



Helping to Keep America's Youth 'Above the Influence'

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, a program within the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), launched the *Above the Influence* (ATI) Campaign to capture the attention of youth by challenging them to think critically about the adverse effects of drug use and the potential negative influences surrounding them in their social and media environments. The ATI Campaign defines substance use as “an influence that makes you less than you.” The message urges youth to be true to themselves by rejecting negative influences in their lives.

The primary target audience for *Above the Influence* is teens 12 to 17 years old, with a focus on 14- to 16-year-olds (typically 8th, 9th, and 10th graders). Research indicates that teens are most likely to try drugs during these critical transition years from middle school to high school.

ATI Resonates with Teens

The ATI brand and its authentic peer-to-peer, non-judgmental messaging approach has become a philosophy for teens and inspires them to continue to make informed choices. Data show that teens understand the brand, embrace it, and proudly identify themselves as *Above the Influence* (ATI).



Findings from the Campaign's year-round survey of teens indicate that not only are 80 percent of teens aware of ATI advertising, but 75 percent of teens (regardless of gender or ethnicity) say *Above the Influence* speaks to them.

More important, survey data show that youth who are aware of the *Above the Influence* advertising are consistently more likely to have stronger anti-drug beliefs than those unaware of the Campaign's advertising. Research makes clear that teens who hold strong anti-drug beliefs are less likely to use substances.

ONDCP seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

Supporting Community-Based Prevention

As outlined in the 2010 *National Drug Control Strategy*, ONDCP will continue to seek a comprehensive and balanced approach to reducing drug use and its consequences in the United States, with a renewed emphasis on preventing drug use in the first place.

The *Above the Influence* Campaign includes broadened messaging to focus on substances most abused by teens. It delivers prevention messaging at the national level as well as more targeted efforts at the local community level. This two-tiered approach allows the Campaign to continue reaching out to teens across the country with a highly visible national media presence, while fostering the active engagement and participation of youth at the community level.

The national (Tier 1) portion of the *Above the Influence* Campaign includes traditional media, such as television, the Internet, and cinema, and now places a greater emphasis on digital media outlets, such as YouTube, and social networking partners, such as Facebook.

Localizing Campaign Advertising

The Media Campaign recognizes that youth substance-use prevention ultimately occurs at the community level, and that community-level partners are vitally important to helping keep youth drug free. Therefore, we are leveraging the strength and high brand awareness of *Above the Influence* and encouraging communities to localize and customize the Campaign's messages to address specific drug issues through the local (Tier 2) initiative.

This approach supports local prevention efforts by providing Campaign resources – including paid media, community-based activities, local partnerships, public service announcement materials, and news media attention – at the community level. Community-based activities and local partnerships will be key in reaching teens across multiple domains, such as schools, clubs, worksites, faith communities, and recreational programs, with Campaign messages.

The Influence Project

To emphasize the renewed local focus, the *Above the Influence* Campaign will engage youth in a national program called the Influence Project. Teens from across the country will be able to log onto www.AbovetheInfluence.com and participate in the Influence Project contest by entering their ZIP code and top influences. Cities with the most ZIP code entries will win a special promotional event from the *Above the Influence* team.

Participating teens also will have an opportunity to see and hear what other teens from their hometowns – and throughout the United States – are saying. A media gallery on the website highlights video footage of teens from around the country talking about the positive and negative influences in their lives and in their communities.

For more information, visit www.TheAntiDrug.com/Resources.

ONDCP seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.