

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE – NEW JERSEY  
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## **NCADD-NJ sees State Supreme Court decision on school drug testing as validation of community response to youth alcohol and drug use**

TRENTON ... (June 10, 2003) - The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey views yesterday's State Supreme Court decision upholding random drug testing of students at Hunterdon Central Regional High School as sustaining one element in a community-wide response to the growing problem of youth alcohol and drug use. The 4-3 majority opinion stated that the decision would not automatically open all districts to random testing because they would not necessarily meet the special needs found to exist in Hunterdon, meaning that "factors, such as the scope of specific drug use or alcohol use, might vary from school to school."

NCADD-NJ Director of Public Affairs and Policy John Hulick said, "We recognize that Hunterdon's drug testing program is first and foremost concerned with the students' well-being, evidenced by its emphasis on counseling students who test positive, not simply on punishing them. In this case, the community incorporated drug testing as part of a broad effort to confront this problem, and then put the focus on counseling students found to be using drugs. The district was reacting to concerns about a worsening situation, fears that, in the words of the school's principle, were corroborated by 'a survey that was scientifically reliable.'"

The survey of students in grades 10-12, along with community involvement that included the creation of a task force, acted as a catalyst for the drug testing program. The survey found that 33 percent of students in those grades had used marijuana in past year, that 13 percent of seniors had tried cocaine, and that 12 percent of juniors had used hallucinogens; 40 percent of students had been drunk in past year, the survey found. Students also reported in the questionnaire that illegal drugs were readily available.

NCADD-NJ has dedicated itself for more than 20 years to educating New Jersey's citizens about alcohol and drug use, treatment and prevention issues, to advocating on state policies concerning individuals addicted to alcohol or other drugs, and to reducing the stigma that frustrates a public health approach to the disease of addiction.

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