partnerships; and
- Improving information systems to better analyze, assess, and locally address drug use and its consequences.

In his message to Congress in the 2010 *National Drug Control Strategy*, the President affirmed that “...a well-crafted strategy is only as successful as its implementation. To succeed, we will need to rely on the hard work, dedication, and perseverance of every concerned American.” For 3 years, this principle has guided the Administration's efforts to include all sectors of American society in a comprehensive national effort to reduce illicit drug use and its consequences. The Administration's first *Strategy* included more than 100 action items to be undertaken by Federal agencies in partnership with state, local, tribal, and international counterparts.

This year's *Strategy* provides a review of the progress we have made during the past three years and also looks ahead to our continuing efforts to reform, rebalance, and renew our national drug control policy to address the public health and public safety challenges of the 21st century.



Important Steps Forward

- Strengthening support for prevention and treatment.** The Administration has increased funding for prevention and treatment programs—during the past 3 years we have spent over \$31 billion on drug education and treatment programs at the Federal level, compared to \$27 billion on domestic law enforcement.
- Effecting positive change in our communities.** The Administration has provided more than \$370 million in funding to over 700 local community coalitions to prevent drug use among teens through the Drug Free Communities program.
- Recognizing drug prevention as part of overall health.** In 2011, the Administration released the first-ever National Prevention Strategy, which calls for eliminating disparities and increasing education.
- Responding to the prescription drug abuse epidemic.** In response to a prescription drug abuse problem designated as an epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), ONDCP led the development of the Administration’s Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan, focusing on education, monitoring, proper disposal, and enforcement.
- Reducing the dangers drug use poses on our roadways.** The Administration has elevated the issue of “drugged driving,” convening a national summit, establishing an historic partnership with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and passing a resolution at the United Nations. In 2010 and 2011, President Obama declared December “National Impaired Driving Prevention Month,” and called on all Americans to drive sober, drug-free, and without distractions.

- **Integrating treatment into mainstream health care.** With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies will be required to address drug addiction as a preventable and treatable disease.
- **Fostering a more equitable and effective justice system.** In 2010, President Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act into law, reducing the unfair and unjustified 100 to 1 sentencing disparity between offenses for crack and powder cocaine. This was the first time in four decades that a mandatory minimum drug law has been rolled back.
- **Getting treatment to drug-involved offenders.** In the past 3 years, drug treatment courts have diverted approximately 120,000 offenders annually into drug treatment instead of prison. There are now 2,600 drug courts across the Nation.
- **Breaking the cycle of drug use and incarceration.** Through enhanced probation programs like Project HOPE in Hawaii, probationers are experiencing dramatic reductions in drug use as a result of drug testing and swift, certain, but reasonable sanctions combined with treatment in cases where probationers request it or are determined unlikely to be successful in the program without it.
- **Supporting the more than 23 million Americans in recovery from a substance use disorder.** ONDCP established a dedicated office to address the needs of people in recovery. The office works with Federal agencies, state and local governments, tribes, and national organizations to foster the development of recovery-oriented systems and services and to remove legal and regulatory barriers to recovery. ONDCP also partnered with Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan and Attorney General Eric Holder to send letters to state and local authorities clarifying regulations that impede access to housing and employment for people in recovery.
- **Strengthening international partnerships to reduce the supply of drugs.** In 2011, the United States and its allies removed 193 metric tons of cocaine from the illicit supply chain as it traveled to the United States from South America. The Administration continues to work with the Government of Colombia as it takes on more responsibility for law enforcement and drug control efforts. Potential production capacity for pure cocaine in Colombia has fallen by 61 percent from 2001 to 2010.
- **Helping our neighbors address transnational organized crime.** Through such programs as the \$1.9 billion Merida Initiative with Mexico, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and the Central American Regional Security Initiative, the United States has helped to expand judicial, social, educational, and law enforcement capacities to counter the influence of transnational organized crime in the region.
- **Fostering alternative livelihoods in drug producing regions.** The Administration has devoted \$1.2 billion to alternative development programs during the past 3 years to provide economic incentives and increased security to farmers in drug producing regions in the Western Hemisphere.