

STUDENT DRUG TESTING

In June 2002, the U.S. Supreme Court broadened the authority of public schools to test students for illegal drugs. Voting 5 to 4, the Court ruled to allow random drug tests for all middle and high school students participating in competitive extracurricular activities. The ruling greatly expands the scope of school drug testing, which previously had been allowed only for student athletes.

Already, testing has been shown to be extremely effective at reducing drug use in schools and businesses all over the country. As a deterrent, few methods work better or deliver clearer results. Drug testing of airline pilots and school bus drivers, for example, has made the skies and roads safer for travel.

Parents, educators – indeed, anyone concerned about the welfare of our young people – should welcome the High Court’s action. It’s a big step in the right direction, for it gives every school in every city and every town a powerful new tool for controlling one of the worst threats facing kids today.¹

The aim of drug testing is not to trap and punish students who use drugs. It is, in fact, counterproductive simply to punish them without trying to alter their behavior. The purpose of testing is to prevent drug dependence and to help drug-dependent students become drug free.

For those who worry about the “Big Brother” dimension of drug testing, it is worth pointing out that test results are generally required by law to remain confidential, and in no case are they turned over to the police.²

FirstLab can assist you in conducting an assessment of your school’s need and ensure that a substance abuse testing program is tailored to meet your individual objectives. Additionally, we can provide expert consultation to guide you through the many scientific, technical, and legal complexities of the testing process. We offer the flexibility of partnering with your internal staff for providing complete program management.

¹ John P. Walters, Director of National Drug Control Policy, “What you need to know about Drug Testing in Schools.” August 29, 2002

² “What you need to know about Drug Testing in Schools.” August 29, 2002

FirstLab is a Third Party Administrator (TPA) specializing in the design, implementation, and management of drug and alcohol testing programs. FirstLab provides full or partial program services customized to meet each schools requirements including the following:

- ♦ Assistance in developing policies and procedures
- ♦ National network of specimen collection facilities
- ♦ On-site collection and testing capabilities
- ♦ Computerized random selection program
- ♦ Analysis of specimens at DHHS certified laboratories, Medical Review Officer (MRO) Services and reports
- ♦ State of the art information management system, LinkUp[®], providing secured access to results via Internet, voice-response fax or direct downloads
- ♦ Free 24 hour consultation hotline
- ♦ Linkage to a network of Substance Abuse Professionals (SAPs)

Did you know?

The US Drug Enforcement Administration report the following:

- ♦ 14 million Americans over the age of 12 are addicted to drugs or 6% of the total population.
- ♦ Average age of usage onset (timeline):
 - 9 years old – cigarettes
 - 11 years old – alcohol
 - 13 years old – marijuana

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT FIRSTLAB'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AT 800-732-3784 EXT 224 OR EMAIL TO PLEVINS@FIRSTLAB.COM