

DRUG FREE COMMUNITIES SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Drug Free Communities program (DFC), created by the Drug Free Communities Act of 1997, is the Nation's leading effort to mobilize communities to prevent youth substance use. Directed by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the DFC program provides grants to community coalitions to strengthen the infrastructure among local partners to create and sustain a reduction in local youth substance use.

Each day, an estimated 4,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 17 use drugs for the first time.¹ Additionally, more high school seniors now use marijuana than use tobacco, and non-medical use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs remains unacceptably high, accounting for 5 of the top 10 substances used by 12th graders.²

Recognizing the fundamental concept that local problems need local solutions, DFC-funded coalitions engage multiple sectors of the community and employ a variety of environmental strategies to address local drug problems. By involving the community in a solution-oriented approach, DFC also helps those youth at risk for substance use recognize the majority of our Nation's youth choose not to use drugs. Additionally, DFC-funded communities have proven to be more effective in addressing these complex social issues and have demonstrated an increase in positive outcomes over communities that do not.



ONDCP seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

The Solutions are in the Community

As a catalyst for increased citizen participation in efforts to reduce substance use among youth aged 12-17, the DFC program requires funded coalitions to include active participation from 12 sectors of the community, including:

- Youth
 - Parents
 - Law enforcement
 - Schools
 - Businesses
 - Media
 - Youth-serving organizations
 - Religious and fraternal organizations
 - Civic and volunteer groups
 - Healthcare professionals
 - State, local, and tribal agencies with expertise in substance abuse
 - Other organizations involved in reducing substance abuse
- The DFC program mobilizes nearly 8,300 community coalition members throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Palau, and Micronesia.
 - Coalition members conduct ongoing community assessments to prioritize efforts to prevent and reduce youth substance use. These assessments are used to plan and implement data-driven, community-wide strategies that address these complex social issues.
 - The DFC program requires funded coalitions to employ environmental strategies – broad initiatives aimed at addressing the entire community through the adaptation of policies and practices related to youth substance use. In so doing, coalitions can address the environment as a whole and make best use of available resources.

Providing Support for Communities

- Since its inception, the DFC program has funded more than 2,000 community coalitions.
- Community coalitions that are at least six months old can apply for up to \$125,000 per year for up to five years. Each coalition can apply for two cycles of funding, for a maximum of 10 years.
- To be eligible for DFC funding, coalitions must comply with a minimum one-to-one match requirement, thus doubling the Federal investment. The matching amounts – whether in-kind, donations, or cash – must come from non-Federal sources.
- With 92% of funds appropriated to DFC allocated for grant awards, DFC represents one of the most effective and efficient primary prevention efforts in our Nation today.
- In FY 2012, \$84.6 million funded 60 new grants, 608 continuation grants for coalitions already in a five-year cycle, 6 new DFC Mentoring grants, and 18 continuation DFC Mentoring grants, which provide funding to existing grantees so they can help new coalitions become strong enough to apply for DFC funding on their own.
- 54 grantees serve organizations and communities working with Native American/American Indian populations.
- 34% of DFC grantees are in economically disadvantaged communities.
- 44% of grantees serve rural communities with 57% serving urban/suburban communities.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2010). Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National findings, NSDUH Series H-41, HHS Publication No. SMA 11-4658). Rockville, MD: SAMHSA, 2011.

² Johnston, L.D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2012). Monitoring the Future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2011. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan.