

A Drug-Free School Zone is More Than a Law and a Sign

Drug-free zones around schools offer communities one way to give students a place where they can play and talk without being threatened by drug dealers and drug users.

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It is a law and a community-wide commitment to reduce drug use among young people.

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Six Steps To Take

1. Build a drug-free school zone coalition that includes representatives from law enforcement, schools, parent groups, civic clubs, youth organizations, businesses, religious institutions, local government, drug treatment centers, other social service agencies, public housing authorities, and the courts.
2. Mobilize the community — talk to key people, build partnerships, assess the community's drug problems
3. Create a shared vision of a safe and drug-free environment for children. Set goals and design strategies to meet them.
4. Establish the drug-free school zone by researching laws and establishing formal partnership agreements with school administrators, city officials, and law enforcement. Name a coordinator, measure and map the zone, post signs (check with law enforcement and city officials regarding wording and placement), and publicize the project. Kick off with special school assemblies, a parents' organization meeting, a proclamation, and press conference.
5. Mobilize the community — talk to key people, build partnerships, assess the community's drug problems.
6. Celebrate successes with award ceremonies, family events, posters, publicity, and T-shirts. Have young people plan and run a drug-free celebration.

Don't stop at the school's boundaries. Expand your drug-free zone efforts to any area besieged by problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

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