



The National Drugs Campaign has been running since 2001, with the Campaign being reviewed each year depending on emerging drug trends at the time.

The strategic approach and development of information resources for the Campaign has been guided by a comprehensive program of market research. Each phase of the Campaign delivery has involved:

- targeted national advertising including television, press, magazines and on-line mediums;
- information for parents (delivered to all households in phases one and three);
- printed information resources for youth;
- a national hotline for information and to link relevant callers to state based drug and alcohol services;
- translated resources and placement of information for parents from Non-English speaking background; and
- a comprehensive media and public relations strategy and partnerships to further disseminate messages – particularly those messages encouraging youth to seek help.

Evaluations have shown that the National Drugs Campaign has been consistent in reaching its target audience. The high levels of awareness of the harms associated with drug use, initially reached in Stage One of the Campaign, have been maintained throughout. The key findings of the most recent evaluation (2010) of the Campaign were:

- Seventy per cent of the ecstasy user group and 44% of young people aged 15–25 in the general community said they had recently seen, read or heard advertising about illicit drugs. There was a very high recognition of the campaign elements among these groups, with 92% of ecstasy users and 70% of young people recognising one or more elements.
- Forty-six per cent of young people who had seen the campaign said they had been influenced or taken action as a result, with commonly identified outcomes such as thinking about the consequences of taking drugs, avoiding use, considering the potential harm involved in taking drugs and reinforcing existing beliefs about drugs.
- The proportion of young people aged 15–24 who are identified as ‘at risk’ of accepting an offer of drugs continues to be significantly lower than at the commencement of the youth component of the campaign in 2004:
 - 28% were at risk of accepting cannabis, down from 42% in 2004;
 - 15% were at risk of accepting ecstasy, down from 21% in 2004; and
 - 11% were at risk of accepting speed, down from 16% in 2004.
- Consistent with the strong findings in relation to at risk young people, there was evidence that substantial numbers of young people had resisted an offer of drugs, with around 55% of young people having resisted an offer of cannabis or cocaine, and just under 70% of young people having resisted an offer of ecstasy, speed or ice.

Evaluations have also found that maintaining public awareness of the harms of illicit drug use through the Campaign is a cost effective prevention strategy for the Australian Government.