



# American Drug Testing

*Drug-Free Workplace Programs*

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## DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORKPLACE.

### More Schools Test for Drugs

The number of schools testing students for drug use is rising as legal barriers to testing have fallen, funding for it has jumped and schools have begun to expand the categories of students who can be screened.

Since the Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that random testing of student athletes and others in competitive extracurricular ac-



tivities did not violate the students' privacy rights, the Bush administration has made testing middle- and high-school students a priority.

In the 2005-06 school year, 373 public secondary schools got federal money for testing, up from 79 schools two years ago, U.S. Department of Education

records show. The government has not tracked the rise of locally funded programs as closely, but the White House estimates that an additional 225 schools have them.

*"... 50% of 12th-graders surveyed last year said they had tried an illicit drug."*

President Bush has asked Congress to increase grant money for testing by 45% next year, to \$15 million.

The number of public secondary schools with testing programs remains a tiny percentage of the 28,000 such schools nationwide. Many districts have been reluctant to impose drug testing, fearing they could face challenges in state courts. Several states' constitutions include privacy rights that go beyond what federal courts have granted, says Graham Boyd, director of the ACLU's Drug Law Reform Project in Santa Cruz, Calif.

However, the rise in testing suggests that such programs are "taking off," says David

Evans of the Drug-Free Schools Coalition in New Jersey. Schools in that state recently decided to randomly test athletes in state tournaments for about 80 substances, including stimulants and steroids. "This happened with workplace drug testing," Evans says. "It started slowly and then grew." It's unclear how many students are testing positive for drugs. The results are secret, and schools are not required to report them to the U.S. government. The results also may not be given to police or used to punish students other than to remove them from extracurricular activities. Most schools involved in testing screen for marijuana, stimulants and opiates. More extensive tests, such as for



the Nettle Creek school district's secondary school in Hagerstown, Ind., will be subject to random testing — not only athletes and students in clubs, but also those who drive to campus and anyone who wants to attend a school prom or class party.

The ACLU and groups such as Students for a Sensible Drug Policy say there is no proof that testing deters drug use. They say testing could discourage kids from joining sports teams or after-school clubs. White House drug czar John Walters says testing gives teens a reason to reject peer pressure to use drugs. "It'll give a kid a suit of armor," he says.

Teens' drug use has dipped recently, a University of Michigan study says. However, 50% of 12th-graders surveyed last year said they had tried an illicit drug.

Source: USA Today

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steroids, add to the cost. A typical test costs \$42, the Department of Education says.

A few school systems are beginning to test the legal boundaries the Supreme Court set for screening students. This fall, nearly all 575 students in