



# American Drug Testing

*Drug-Free Workplace Programs*

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## DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORKPLACE.

### U.S. Drug Czar Urges Student Testing

The nation's drug czar came to Philadelphia to draw a link between teen violence and drug use - especially marijuana - and urged schools to embrace random student drug testing. Venturing to a city with one of America's highest murder rates,



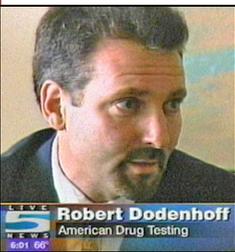
John P. Walters, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy,

said young substance abusers were more likely to engage in violence and to join gangs.

Walters timed his visit with the release of a three-page "special report" from his office that reinforced a correlation between drug use and violence. The report was based on studies conducted during the last decade.

"Early use of marijuana is an important warning sign, national data shows us, for later involvement with gangs as well as criminal self-destructive activities," Walters said at a news briefing.

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Robert Dodenhoff, President

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Walter said that children who smoke marijuana were four times more likely to join

*"...Walters encouraged schools to test students randomly for drugs, not as a punishment, but to force an intervention..."*

gangs, and that pot was second to alcohol as the most widely used substance in gang life.

**"Marijuana use is not harmless," he said. "We need to abandon that notion."**

Walter's emphasis on the dangers of pot-smoking drew an immediate rebuke from the Marijuana Policy Project, a Washington advocacy group. Bruce Mirken, the organization's spokesman, said research showed that marijuana doesn't cause violence and aggression.

"They're deliberately confusing a correlation with causation," he said, calling Walter's claims "shockingly misleading and dishonest."

Walters conducted the briefing before an audience of youth advocates at the Lehigh Avenue offices of the Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Net-

work. His announcement of the report touched off anticipation that the federal government would back his words with money.

"Most of the time when you see a new report, you also see a shift in some funding strategies," said Darryl Coates, the organization's executive director.

But Walters offered little hope that more money would be forthcoming, saying that the federal government's emphasis was on law enforcement and that federal prosecutors could really focus only on adult drug offenders.

"Juveniles should be treated by state and local authorities, who are better able to provide alter-

braced drug testing since President Bush advocated the practice more than three years ago.

Walter endorsed support for adult-supervised activities, especially after-school programs, during the time of day when youths are more likely to commit violent crimes.

"With summer upon us, that's a particular challenge because you're going to have obviously more people out of school and needing proper guidance," he said. "Drug-use trends tend to spike during June, July and August, not coincidentally, because they are not under supervision of adults as they are during school year."

Source: Philadelphia Inquirer



natives," he said.

But Walters encouraged schools to test students randomly for drugs, not as a punishment, but to force an intervention.

"I know it's controversial," he said, saying that more than 1,000 school districts had em-

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