

As young people we have a responsibility to speak up against a war that is waged in our name. The War on Drugs targets youth with policies that not only fail to protect us, they actually leave us less safe.

Drug abuse is a real issue that needs to be dealt with seriously, but the War on Drugs only makes our nation's drug problems worse.

With \$50 billion a year spent on enforcing drug laws, treatment needs continually go unmet. Drug prohibition, like the earlier failed experiment of alcohol prohibition, simply puts the distribution of drugs in the hands of gangs and violent criminals.

Punitive drug laws have particularly harmful effects on young people and children. College students convicted of drug crimes, however minor, automatically lose their financial aid. At many schools, students who test positive for drugs are barred from participating in extracurricular activities. Such poorly-considered punishments close off opportunities for young people as they move into adulthood, causing lasting damage to their lives.

Millions of Americans are busted with drugs every year, and the consequences of an arrest do not end with handcuffs and jail cells. Drug convictions can make people ineligible for public housing or other assistance. Nationally, 4.7 million Americans are disenfranchised from voting due to their records.

Yet draconian policies have done nothing to solve problems of drug abuse. Thus far, our government has chosen to bury its head in the sand and ignore the \$400 billion worldwide market for illegal drugs.

This is a war that makes our world less safe, less just, and less free.

SSDP's Campaigns

• Higher Education Act (ssdp.org/campaigns/hea)

In 1998, Congress passed the Aid Elimination Penalty, an amendment to the Higher Education Act, which prevents students with drug convictions from receiving federal financial aid. Since then, over 200,000 students have lost their financial aid.

SSDP has fought for its repeal ever since, and in 2006, Congress scaled back the law, so now it applies only to students who were in school at the time of their convictions. While thousands of students will be helped by this partial victory, it's still not enough. SSDP is continuing to pressure Congress to repeal the law altogether.

• Campus Change (ssdp.org/campaigns/ccc)

The Campus Change Campaign is designed to help student activists change punitive prohibitionist policies on their own campuses, so they can keep their peers safe from these harmful and ineffective punishments.

Each campus climate is unique. Chapters can tackle dorm policies, the disparity between punishments for marijuana violations and underage drinking, parental notification for drug infractions, or other policies.

Running campaigns on campus helps activists hone the skills they need to take their advocacy to the next level, making change in the larger community.

• Student Drug Testing (ssdp.org/campaigns/srp)

Despite the federal government's aggressive push for schools to implement student drug testing, the practice is counterproductive, expensive, and invasive. Students who use drugs shouldn't be locked out of extracurricular activities, which are proven to reduce drug abuse and keep kids in school.



University of Michigan Chapter

In less than a year, we have:

- Attended an Office of National Drug Control Policy summit on random student drug testing to explain to teachers and administrators that testing is not only ineffective but also harmful to the learning environment and the student-teacher relationship.
- Held a film screening of "BUSTED: The Citizen's Guide to Surviving Policy Encounters" and had a Q&A afterwards with Criminal Defense Attorney Matthew Abel.
- Hosted speeches by democratic presidential candidates Mike Gravel and Dennis Kucinich.
- Collected over 3,500 signatures for the medical marijuana ballot initiative in Michigan.
- Held a lobbying meeting with a representative of Congressman John Dingell on the harm of the aid elimination penalty in the Higher Education act, which has denied over 200,000 students federal financial aid.
- Held a Week of Student Action to repeal the aid elimination penalty and got nearly 500 postcards to representatives in favor of repeal signed and hand-delivered on Capitol Hill.
- Planned to implement a Good Samaritan Policy at our University, so students dealing with an overdose of alcohol or other drugs are not criminally punished when they try to get medical help.
- Received the Outstanding Chapter award from national SSDP, and received 4 full scholarships for the 2007 International Drug Policy Reform Conference in New Orleans.



Top Ten Reasons to Join

10. You'll meet people who share the same ideals as you.
9. You'll learn more about drug policy and how it relates to civil rights, racism, foreign policy, health, education, etc.
8. You'll learn how to protect your rights and not get arrested in a police encounter, and you'll be able to pass this knowledge along to others.
7. You'll become a trusted expert on drug policy among your peers.
6. SSDP is the future of the drug policy reform movement.
5. You'll learn how to effectively change drug policies in your school and in your community.
4. You'll get to set the course of a growing movement against America's longest war—the War on Drugs.
3. You'll meet and socialize with SSDP members from across the U.S. and Canada at our annual international conference.
2. You'll feel a strong sense of accomplishment and meaningfulness because you had the courage to stand up to injustice.
1. **If you don't do it, who will?**

SSDP's Recent Accomplishments

- Forced Congress to scale back the Higher Education Act Aid Elimination Penalty, which prevents students with drug convictions from receiving financial aid. Nearly 200,000 would-be students have been affected by the penalty. SSDP mobilized 125 student governments to voice their opposition to the unjust policy.
- Defeated the Department of Education in a lawsuit seeking information about the number of students who have lost financial aid due to drug convictions in each state. When the DoE sought to make us pay an exorbitant sum to obtain the information, we sued, and *The New York Times* editorialized on our behalf.
- Mobilized student activists in SSDP chapters nationwide to reform campus, local, and state drug policies. In our new Campus Change Campaign, four chapters have already passed student voter initiatives for more sensible campus drug policies. Some SSDP chapters have passed statewide legislation and local ballot initiatives.
- Initiated debate on the validity of student drug testing at the Office of National Drug Control Policy's student drug testing summits. By presenting data to school administrators considering drug testing, SSDP activists ensured that alternative perspectives were considered.
- Brought over 100 SSDP chapters to the 2007 International Drug Policy Reform Conference in New Orleans, December 5-8.

Join Students for Sensible Drug Policy and work towards more rational and humane drug policies—on your campus, in your community, and in your country.

Visit www.SchoolsNotPrisons.com for more information on SSDP in Washington, D.C.

Not in Our Name

As the voice of the DARE Generation, Students for Sensible Drug Policy represents the millions of young people who oppose a War on Drugs fought in our name. This war is harmful, ineffective, expensive, and unjust. On campus and beyond, our movement works to promote policies that reduce the harms associated with drug abuse, as well as the harms associated with drug prohibition.



**Students for Sensible Drug Policy
at the University of Michigan**

<http://umdrugpolicy.org>