

“... we are deeply concerned about the rising trend of drug use by young Americans. While overall use of drugs in the United States has fallen dramatically – by half in 15 years – adolescent drug abuse continues to rise. That is why the number one goal of our strategy is to motivate America’s youth to reject illegal drugs and substance abuse.”

-- President Bill Clinton

About the Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) Program

DEFY is a 2-phased prevention program for kids ages 9 – 12. DEFY deters “at-risk” behaviors by giving kids the tools they need to resist drugs, gangs, and alcohol. The leadership and life skills provided by DEFY include: goal-setting, team-building, conflict resolution and decision making.

The DEFY curriculum is based on two decades of research and incorporates key characteristics of successful prevention programs identified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Annual reviews of the curriculum ensure that it is current and accurate.

A study by the Pennsylvania State University in 1996 demonstrated that the DEFY curriculum produced a measurable, positive outcome in:

- Resistance skills
- Social behavior
- Gang attitudes
- Self-esteem
- Alcohol attitudes
- Smoking attitudes
- Drug knowledge

“... To be completely ready, you have to take care of families.” – Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre

Phase I is a structured 5-day residential or 8-day non-residential camp environment that occurs during the

summer. During Phase I DEFY youth participate in classroom learning that covers:

- Goal setting
- Leadership and teamwork
- Relationships/conflict management
- Substance abuse prevention
- Gang awareness/deglamorization
- Self-confidence

In addition, Phase I participants engage in physical fitness training, local field trips, and compete in a physical challenge. Aside from the education and training the youth receive, Phase I enables youth to bond with adult mentors and staff to enhance the effectiveness of Phase II.

Phase II is a school-year mentoring phase designed to

“I love kids. I’m from Atlanta and ran the same streets these kids do – the only way to make things better is to get involved and make things happen.”
-- AOC Richard Sheets, NAS Atlanta, GA

support the training and education received in Phase I. During regularly scheduled activities, mentors and staff provide tutoring and positive reinforcement through group or cluster mentoring and interactive workshops.



Partnerships

In 1996 the Attorney General’s Weed & Seed program

“I’ve learned to have a drug-free life as part of the DEFY Program.” – John Whitmill, ten-year-old Corpus Christi participant

adopted DEFY, expanding the programs reach to any location with a U.S. Attorney’s Office. The Executive Office of Weed & Seed (EOWS) administers the Department of Justice (DOJ) DEFY programs in cooperation with local military units and law enforcement agencies working primarily with inner-city youth. Weed & Seed is a strategy to “weed” out crime and “seed” the community with positive resources. It consists of building partnerships between community residents and police, prosecutors, government officials, local businesses, social service providers and the private sector.

Other agencies, such as the Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, DEA, and BATF, also support and deliver DEFY in many communities.

“I’m very proud of our Sailors and Marines who give so much of their time and represent the Naval service so well.” – Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton

Local Responsibilities

Navy DEFY programs are run by local commands using resources and funding provided by the DDRTF. Weed & Seed sites are supported through the local U.S. Attorney’s Office.

Each site is responsible for:

- Appointing a Program Coordinator for over-all responsibility of the DEFY program
- Appointing a Camp Director for direct responsibility for Phase I
- Recruiting staff, mentors and other volunteers

- Logistics required for a successful program (lodging, classroom, transportation, etc.)
- Executing DEFY in accordance with a Memorandum Of Understanding, the DEFY Program Manager's Guide, and the Youth Curriculum (supplied by the DDRTF)
- Conducting staff and mentor training (with materials provided by the DDRTF)
- Providing the DDRTF with a final report.

About the Drug Demand Reduction Task Force

The Drug Demand Reduction Task Force (DDRTF) was established in 1992 by the Secretary of the Navy as a visible part of the Department's commitment to the families of all Sailors and Marines. Using state-of-the-art prevention technologies, the DDRTF has produced a nationally recognized, preemptive prevention program, Drug Education For Youth (DEFY). Fully integrated with the President's National Drug Control Strategy, DEFY is a locally owned and operated program that defines the Secretary's commitment to our families. The DDRTF, staffed entirely by Reserve Sailors and Marines, is responsible for the resources needed by local commands to fully implement DEFY.

Among the many things it is responsible for, the DDRTF:

- Supplies funding for local commands to operate a DEFY program
- Provides necessary supplies for each child, adult staff and mentor participating in DEFY
- Assists in the coordination of regional DEFY events
- Assists local Program Coordinators as necessary
- Provides training to Program Coordinators

"Programs such as DEFY are essential components of the [National Drug Control] Strategy ... All of us at ONDCP salute the men and women who have made DEFY a model prevention program."

-- General Barry McCaffrey, Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy

Where to go for more information

Local commands and the volunteers they willingly provide are key to DEFY's success. Adult staff, mentors, and volunteers have made an indelible impact

on the youth participants and are essential to the success of individual youth.



DEFY™
DRUG EDUCATION FOR YOUTH
Strong Kids, Strong Families, Ready Fleet



Military commands wishing to conduct a DEFY program at their facility should contact the DDRTF.

Local law enforcement agencies and other non-military entities should contact the local US Attorney's Office.

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