

OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
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Fact Sheet: U.S. Drug Policy

Decades of scientific study show 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. And while smart law enforcement efforts will always play a vital role in protecting communities from drug-related crime and violence, the Obama Administration has remained clear that we cannot arrest our way out of the drug problem through an enforcement-centric “war on drugs.”

Today, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) released the [2012 National Drug Control Strategy](#), the Obama Administration’s primary blueprint for drug policy in the United States. The *Strategy* reviews 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. Specifically, the new *Strategy* is guided by three facts: addiction is a disease that can be treated; people with substance use disorders can recover; and innovative new criminal justice reforms can stop the revolving door of drug use, crime, incarceration, and rearrest.

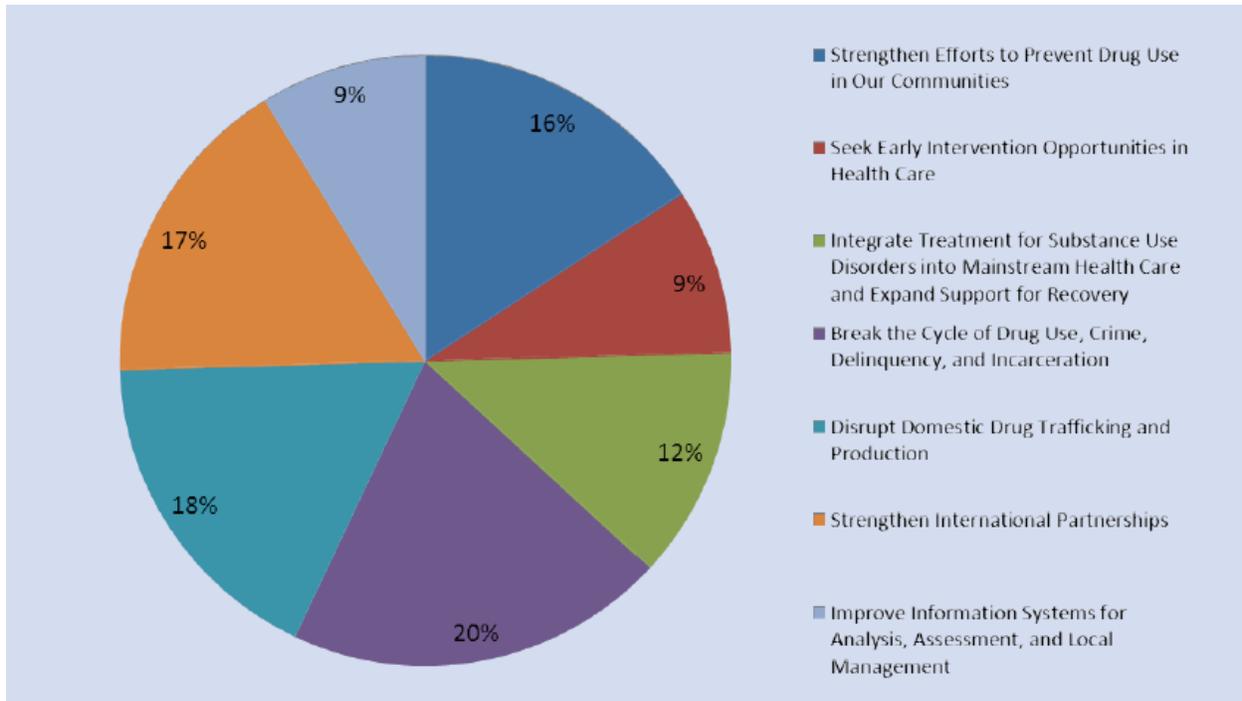
The Facts: Drug Use in America and the Administration Response

- The rate of overall drug use in America [has dropped by roughly one-third over the past three decades](#). Since 2006, [meth use in America has been cut by half and cocaine use has dropped by nearly 40 percent](#).
- In Fiscal Year 2012, the [U.S. Federal Government spent](#) \$10.1 billion on drug prevention and treatment vs. \$9.4 billion on domestic law enforcement and incarceration, \$3.6 billion on interdiction, and \$2.1 billion on international drug control programs.
- Each year, [specialized drug courts](#) supported by the Obama Administration divert approximately 120,000 non-violent drug offenders into treatment instead of jail. Today, there are over 2,600 of these courts in operation in the United States and growing.
- Cocaine production in Colombia – the source of 95 percent of the cocaine in the United States – has dropped by almost two-thirds since 2001.

Obama Administration Drug Policy: A Record of Reform

- In August of 2010, the President [signed the Fair Sentencing Act into law](#). This significant piece of drug policy reform dramatically reduced a 100-to-1 mandatory minimum sentencing disparity between powder and crack cocaine and eliminated the mandatory minimum sentence for simple possession of crack cocaine. It also increases penalties for major drug traffickers.
- In October of 2009, the Administration established the first-ever **Recovery branch** at the Office of National Drug Control Policy to support the 23.5 million Americans in recovery by [eliminating barriers to recovery and lifting the stigma associated](#) with drug addiction.
- In March of 2010, the President signed the **Affordable Care Act** into law. The new law takes a public health approach to treating substance use disorders by [requiring insurers to cover treatment for substance use disorders](#) the same way they would other chronic diseases starting in 2014.
- In June of 2011, the Administration released the first-ever [National Prevention Strategy](#), which recognizes drug prevention as a part of overall wellness.
- 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](#).
- 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.
- In October of 2010, the President [signed the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 into law](#). The law will help communities combat the Nation's prescription drug abuse epidemic by making easier to properly dispose of expired, unused, or unneeded prescription drugs.
- Since March of 2009, **the Administration has [deployed more personnel, infrastructure, and technology along the Southwest border](#)** to combat illegal cross border activity than in any other time in U.S. history.

A Balanced Approach: Administration Drug Policy by Action Item



A full copy of the 2012 *National Drug Control Strategy* is available [here](#).

Click [here](#) to download the infographic: “Obama Administration Drug Policy: A Record of Reform”

Click [here](#) to see videos and read more about innovative alternatives to drug control supported by the Obama Administration.

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