

NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 016 - Folder 008

Drugs - Radio Town Hall

**ABC Radio Town Hall Meeting with President Clinton
March 12, 1997**

Potential Questions and Answers

Age of first time users is dropping

Q. In the last few years, more and more young people are trying drugs and at younger and younger ages. How can we reverse this trend?

A. This is a very serious problem. We began witnessing a change in our youth's attitudes towards drugs as early as 1989. Kids were not getting a consistent anti-drug message.

The number one goal of my National Drug Control Strategy is to educate and motivate youth to reject illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco. We know that if you can change youth's attitudes about drug use we can lower youth drug use.

That is why it is vital that parents are aware of the dangers drugs pose to our children. Drug prevention efforts should begin at home with discussions around the kitchen table. And parents should have the confidence that their kids are getting the same anti-drug message at school. That is why I have worked so hard to expand school-based drug prevention programs.

We all know that kids watch a lot of television. And their views and attitudes are often shaped by what they watch. Unfortunately, kids have not been getting a consistent anti-drug message through the media.

That is why my Strategy provides \$175 million for a national media campaign targeting illegal drug consumption by youth. This initiative would rely on high-impact, anti-drug television advertisements to educate and inform our youth about the dangers of illegal drug use. And we have challenged the networks to match us dollar for dollar.

Q. I have never tried drugs and I try to do the right thing every day. But drugs are all around me. In fact, drug deals go on right near my school. What can you do to make my neighborhood safe from drug dealers?

A. Four years ago, my Administration set out to reverse the rising tide of youth crime with a comprehensive program: more police, tougher punishment, and smarter crime prevention. Our strategy is working. Last year, violent crime dropped for the fifth year in a row, marking the longest period of decline in 25 years.

We are moving in the right direction, but we have a long way to go. We need to reach the point when people watch the evening news and they are shocked about a report on a violent crime.

That is why it is so important to put more community police officers on our streets and in our neighborhoods to not only enforce the law, but to prevent crime. Our initiatives are also designed to empower communities so that they can take back their neighborhoods from gangs and drug dealers. And my new Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Bill increases penalties for drug dealers who peddle to kids, use kids to sell drugs, or sell drugs in or near a school.

Q. Will cigarette smoking or drinking lead to drug use?

This we know --- a young man or a young woman who reaches age 21 without smoking, without abusing alcohol, and without using illegal drugs is virtually certain never to do so for the rest of their life.

Last year, I convened the first ever White House Leadership Conference on Youth, Drug Use and Violence. At that important event, Joe Califano spoke about some of the research findings of his Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. They found a powerful statistical relationship between adolescent use of nicotine, alcohol, and marijuana and the use of drugs like cocaine and heroin.

Listen to this: A 12 to 17 year-old who smokes cigarettes is 19 times likelier than one who doesn't to use cocaine. A 12 to 17 year-old who drinks alcohol is 50 times likelier than one who doesn't to use cocaine. And one who smokes pot is 85 times likelier than one who doesn't to use cocaine. The earlier and more frequently a child uses any of these substances, the likelier that child is to use cocaine or heroin.

That is why we must renew our commitment to the drug prevention strategies that deter first-time drug use and halt the progression from alcohol and tobacco use to illicit drugs. And that is why I included the prevention of underage drinking and smoking in the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy.

We need to get to our kids at earlier ages, today. They need to hear from their parents that drugs are wrong, drugs are illegal, and drugs can kill you.

Medical effects of drugs

Q. Part of the problem is that kids do not know how harmful drugs are to them. What

can we do to get that message out to them?

That will be the point of our national anti-drug media campaign -- to teach children how harmful drugs are and how they can ruin your life.

Children who use drug, alcohol or tobacco increase the chance of life-long dependency. They also incur greater health risks. Every day, 3,000 children begin smoking cigarettes regularly; as a result, a third of these youngsters will have their lives shortened.

The younger an individual starts drinking and the greater the intensity and frequency of alcohol consumption, the greater the risk of using other drugs.

The social and health costs to society of illicit drug use are staggering. Drug-related illness, death, and crime cost the nation approximately \$66.9 billion every year. Every man, woman, and child in America pays nearly \$1,000 annually to cover the expense of unnecessary health care, extra law enforcement, auto accidents, crime and lost productivity resulting from substance abuse.

Q. I know that you are working very hard to stop drugs from flowing into our country and taking drug dealers off our streets. But unfortunately, many kids are getting legal drugs through theft and other means. What can we do to prevent kids access to legal drugs?

A. Many American are dependent upon receiving their prescriptions through the mail. The Drug Enforcement Administration is very actively working to reduce the diversion of legal drugs for illegal purposes and reducing theft and fraud of prescription drugs. But government can only do so much. That is why it is so essential that kids learn from their parents that not only legal drugs but illegal drugs can be extremely harmful and addictive. All children should learn a valuable lesson from what occurred in Woburn, Massachusetts.

Q. Recently some states have passed medical marijuana initiatives so that terminally ill patients can use marijuana for their pain. Do you support these initiatives? What kind of message does this send our children about marijuana?

A. I opposed those measures. I believe that we need to ensure that all Americans have access to safe and effective medicine -- and my Administration has worked very hard in that direction. However, the marijuana initiatives in California and Arizona contradict Federal law and complicate the National Drug Control Strategy by sending the wrong message to our children. They undermine the concerted efforts of parents, educators, businesses, elected leaders, community groups and others to achieve a healthy, drug-free society. It is critical to send a clear

message to the drug legalization movement that this Administration will continue to enforce Federal law and oppose the legalization of illicit drugs outside of the medical-scientific process already in place.

Emerging Drugs -- Inhalants

Q. Many kids are doing inhalants. What can we do to cut off their access to them?

A. It is encouraging that in 1996 inhalant use actually went down for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders. But these drugs are still too popular and unfortunately too many youth are not aware of how dangerous they can be. We can never fully restrict inhalants because quite often they are common household products. That is why teaching kids about the dangers about all drugs is so critical to our effort to reduce youth drug use.

Talking to your kids about drugs

Q. Mr. President, I know what it is like to fight the temptation of drugs-- I've had an addiction to crack cocaine which I am currently getting treatment for. I don't want this to happen to my daughter when she grows up. How can you prevent this from happening to her too?

A. We must educate and enable our children to reject illegal drugs as well as alcohol and tobacco-- this is my National Drug Control Strategy's number one goal. And we must do this at an early age and continue it throughout their young lives-- from kindergarten all the way through high school. To this end, I have been a strong supporter of school-based prevention programs. I think we can have an even greater impact by focusing our drug prevention and education activities on those programs which have been found to be the most effective.

Q. How do you talk to Chelsea about drugs?

A. We know that many children abstain from using illegal drugs because an adult they respect -- usually a parent but often a teacher, coach, religious or community leader -- convinced them that using drugs was dangerous. Both Hillary and I have discussed drugs with Chelsea. She has very strong negative feelings about cigarettes, liquor and illicit drugs. She has dealt with this issue in a very mature way and she is committed to trying to help other young people stay out of trouble or help them if they think they are in trouble.

International drug trade

Q. What can you do to keep drugs from coming across our borders?

A. We must continue to shield America's air, land, and sea frontiers from the drug threat. By devoting more resources to protecting the Southwest border than ever before, we are increasing drug seizures, stopping drug smugglers, and disrupting major drug trafficking operations.

We must continue our interdiction efforts, which have greatly disrupted the trafficking patterns of cocaine smugglers and have blocked the free flow of cocaine through the western Caribbean into Florida and the Southeast.

Our comprehensive effort to reduce the drug flow cannot be limited to seizing drugs as they enter the United States. We must persist in our efforts to break foreign and domestic sources of supply. We know that by working with source and transit nations, we can greatly reduce foreign supply. International criminal narcotics organizations are a threat to our national security. But if we target these networks, we can dismantle them-- as we did the Cali Cartel.

Addicts with children

Q. I battled a serious drug addiction problem that began when I was in eighth grade. I became addicted to back pills and started to drink and take serious drugs like LSD. Thanks to the help I've received, I've been sober for three years. What do you propose to do to help young people like me who have serious addiction problems?

A. One of the most crucial things we can do is to try to prevent these problems before they become full-blown. That is why I support zero-tolerance policies for gateway drugs like tobacco and alcohol for young people. By cutting off access to gateway drugs, we can often prevent young people from getting involved in harder drugs like cocaine and heroin. One study found that children who smoke marijuana are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than peers who never tried marijuana.

Parents also must also play an active role to notice changes in their kid's behavior so they can talk to them, and get them help, if necessary.

And we need to help parents get treatment for their children who need it. My 1997 National Drug Control Strategy promotes effective, accessible drug treatment. It also supports research into the scientific reasons for drug addiction. In fact, my budget for the next fiscal year increases funding for prevention and treatment research at the National Institute for Drug Abuse to over half a billion dollars.

Government, schools, and community leaders can all play a role in educating our children

about drugs and their harmful effects. But parents must take the lead in talking to their children and warning them about the dangers of drugs and encouraging them to make positive, healthy choices. As my Drug Czar, General McCaffrey has said, the best weapon against drugs is the kitchen table.

Media glamorizing drug use

Q. Many of the songs that we listen to and the shows we watch glamorize drug use. And there are not many anti-drug songs, shows or ads these days. How can you help to counter this?

A. All too often we see signs of complacency about the dangers of drug use -- diminished attention to the drug problem by the national media; the glamorization and legitimization of drug use in the entertainment industry; the coddling of professional athletes who are habitual drug users.

We have reduced overall drug use by 50% over the last 15 years. But unfortunately, beginning as early as 1989, youth attitudes about drugs began to change -- and as a result, youth drug use began to rise in the early 1990s. This has been well-documented by one of the most reputable surveys in the country, the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future." In addition, Since 1990, the number of anti-drug PSA's have dropped by 30%. Kids have not been getting a consistent anti-drug message through the media.

We know that if you can change youth attitudes about drug use we can lower youth drug use. That is why my Strategy provides \$175 for a national media campaign targeting illegal drug consumption by youth. This initiative would rely on high-impact, anti-drug television advertisements to educate and inform the public about the dangers of illegal drug use.

Kids who are tempted but don't use drugs

Q. It is very difficult for young people to reject drugs when so many of their friends are using them and it is considered "cool." What advice do you have for young people to fight off peer pressure to use drugs?

A. It is not easy being a kid. Peer pressure can be overwhelming. So many young people use drugs simply because their friends do.

We have an obligation to give kids something to say "yes" to. That is why my Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Bill contains an After School Initiative so that kids are learning about life in the classroom and not on the streets.

In some communities drug testing is working for kids -- not so much the test itself but it gives kids a reason to fight off peer pressure. And frankly, quite often that is all our kids are asking for.

Q. The Boys and Girls Club helped me to stay away from drugs and a life of crime. But a lot of kids aren't as lucky and don't have places to go where they can stay out of trouble. Just locking up young people isn't going to solve our drug problem. What kinds of alternatives to gangs and drugs do you support for kids?

A. I agree that it is going to take much more than jailing people to solve our drug problem. My Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy contains an After School Initiative to help keep schools open late, on the weekends and in the summers-- giving kids safe havens from drugs and violence. The Boys and Girls Clubs and other organizations like it, give young people something to say "yes" to-- something that I agree is critical to help keep our kids away from gangs and drugs and out of trouble.

We must take a balanced approach if we want to bring down youth drug abuse. We've got to have tough punishments for those who sell drugs to kids and use kids to sell drugs. But we must also have treatment to help young people break their drug problems and prevention to teach children the dangers of drugs and give them positive choices in their place.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH TOWN HALL PARTICIPANTS

- 1. Have your parents ever talked to you about drugs?**

- 2. Do you have any role models in the media that teach you not to do drugs?**
Do you have any role models that you know personally that teach you the dangers of drugs?

- 3. Are there any programs in your school that educate you on the dangers of drugs?**

- 4. Those of you here today that have used drugs, how many of you didn't know the medical dangers of drugs before you used them, and wouldn't have used them if you did?**

- 5. How many of you know a person who sells or uses drugs? What do you think can be done to help them stop?**

Drug Fact Sheet

Overall Drug Use

An estimated 12.8 million Americans -- about 6% of the household population aged 12 and older -- use illegal drugs on a current basis (within the past 30 days). That is a 50% reduction from the 1979 peak of 25 million. Despite the dramatic drop, more than 1/3 of all Americans -- 12 and older -- have tried an illicit drug. Ninety percent of those used marijuana or hashish.

Trends in Youth Drug Use

Illicit drug use among 8th graders is up 150% over the past five years. And over 50% of 12th graders have tried an illicit drug. While alarmingly high, the prevalence of drug use among today's youth has not returned to near-epidemic levels of the late 1970s. In 1995, 10.9% of all youngsters between the ages 12-17 used illicit drugs on a "past-month" basis -- a doubling from the historic low in 1992 of 5.3% but still well below the 1979 peak of 16.3%.

Alcohol Use Among Youth. Alcohol is the drug most often used by young people. By 12th grade, over 3/4s of students have used alcohol in their lifetime. Approximately 1/4 10th grade students and 1/3 of 12th graders report having have 5 or more drinks on at least one occasion within two weeks of the survey

Tobacco Use Among Youth. Despite a decline in adult smoking, American youth continue to use tobacco products at rising rates. In 1996, nearly 2/3s of high school seniors have used cigarettes. More than 1 in 5 are daily users -- these are higher percentages than at any time since the 1970s. Every day, 3000 children begin smoking cigarettes regularly. As a result, according to one study, a third of these youngsters will have their lives shortened.

Marijuana Use Among Youth. Almost 1 in 4 high school seniors used marijuana on a "past-month" basis in 1996. Marijuana also accounts for most of the increase in illicit drug use among youths aged 12 to 17. Between 1994 and 1995, the rate of marijuana use among this age-group increased by 37 percent (from 6% to 8.2%). Adolescents are also beginning to smoke marijuana at a younger age. The mean age of first use dropped from 17.8 years in 1987 to 16.3 years in 1994. According to one study, children who smoke marijuana are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than peers who never tried marijuana.

Cocaine Use Among Youth. Cocaine use is not prevalent among young people. In 1996, approximately 2% of 12th graders were current cocaine users. While this figure was up from a low of 1.4% in 1992, it was still 70% lower than the 6.7% high in 1985.

Other Illicit Drug Use Among Youth. About 5% of high school students use stimulants on a monthly basis, and 10% have done so within the past year. Encouragingly, the use of inhalants -- the third most common illicit substance -- declined among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in 1996. LSD however was used by 8.8% of 12th graders drug the past year.

President Clinton's Anti-Drug Accomplishments for Our Youth

March 1997

President Clinton believes that we must all share in the responsibility to protect our children from the scourge of illegal drugs and that it must be a top priority. That is why the number one goal of the President's 1997 National Drug Control Strategy is to motivate America's youth to reject illegal drugs and substance abuse.

A Record of Accomplishments:

- ✓ **Zero-tolerance on underage drinking.** The President has pushed states to adopt a policy of zero-tolerance for teen drinking and driving or risk losing Federal highway funds.
- ✓ **Drug Testing.**
Drivers Licenses: The President's fiscal year 1998 budget includes funding for a state demonstration program to drug test teens before they receive their driver's licenses and provides incentives for states to fight drugged driving.
Home Drug Testing Kits: In January of this year, the Food and Drug Administration approved the first home drug testing kit, allowing parents to test their children for illicit drugs and talk to them about the consequences of drug use.
- ✓ **Safe and Drug-Free Schools.** The President has fought throughout his term for full funding of the program which is used by over 97% of the school districts in the country to keep violence and drugs away from students and our schools.
- ✓ **Combating Emerging Drugs.**
Methamphetamine Strategy: Last year, the President signed into law a strategy to attack Methamphetamine at every level-- through regulation of precursor chemicals, and increasing criminal penalties for possession and distribution.
Rohypnol: Responding quickly its rising popularity, the President directed the Customs Department to crack down on Rohypnol at the ports of entry. He later signed into law tougher penalties for those who use of Rohypnol to facilitate a violent crime.
- ✓ **White House Conference on Youth, Drug Use, and Violence.** Last year, the President held the first ever Conference on Youth, Drug Use and Violence. The Conference launched a national media literacy and drug deglamorization campaign aimed at youth.
- ✓ **Working to end teen tobacco use.** President Clinton has proposed restricting youth access to tobacco products, and reducing the advertising and promotional activities that make these products appealing to young people.

A Plan of Action for 1997:

- ✓ **National Anti-Drug Media Campaign.** The cornerstone of the President's anti-drug strategy is a \$175 million national media campaign targeting our youth with a consistent anti-drug message.
- ✓ **Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy.** President Clinton's strategy is a balanced plan to target gangs and violent juveniles, and keep kids gun and drug-free and on the right track:
After Schools Initiatives. President Clinton's plan creates 1,000 after school initiatives to keep schools open in the evenings, weekends and during the summer, keeping kids off the streets and giving them something to say "yes" to.
Youth Drug Courts. The strategy contains \$50 million for juvenile drug and gun courts to create innovative and individualized penalties to benefit the public and youth offenders.
Tough Penalties for Drug Traffickers. The President's strategy increases penalties for those who sell drugs to kids and use kids to sell drugs.

File-Drugs - Radio Town Hall

March 11, 1997

**LIVE ABC RADIO TOWN HALL MEETING
STRAIGHT TALK ON DRUGS**

DATE: March 12, 1997
LOCATION: East Room
TIME: 11:00 AM EST
FROM: Mike McCurry & Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

This program is a live, one-hour radio broadcast focusing on the increasing use of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco by America's youth. The broadcast will offer you an opportunity to discuss with children and parents the importance of an open and early dialogue on drug abuse. It will also allow you to highlight the Administration's focus on protecting children through your national drug strategy, which is part of an overall mission of giving America's children a safe, wholesome, constructive upbringing that begins with a drug-free life, appropriate health care, safe streets and a decent education.

II. BACKGROUND

The ABC Radio and Television Network is dedicating the entire month of March to a major public service campaign to encourage parents to talk with their children about drugs. The campaign includes specially produced public service announcements aired every network hour for the entire month, as well as programming from the ABC News, Daytime and Entertainment divisions.

The Radio Town Hall Meeting is designed to be a discussion on the growing danger drugs pose to America's children. The program will be broken into four main segments, in which specific attention will be given to:

- ❑ The declining age of first-time drug users
- ❑ The medical effects of drugs
- ❑ Inhalants and gateway drugs
- ❑ Parents who once used drugs and their strategy for talking to children
- ❑ Approaching parents for advice
- ❑ Media messages on drugs
- ❑ Responding to peer pressure
- ❑ Solutions: Programs that work and information and

resources available to all
 While studies have shown that drug use among teens in America has doubled, children whose parents have talked to them about the risks of drugs are half as likely to use drugs. A recent ABC News-Washington Post poll finds contradictory responses from teenagers and their parents when comparing their perceptions on drugs.

- ❖ 85% of parents say they have had a *serious talk* with the child about drugs; 45% of teens say the same
- ❖ 60% of parents say their child knows someone in school with a serious drug problem; 38% of teens say the same
- ❖ 52% of parents say that drug abuse in local schools is a serious problem or crisis; 34% of teens say the same

(Washington Post, March 4, 1997)

The audience for the town hall meeting is comprised of 31 students and 14 parents, doctors and counselors. The audience is geographically diverse, representing Los Angeles and Sacramento California, Baltimore, Woburn and Springfield, Massachusetts, New York City, Detroit, and Washington, DC. Several of the students are recovering substance abusers, several are drug-free honor students from schools in drug-infested neighborhoods. See attached bios for further information.

NOTE: You will be using a hard-wired lavalier microphone, with a hand-held microphone for backup. The audience will be heard through boom microphones operated by ABC radio technicians.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing:
 The President
 Gen. Barry McCaffrey
 Sec. Donna Shalala
 Sylvia Matthews
 Ann Lewis
 Mike McCurry
 Bruce Reed
 Lorrie McHugh
 Dennis Burke

Town Hall Meeting:

Event Participants

The President
 Peter Jennings
 Dominique Dawes

50 Audience Members: Children, Parents, Guidance Counselors

(see attached for biographical information)

NOTE: Gen. Barry McCaffrey and Sec. Donna Shalala will be seated with the audience.

Event Staff

Lorrie McHugh

Megan Moloney

Brenda Anders

Sarah Farnsworth

ABC Radio News Production Staff

White House Communications Agency (WHCA) staff

White House Television (WHTV)

White House photographer

V. PRESS PLAN

ABC has had an outstanding response from its affiliate stations. The broadcast will be carried by stations in 27 of the top 30 media markets in the country, including live coverage in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, Dallas, Seattle, Boston, and San Francisco. Other markets committed to carrying the program include: Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, Tampa, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Denver, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, Portland, San Diego, Kansas City, San Antonio and Louisville. Also, KARN-AM in Little Rock, which is not an ABC affiliate, will broadcast the program over the Arkansas Radio Network. The broadcast is available to nearly three-thousand ABC Radio affiliate stations. The ABC Radio network is heard each week by over 120-million people.

The White House Pool will cover the opening segment of the program. They will be escorted out of the room following your opening remarks, plus one Q&A.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

10:00 AM Briefing

10:45 AM Warm Up with Studio Audience

11:06 AM Live Town Hall meeting begins

11:06-11:16

Opening Segment

- *Welcoming Remarks*

- *Introduction of Dominique Dawes*

- *The declining age of drug users*

11:17-11:20

Commercial Break

NOTE: ABC will run the Dominique Dawes PSA for Girl Power! during this break.

The ABC Radio Network will not run commercials, only public service announcements during the breaks; however, local stations may choose to air paid commercials.

11:20-11:30 Segment Two
- Parents who once used drugs & their strategy for talking to children
- International drug trade
- What are the signs of trouble?

11:30-11:33 Commercial Break

11:33-11:46 Segment Three
- Media messages on drugs
- What a child should say to friends who try drugs
- Children taking charge of their lives

11:46-11:49 Commercial Break

11:49-11:59:30 Closing Segment
- Solutions: Programs that work
- Final questions and show summary

Group photo with guests

VI. REMARKS

There will be brief opening remarks at the beginning of the program and an opportunity for brief closing remarks at the end. During your opening remarks, you will introduce US Olympic Gymnast Dominique Dawes, who has recorded a public service announcement for the Department of Health and Human Services. The PSA is part of a national service campaign to encourage and empower girls ages 9-14 to be drug- and alcohol-free. Remarks will be forwarded by the Office of Speechwriting.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- ☒ Q&A
- ☒ Biographies
- ☒ Format