CORE DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN TRAINING PROGRAM
A COMMUNITY AWARENESS TRAINING

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• The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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The DEC Mission

National DEC’s mission is to change the status quo by empowering practitioners to identify and respond to children living in dangerous drug environments.
Video: Why
Defining Drug Endangered Children (DEC)

The National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children defines drug endangered children as children who are at risk of suffering physical or emotional harm as a result of illegal drug use, possession, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution.

They may also be children whose caretaker’s substance misuse interferes with the caretaker’s ability to parent and provide a safe and nurturing environment.
Our Vision: Healthy, Happy & Safe Children 100%
Children at Risk

2.1 million children in the United States live in homes where a parent uses illicit drugs
Children at Risk

9.2 million children in the United States live in homes where a parent or other adult uses illicit drugs
Understanding Risk

Children whose parents abuse alcohol or drugs are:

- 3 times more likely to be verbally, physically or sexually abused
- 4 times more likely than other children to be neglected
Understanding Risk

Children of parents with substance use disorders have a higher likelihood of developing substance use problems themselves.
Understanding Risk
Children at Risk

Children + Drugs = RISK
Risk (n.): The chance of something going wrong; the danger that injury, damage or loss will occur.

-Encarta Dictionary of North America
Understanding Risk

- **All** drug endangered children are **at risk**

- How much risk and risk for what varies
CHILDREN at Risk
www.nationaldec.org
Effects of prenatal drug exposure:

- Are difficult to isolate due to:
  - poor prenatal care
  - poor nutrition
  - Prematurity
  - adverse postnatal environment

- Depend on:
  - the substance being used
  - frequency of use
  - duration of use
  - Quantity of use

We have an opportunity to educate professionals and adults on the effects
Postnatal Risk Examples:

What are some risks of substance abuse and drug activity?

- Environmental Chaos
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of necessities
- Violence/Domestic Violence
- Overlay deaths
- Loss
- Ingestion and Exposure
Evidence of Harm: Illicit Drug Activities

Use & Possession

Manufacturing & Cultivation <-> Distribution
Drug Use

Use & Possession
Drug Use

Central Nervous System (CNS) Stimulants

• Example:
  – Salt Lake City, UT
  – “Rocking up” crack cocaine
  – Officers entered two bedrooms and discovered these two children behind closed doors
Drug Use

Heroin
Drug Distribution

Distribution
Drug Distribution

Children become victims of the illicit drug trade in many ways:

- Home invasion
- Abduction
- Ransom
- Drugs transported in children’s items
- Children brought to drug buys
- Children used as decoys
True Stories

www.nationaldec.org
Manufacturing & Cultivation
Manufacturing & Cultivation
Questions to Ponder

• When do we take action to protect children?
• Do we consider illicit drug activity alone justification to intervene?
• Do we wait until additional maltreatment circumstances arise?
• What if we wait too long?
How do we get to 100%?

• Understand the long-term needs of drug endangered children
• Implement appropriate and effective intervention strategies
Understanding the Long-Term Needs of DEC

Children growing up in drug environments may experience:

– Emotional problems: anxiety, PTSD, complex emotions

– Behavioral problems: sexually act out, act out what they have seen

– Cognitive problems: inability to pick up on social cues, difficulty paying attention, delayed
Understanding the Long-Term Needs of DEC

Roe W. Bubar
Native Studies Scholar
Colorado State University
On daughter’s 10th birthday, daughter told teacher and school resource officer about drugs in her house.

SRO advised taskforce of the information

Task force executed search warrant and discovered meth lab

Father’s first phone call from jail

Courtesy of Eric Nation, Jasper County Sheriff’s Office, IA.
Dad: Are you there?
Daughter: Ya

Dad: How does it feel to know you just sent your dad to prison for a long time?
Daughter: Sorry

Dad: No you’re not f@%-#** sorry! You had no business saying this s*@ to anybody! All you had to do is say something to me or grandma! What f@%-#** business did you have going running your f@%-#** mouth at school?

Daughter: Sorry

Dad: No! No sorry my a**! This is no sorry to it! Answer my question! Why did you go run your f@%-#** mouth at school?

Daughter: I had no business

Dad: No! You didn’t have no business! But, thanks to you, I will be spending a lot of time in prison! I’m done talking to you! Bye!
Understanding the Long-Term Needs of DEC

- Daughter arrested years later for felony theft
- Daughter has been in and out of the criminal justice system on numerous occasions
The Importance of Intervention

We ALL have an intervention & prevention role to play
The Importance of Intervention

The *earlier* the intervention, the more efficient and effective the outcome

**BUT** ... research and clinical trends *also* support the potential for change throughout life
The Importance of Intervention

In other words...

It is **never too early** to intervene...

**AND**

It is **never too late** to intervene!
The Importance of Intervention

Moving children from

RISK to RESILIENCY
Collaborative Mindset
Collaborative Mindset

COLLABORATION:

[E]xchange of information, altering of activities, sharing of resources, and enhancement of the capacity of another for the mutual benefit of all and to achieve a common purpose.

Chris Huxham, Creating Collaborative Advantage
Collaborative Mindset

• What we know already:

  Collaboration is challenging

• What we may not know:

  WHY collaboration is challenging
Collaborative Mindset

WHY collaboration is challenging:

- Competing goals
- Relationship issues
- Control issues
- Differing values
- Helplessness
- Un-channeled passion/energy
Collaborative Mindset

Law Enforcement
Child Protective Services
Judicial
Medical
Drug Treatment
Education

DEC
Collaborative Mindset

Judicial

Drug Treatment

Law Enforcement

Child Protective Services

Medical

DEC
Collaborative Mindset

A collaborative strategy requires a deep awareness of what each system has to offer and is willing to share.
Collaborative Mindset

Break the cycle of abuse & neglect for the next generation
Do we let children accept this reality?
Or do we change the status quo?
Changing the Status Quo
Changing the Status Quo

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead
Changing the Status Quo

• Candice Lightner, MADD Founder
  – Sept 1980: MADD incorporates
  – End of 1980: MADD grows to 11 chapters
  – 1982: MADD grows to 100 chapters; participates in drunk driving commission at President Reagan’s request
  – 1983: 129 new anti-drunk driving laws passed
  – 1984: Uniform drinking age raised to 21; MADD grows to 330 chapters in 47 states
  – 2000: Congress makes .08 BAC the national illegal limit for impaired driving
  – TODAY: More than 300,000 lives saved and more than 50,000 victims served
Believe in the future and create the reality
Our Vision: Healthy, Happy & Safe Children 100%
If we leave here today and do nothing different, *nothing* will change.

*WE CAN* make a difference...to change the trajectory of drug endangered children’s lives.
National DEC Offers:

- In Person Training:
  - Core DEC Awareness Training
  - The DEC Approach Training
  - Local DEC Development Training
  - Drug Identification and Drug Trends
  - Train the Trainer Trainings
  - Other

- Online Tribal DEC Training: 4 modules currently

- Monthly and archived Webinars

- Online Resource Center: articles, publications, example MOU’s and protocols (more than 1,500)

- National Network of over 10,000 professionals

- Monthly newsletter via eupdate

- Monthly DEC Connect Call

- Technical Assistance: in person, email, phone, webinar, etc.

- Experience and knowledgeable staff

- National DEC Conference
Thank You

www.nationaldec.org