



UPDATED 2022

Promising Practices for Helping Drug Endangered Children

PATHS TO A COMMON VISION



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice





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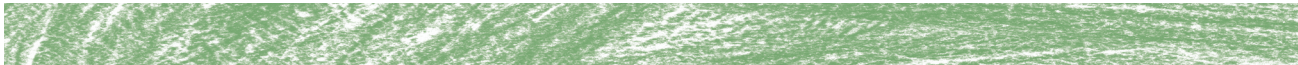
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Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

Colleagues,

More than 12 percent of children in the United States—nine million children—live in homes where a parent or other adult uses illegal drugs. The impact on these children can be devastating. They are three times more likely than children in drug-free environments to be verbally, physically, or sexually abused and four times more likely to be neglected. It is hard to find these kids—and harder still to protect them.

Fortunately, organizations like the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (National DEC) and their affiliated state, local, and tribal DEC alliances continue to make great strides in establishing training and resources that help law enforcement, social workers, teachers, community groups, and others identify and assist children growing up in these tragic circumstances. National DEC regularly demonstrates that we can provide a powerfully visible alternative to the neglect and violence that are part of the daily lives of far too many children. We can intervene more effectively to help mitigate the long-term negative effects children face when they are exposed to this kind of trauma.

Using trauma-informed approaches to respond to children who are endangered by drugs is increasingly becoming a central part of law enforcement's mission to serve and protect. This new edition of *Promising Practices for Helping Drug Endangered Children: Paths to a Common Vision* (originally published in 2014) highlights resources National DEC has developed to facilitate the establishment of state, local, and tribal alliances; it also gives examples of how many agencies are consistently using those resources to carry out the organization's three-part mission and make a difference in children's lives. It can help you and your agency collaborate with others in your community to make identifying and serving these children part of your daily routine. Every child deserves to grow up in a home free from abuse and neglect. Together, we can make that a reality.



Robert E. Chapman
Acting Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Mission of National DEC and Purpose of This Guide

The National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (National DEC) teaches early identification, response, and appropriate intervention services for children and families affected by parental or caregiver substance misuse. We equip comprehensive, multidisciplinary alliances, communities, organizations, and individuals with access to our national resource center, training, and technical assistance.

Our vision is 100 percent healthy, safe children, families, and communities free from the negative impact of substance misuse and drug activity.

Who we are and what we do

National DEC defines *drug endangered children* as children who are at risk of suffering physical or emotional harm as a result of legal and/or illegal drug use, possession, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution. They may also be children whose caretaker's legal and/or illegal substance misuse interferes with the caretaker's ability to parent and provide a safe and nurturing environment.

The essence of this definition is that children plus drugs equals risk. When children live in homes in which the adults are involved in the illegal drug trade or are using substances, the children's well-being is at risk. The DEC movement challenges all of us to recognize these risks and to work together in a collaborative way to protect children from neglect and abuse, which all too often occurs across generations, and provide help to the children and families so they can heal. We call this collaborative effort the DEC Approach.

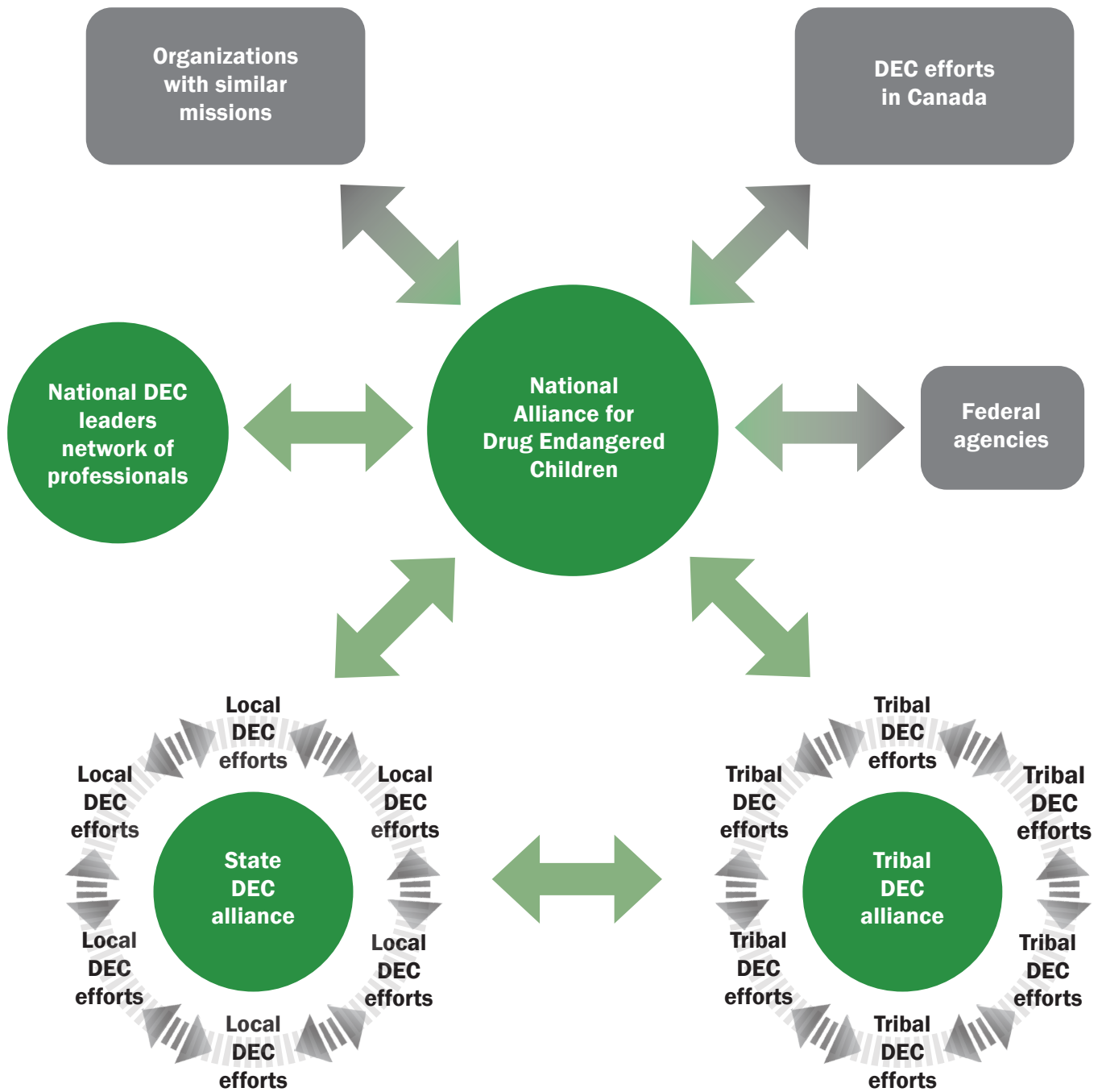
The DEC Approach focuses on forming community-based partnerships that engage professionals from multiple disciplines in a collaboration to identify, respond to, and provide services and support to children and families who live in environments where there is substance use or drug activity. This joint approach brings to the forefront the collaborative aspect of the duties of these various disciplines while also assisting in meeting these children's needs.

We work to strengthen community capacity by coordinating efforts among state, tribal, and local alliances and by providing training and technical assistance. We also connect practitioners to resources through our resource center, and with the support of government agencies, National DEC provides program assistance to communities across the United States.

We believe that success begins with identifying children at risk. Recognizing children as victims gives us all an opportunity to provide response, intervention, and support. By collaborating and leveraging resources, we can provide opportunities to drug endangered children to live in safe and nurturing environments, free from abuse and neglect.

National DEC, along with DEC professionals and DEC alliances throughout the United States, has worked hard to create effective collaborations at the national, state, tribal, and local levels and to institutionalize the DEC Approach to the benefit of drug endangered children and their families. We believe that being part of DEC efforts makes each of us part of a larger solution, connects us to other professionals working on the same challenges, and helps us advocate more effectively on behalf of children and families. Figure 1 on page vii shows how some of the organizations and entities involved in the DEC effort are connected.

Figure 1. Organizations and entities connected by the DEC mission



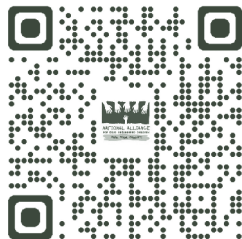
About this guide

DEC alliances are the cornerstone of the effort to identify and help drug endangered children. Contact National DEC staff at info@nationaldec.org for more information on current and upcoming DEC alliances or to get more information on how to establish yours. These multidisciplinary alliances have developed programs structured around the legislative statutes, drug trends, and partnerships in their state, tribe, or community to uniquely fit the needs of their community members and local DEC initiatives. Even though no two DEC alliances are exactly alike, they all have many similarities including a working partnership with National DEC, awareness campaigns, marketing strategies and branding, DEC trainings and conferences, and data collection.

National DEC and alliances at all levels across the country work hard to develop promising practices to help children and families impacted by addiction and substance use. Promising practices are those practices that have proven to be effective at achieving a specific aim and that hold promise for other organizations. The purpose of this guide is to share promising practices around drug endangered children to further the DEC mission. These promising practices are being used by DEC alliance leaders across the nation as they strengthen their DEC organizations and resources. They are also being used by current practitioners from various disciplines to implement and institutionalize their local drug endangered children initiatives.

We hope this guide will connect you to other state, tribal, and local DEC leaders as well as professionals in the field so you can leverage resources and take advantage of tools that have already been developed to strengthen DEC efforts in your area. National DEC intends to periodically revise this publication with updated information about DEC promising practices and new DEC developments. The QR code on this page will lead you to National DEC's website, www.nationaldec.org, and the appendices to this publication.

National DEC staff and the authors of this document, Carrie Jensen, Eric Nation, and Stacey Read, would like to thank all the alliances, professionals, and partners for sharing their promising practices and for their contributions to this guide. Without strong partnerships and collaboration, this work and this guide would be impossible. Together, we are truly stronger.



National DEC's Foundational Resources

We start by highlighting the foundational resources developed by National DEC. These resources are used by state, tribal, and local alliances as they build, strengthen, and grow their DEC efforts.

Training and technical assistance

We offer a range of trainings and technical assistance to communities and cater to local needs. Our foundational trainings include Core DEC Awareness, DEC Approach, Local DEC Development with the Roadmap and Toolkit, DEC Development Academy, DEC Train-the-Trainer, and Intersection of DEC and Human Trafficking. Other trainings include Early Identification, Evidence, and Information Collection and Tabletop Exercises. All of these trainings are offered both in person and virtually. National DEC offers other trainings by request on a variety of topics.

National DEC also has four self-paced online training modules; these are important baseline training for anyone who may encounter drug endangered children. The modules were developed through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). They are free and geared towards all disciplines and range from 30 to 45 minutes each. The course modules feature interviews with a wide array of experts from across the United States, interactive graphics, scenario videos, and a virtual tour of a home impacted by drug presence. The course descriptions are available on our website, www.nationaldec.org.

National DEC provides a wide array of technical assistance as well. We adapt and customize technical assistance based on each individual alliance's or professional's needs. Some of the many options we provide include assistance with data and information, coaching sessions, case scenarios, strategic planning, content and social media development, and "ask the expert." The technical assistance we offer can be provided both in person and virtually.

National DEC's website

The National DEC website, www.nationaldec.org, helps connect professionals to pertinent information that will help them in their efforts of identifying and helping children. The resources, articles, webinars, tools, and other resources provided include the following:

- **Roadmap and Toolkit.** With the support of the COPS Office in the U.S. Department of Justice, National DEC developed a Roadmap and Toolkit jump drive that is available through our website. It provides materials, resources, handouts, and guidelines for building a DEC alliance.
- **Online training courses.** National DEC hosts four training modules ranging in length from 30 to 45 minutes each.
- **Professional development webinars.** National DEC holds DEC-related professional development webinars that are available free of charge and accessible for later viewing.

- **Peer-to-peer call sharing.** Offered quarterly, our All Hands on DEC peer-to-peer call sharing provides networking and a chance to learn from others working on DEC efforts in their local areas. These virtual calls are held live, and the recordings are posted at the website for later viewing.
- **Online resource library.** National DEC's online Resource Center contains downloadable DEC-related research articles and resources.
- **Downloadable resources.** National DEC offers one-page resources, handouts, brochures, and other materials using current research and timely topics to address the requests of alliances and provide useful resources to help them in their local DEC efforts. Find them and the appendices to this publication at www.nationaldec.org or by following the QR code on page viii. Some of the available resources include the following:
 - A series of Working with Other Professionals in Drug Endangered Children Efforts one-page fact sheets (appendices 1–6 at the website) provides professionals with information about what other disciplines involved in DEC efforts can do and what they can offer to others' DEC efforts. These fact sheets were developed in partnership with the Office of Victims of Crime and have been made available to everyone.
 - An editable brochure on Drug and Alcohol Use During Pregnancy (appendix 7 at the website) is packed full of information to which you can easily add local resources.
 - A handout on Developmental Consequences of Fetal Exposure to Prenatal Drug Use (appendix 8 at the website) provides information on how drugs impact the fetus in utero with specific details about several types of drugs.
 - A series of one-page documents (appendices 9–11 at the website) defines drug endangered children, statistics, what you need to know, and who should be involved in DEC efforts.
 - In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, National DEC developed and published several fact sheets and supports (appendix 12 at the website) about recognizing and responding to drug endangered children during a pandemic through virtual interactions. National DEC partnered with Drug Free America Foundation, Inc. on these resources to broaden awareness and reach.

All these resources are designed to make DEC awareness, research, and training more accessible to more practitioners.



CheckDEC Mobile App

CheckDEC is a free mobile app that easily connects children, families, and professionals to a wide array of information, resources, related up-to-the-minute news articles, and hope-filled videos. The app is geotagged and provides resources within the user's ZIP code for easy access to local resources. Everything accessible on the CheckDEC app is also available at www.checkdec.org.

Users can select from a variety of categories and subcategories to find a resource or service specific to their needs. This app puts crisis resources and services in the palm of users' hands and connects children and families to help today.

Users can submit their own real-life journeys and messages of hope or support via video as well. This peer-to-peer sharing can be powerful and encouraging and may change the trajectory of others' lives.



QR code to scan and download the CheckDEC app.

CheckDEC also provides state, tribal, and local DEC alliances and professionals across the country with resources and services. They can use the information for themselves, share it with other professionals, or share with children and families they are helping. DEC alliances can also add resources and services to the mobile app to enhance information within their area code. Alliance members and professionals can participate in the training that the app provides in a variety of formats and can use the resources to help their efforts.



CheckDEC mobile app provides professionals with resources, services, and training.

DEC Development Academy

National DEC partnered with the Mid-America Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) and ACT Missouri to develop the DEC Development Academy. The purpose of this academy is to support local communities in building their local DEC alliance by providing targeted and intensive training and technical assistance to a select group of community partners together in a cohort. In addition, this academy helps to build statewide capacity by creating a network of local DEC alliances, experts, and partnerships across states. Teams of community stakeholders representing different disciplines attend the academy together to learn from and support one another throughout the process. In the course of five to eight sessions, the academy builds the team's foundation of DEC knowledge, skills, and individual action plans for implementation. Peer-sharing and coaching sessions are included in the academy to foster new partnerships and collaboration and to help move efforts forward.

National DEC also offers an Advanced DEC Development Academy, featuring additional technical assistance sessions and training for communities that have completed the DEC Development Academy as they continue on their path of establishing a state, tribal, or local DEC alliance. For more information on the Advanced DEC Development Academy, contact our staff at info@nationaldec.org.

Certifying DEC trainers

Through our Train-the-Trainer program, we partner with state, tribal, and local alliances to certify local professionals in National DEC's curriculum with both the Core DEC and DEC Approach trainings. The training takes several days and is offered both in person and virtually. Having local professionals trained in the curriculum allows for sustainability and self-reliance to provide the trainings when and where they are needed within the community. DEC-certified trainers spread the DEC mission by providing National DEC-approved and -supported curriculum. Attending a train-the-trainer class is the first step in becoming a DEC certified trainer; trainers then provide regular trainings in their local areas using the provided, approved

curriculum materials. Trainers work with National DEC staff to report data and information on the trainings. Certified trainers have opportunity to work one on one with National DEC staff as they move efforts forward within their communities.

Roadmap and Toolkit

National DEC created a Roadmap and Toolkit, along with the Roadmap and Toolkit jump drive, to assist in alliance development. These tools are designed to consolidate all the information needed to form a DEC alliance. They provide resources (including samples from existing alliances) to help the formation proceed smoothly. The Roadmap includes all three stages of developing a DEC alliance: *Awareness*, *Implementation*, and *Institutionalization*. The Roadmap and Toolkit are also readily available for state, tribal, and local partners and professionals on our website, www.nationaldec.org.

Building and sustaining an alliance takes continual effort and attention; many of the steps will be repeated and expanded over time as new people join, the community grows, and efforts advance.



Access the National DEC Roadmap and Toolkit at www.nationaldec.org.



Awareness, Implementation, and Institutionalization—National DEC

The DEC mission has three main components:

- 1. Awareness.** Raising awareness about drug endangered children gets people on board and helps assistance efforts keep moving forward. It is important to raise awareness on a variety of topics, including substance use and addiction, their risks to children, the need for collaboration, and how people can help. It is also important to continue to provide awareness as staff turnover, staffing changes, and funding levels can all impact the work.
- 2. Implementation.** The next component is taking action and building the alliance. This is done by implementing a common vision, ongoing collaboration, and ongoing change, which is accomplished through the DEC Approach training. A common vision helps practitioners and community members share a common focus and end point, ongoing collaboration allows practitioners to continue asking themselves who is missing from the DEC alliance and allows for sharing information and making each discipline stronger, and ongoing change assists practitioners in responsively adapting the ways they do their jobs. The DEC Approach training and other resources help implement changes and put true collaboration into practice.
- 3. Institutionalization.** Sustaining DEC efforts is the institutionalization component. It is important to ensure current efforts will last and be effective. Institutionalization also involves staying aware of upcoming issues and preparing to address them. This stage is also when formalizing efforts with memoranda of understanding (MOU) and protocols and looking at policies and laws will be important.

The promising practices in this guide cover all three of these components and how to support and enhance them. All three components are interconnected—they overlap, and they are all essential for successfully breaking the cycles of neglect and abuse experienced by too many children and families in our communities.

Awareness

Awareness is the most important, and often underused, step in the Roadmap and Toolkit and in DEC efforts. Awareness should be used consistently and regularly throughout the whole DEC process, as there are always new members coming to the table, new community relationships built, and more aspects of every situation that need attention brought to them. As you move through Implementation and Institutionalization, continue to use pieces of the Awareness step; continually come back to it to strengthen and support your community and alliance.

National DEC has taken steps to build awareness throughout its national network. Here are several promising practices we have developed and used in building awareness around issues related to drug endangered children:

E-Updates. We provide monthly email newsletters with current research, news articles, and updated trainings and resources. The newsletters can be shared by professionals as part of providing awareness and education in their areas and helping alliance members and other professionals stay familiar with current DEC-related information.

Peer-to-peer sharing calls. The purpose of these quarterly calls is to bring DEC leaders together from across the nation to share their effective DEC efforts, exchange information, and learn from one another.

DEC videos. Videos are a great way to share a message, participate in training and awareness, and market DEC ideas. National DEC offers an archive of video clips and trainings we have created, led, and participated in.

- **Help, Hope, and Support videos.** We have several awareness videos that can be used as tools to help educate and encourage professionals, children, and families. These videos range from one to five minutes and can be used in awareness, education efforts, and other trainings. The videos are housed on our YouTube channel, the CheckDEC mobile app, and our website.
- **What's New in Blue: Season 2 Episode 5 | Drug Endangered Children featuring Lieutenant Eric Nation (retired).** This short video was developed with our partners at the COPS Office. Inspired by the approach used for TED Talks, *What's New in Blue* is a series of short videos intended to keep viewers informed about innovative developments and critical issues in law enforcement. The episodes feature informative discussions about ideas worth spreading throughout American policing in a format useful for viewing in roll call or training classes or sharing with colleagues and across social media. This episode is about drug endangered children and discusses how important DEC efforts are to children and families.
- **YouTube channel.** We have training, educational, personal journey, and public service announcement videos available on our YouTube channel. National DEC and professionals from across the country use these videos to provide awareness and hope to others. National DEC channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEp42dkpvBV4TZ5JFPIdV0w>

Social media. National DEC is active on social media, sharing daily posts on relevant news stories and the great work of DEC alliances and professionals and spotlighting current research, data, and information. Social media provides an opportunity to reach audiences and individuals who might not otherwise have the opportunity to learn about drug endangered children and National DEC's mission. Find National DEC on the following social media platforms:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalDEC4Kids/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NationalDEC>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/national-alliance-for-drug-endangered-children>

Partnerships. National DEC has established collaborative partnerships with federal, state, tribal, and local partners and communities from numerous disciplines across the United States and internationally. Partnerships are a cornerstone of the DEC work being done at all levels around the world. “Together we are stronger” is a motto associated with DEC efforts.



DEC Awareness Day. The fourth Wednesday of April every year is designated by National DEC and our national network of state, tribal, and local DEC alliances and professionals as Drug Endangered Children Awareness Day. People from across the United States can come together for one day in their state or community to specifically raise awareness of drug endangered children. DEC alliances have been very creative in developing strategies to raise awareness on this day about the risks faced by drug endangered children and what people can do to help the children and families. Activities have included governors’ proclamations, targeted and specific trainings, press releases, drives to collect items for drug endangered children, and more. Start planning today for the next DEC Awareness Day!

Podcasts. National DEC has leveraged technology and participated in many podcasts to spread awareness of the DEC mission. Podcasts and other streaming platforms allow for the DEC message to spread to audiences who otherwise might not be aware of the DEC mission. Examples of our podcast appearances can be found on our website at <https://nationaldec.org/resources-to-download/>.

Community assessment. A free community assessment (appendix 13 at the website, www.nationaldec.org, or follow the QR code on page viii) helps gather data already available within the community. We recommend completing this community assessment to gather and analyze current and relevant data and identify gaps, strengths, and areas to focus on. The assessment should be conducted through a local DEC alliance or by professionals working on DEC efforts to compile data from multiple disciplines to show how substance abuse is impacting children and families within communities.

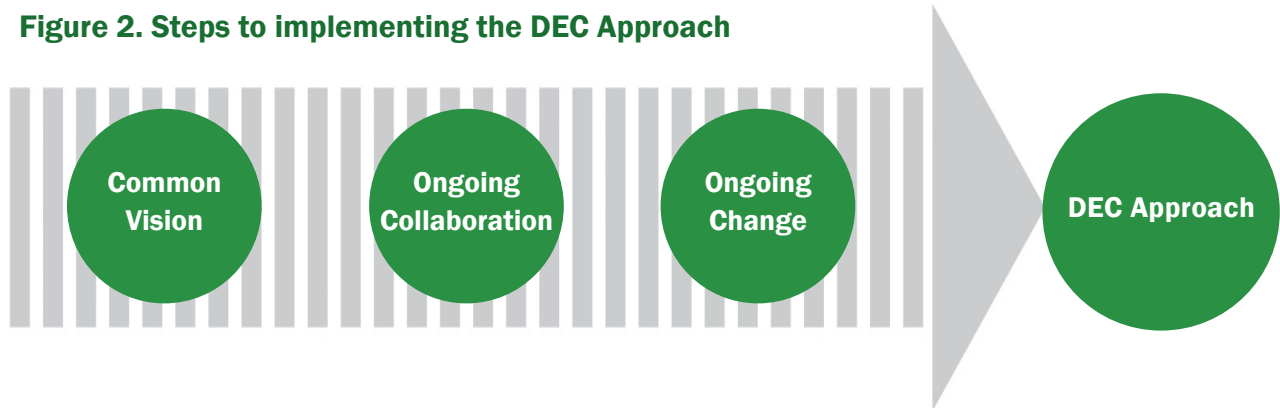
State, tribal, and local videos. National DEC assists alliances in creating short, informational public service announcement (PSA)–style videos to help advance the DEC mission. Alliance leaders work with the DEC staff on a script, images, and recordings to create a short video on the benefits of participating in local DEC alliances. Once National DEC staff finalize the PSA videos, they are posted on our YouTube page and shared with the DEC alliances to use in their awareness efforts.

Implementation

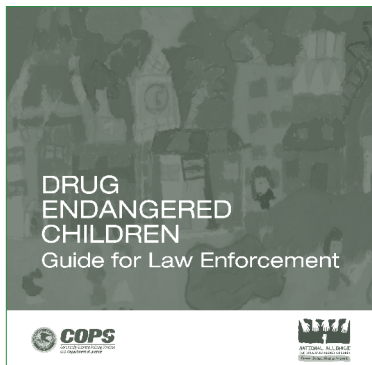
Because the DEC mission involves so many disciplines, agencies, and jurisdictions, implementing the DEC Approach can greatly enhance efforts to help drug endangered children and move them forward. The DEC Approach is a comprehensive strategy based on a common vision, ongoing collaboration between various disciplines and agencies, and ongoing changes in practice. This DEC Approach has proven to be effective

in improving the likelihood of better outcomes for drug endangered children. The DEC Approach is adaptable to fit each unique community's needs, allowing communities to implement approaches that will work for them. (See figure 2 to see the steps to implementing the collaborative DEC Approach.)

Figure 2. Steps to implementing the DEC Approach



Here are some of the resources and supports National DEC offers to help DEC alliances implement applicable practices in their community to support the DEC Approach. They can all be found with the online version of this publication at the website, www.nationaldec.org, or by following the QR code on page viii.

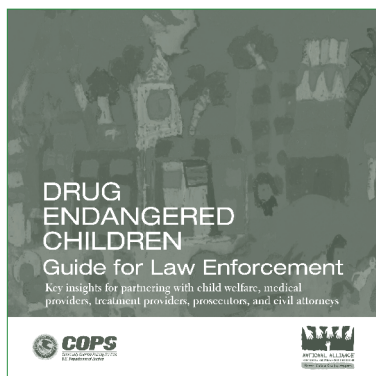


DEC Guide for Law Enforcement. With support from the COPS Office, National DEC developed *Drug Endangered Children: Guide for Law Enforcement* (appendix 14 at the website), which highlights the drug endangered children mission and introduces the DEC Approach.

This approach recognizes the risks that drug endangered children face and the likelihood of harm to them and focuses on engaging professionals from multiple disciplines in developing a collaborative response. It creates a mindset among all disciplines—not just law enforcement but also child welfare workers, medical professionals,

teachers, prosecutors and judicial staff, treatment providers, and other practitioners—that together we can break the cycle of substance use as well as abuse and neglect. All disciplines play a vital part in the DEC Approach.

The COPS Office DEC Guide identifies the core elements as well as the benefits and challenges of the collaborative DEC Approach and is a tool used as part of the local DEC development by state, tribal, and local DEC alliances. It includes organizational issues, bylaws and protocols, communications, public awareness and support, and recommended steps and timelines.



DEC Guide for Law Enforcement: Key Insights for Partnering with Child Welfare, Medical Providers, Treatment Providers, Prosecutors, and Civil Attorneys. This guide (appendix 15 at the website) builds on the concepts, tools, and resources outlined in the first DEC Guide. It provides insights about how various practitioners can help drug endangered children and how they do their jobs. This guide also provides insights about how collaboration among law enforcement, child welfare professionals, medical providers, treatment providers, and attorneys leads to better outcomes for drug endangered children.

DEC Approach Training: Moving from Awareness to Action. This training is designed to expand on the ideas of creating a collaborative mindset and effective behavioral change as outlined in the Core DEC training and the COPS Office DEC Guide. The DEC Approach Training directly engages law enforcement, child welfare, medical professionals, teachers, prosecutors and other judicial staff, and many other professionals in developing DEC-oriented partnerships and helps participants gain a deeper awareness and understanding of each discipline’s roles and responsibilities. It emphasizes that having more knowledge about our partner agencies enhances our response to children living in drug environments.

Peer-to-peer connections and sharing. Peer-to-peer connections and sharing are invaluable. Learning from how others have implemented their DEC efforts provides practical, real-life examples of DEC promising practices. National DEC proudly supports and connects peer-to-peer sharing in many ways.

- National DEC’s All Hands on DEC quarterly calls bring the DEC community together to share what has been working in local areas and learn from one another. National DEC staff facilitate the calls while alliance members and professionals share and discuss different topics.
- National DEC showcases the promising practices of state, tribal, and local alliances through social media, monthly newsletters, and inviting guest speakers during meetings and trainings. This allows National DEC staff to share information across the country so professionals and alliances in DEC efforts can build on others’ experience and prior hard work.

National DEC facilitates discussion around successes implemented by professionals and state, tribal, and local DEC alliances.

E-updates. Our monthly e-update not only builds a base for DEC awareness and knowledge but also continues to support the DEC community as alliances develop and grow throughout the implementation phase. E-updates spotlight how professionals and alliances are implementing their DEC efforts and share materials that alliances may find useful.

Sharing promising practices to help others implement. National DEC also provides opportunities through training and technical assistance to share promising practices across the country.

Institutionalization

Awareness and implementation are only part of the challenge; institutionalization is the key to sustainability. Institutionalization can take the form of changes to state laws, agency policies, and organizational procedures or even the creation of dedicated positions to oversee interagency coordination. National DEC provides support and ongoing efforts to create sustainable DEC alliances. Some of the ways we do this include the following:

Advanced DEC Development Academy. The Advanced DEC Development Academy provides alliances and professionals with a variety of in-depth and advanced training and technical assistance opportunities. These offerings can be targeted to meet the needs of the alliance and community or can be more broad-based. These advanced opportunities are offered on a variety of topics and with a variety of trainers, focusing on providing professionals with a wide range of information to be used in their community. They will help to advance the knowledge and skills of professionals across the nation.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). National DEC's Roadmap and Toolkit offers templates for MOUs. MOUs provide all organizations joining together for the DEC alliance with an understanding about what will happen and what information and resources will be shared among alliance members. State, tribal, and local DEC alliance should all implement MOUs.

National DEC develops formalized partnerships at every level through MOUs as well. For example the first state DEC alliance to sign an MOU with National DEC was the South Carolina Drug Endangered Children Alliance (SCDEC), which recognizes the establishment of the state DEC alliance and outlines the working partnership between SCDEC and National DEC. National DEC has since successfully implemented MOUs with alliances in many states.

Protocol worksheets to develop a DEC alliance. The Roadmap and Toolkit provides access to worksheets (appendix 16 at the website) designed to help establish a protocol when building a local DEC effort. The worksheets can assist a local community in formalizing the building of an alliance.

- The Building a DEC Protocol Worksheet goes hand in hand with National DEC's Identifying Key Disciplines and Individuals Worksheet. The first step in establishing a DEC alliance to help implement the DEC Approach in your community is to identify the key stakeholders who need to be involved at the ground level. Key stakeholders are those who
 - have opportunities to identify drug endangered children;
 - encounter drug endangered children on a regular basis;
 - provide access to resources that drug endangered children require;
 - could effect change in their organization or agency.

- One of the vital roles of a DEC alliance is to identify drug endangered children in the community. This identification is challenging because data recording practices regarding substance use vary so widely among organizations. Children and their caregivers are often identified by a primary indicator such as a drug charge for a parent or physical abuse or neglect to the child. Unfortunately, the substance misuse in the home—and its resulting impacts—is often minimized. These gaps in information lead to gaps in much-needed services for children exposed to these environments. By identifying the places and situations in a community where National DEC has a chance to discover drug endangered children, National DEC casts a wider net and close these gaps.

Grants. Grant funding allows us to provide our services, trainings, and technical assistance as well as expand our offerings. National DEC frequently co-writes grants with DEC alliances to expand the support, training, and technical assistance we can provide to the alliance and also to share these resources across the country. While grant funding is not necessary for DEC efforts, it allows for an easy expansion of efforts at all levels as well implementation of new ideas through DEC alliances across the nation.

Policies and laws. National DEC works to help those at all levels impact change. Such changes can be in policies and laws to help institutionalize DEC efforts. National DEC works with lawmakers and others on policies and laws both nationally and at the state and local levels.

Partnerships. National DEC works tirelessly to form partnerships to further the DEC mission across the country. These partnerships are the cornerstone of growth and expansion of the DEC mission and the chance to develop new ideas with new professionals. These partnerships exist at all levels and among all disciplines. National DEC also teaches others how to form and enhance their own partnerships in their areas.

Strategic planning. National DEC helps DEC alliances create an individualized strategic plan so they can continue to grow and expand their DEC efforts in measurable, achievable ways. Strategic plans provide structure and guidance to DEC efforts to meet and achieve the goals the alliance sets or that are laid out in a grant. With this guidance, alliances across the country achieve goals, implement ideas, and track data.

Logo. As MOUs and partnerships are established between National DEC and state, tribal, and local alliances, we provide the newly established alliance with an individualized, custom logo recognizing their alliance’s name and creating a visual connection between the alliance and National DEC. This linkage to National DEC and DEC efforts across the country is powerful as we are stronger together.



FOR DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

Help. Hope. Support.



Awareness, Implementation, and Institutionalization— State, Tribal, and Local Alliances

Awareness

Awareness is a very important phase that must not be missed or forgotten down the road; rather, awareness should always be brewing and should be made available to as many community members as possible. National DEC's Roadmap and Toolkit includes many suggestions about different ways to build awareness of drug endangered children. Using several strategies is very common for state, tribal, and local alliances; a particular awareness activity may succeed for one alliance and not for another. You may need to try several and implement different ways to bring awareness and address your community's drug concerns while targeting different audiences with different strategies.

The following are a few examples of awareness activities alliances have implemented. Additional ideas can be found in our Roadmap and Toolkit on our website, www.nationaldec.org.

Community assessment

What is a DEC community assessment, and why should a DEC alliance use it? A community assessment helps you examine your community's needs to identify specific issues to address and resources available to assist with DEC efforts. National DEC offers a simple assessment worksheet called Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Community Assessment (appendix 13 at the website) to help communities think about the next steps in their DEC efforts. The community assessment walks alliance members through ideas around collecting data, providing training and what trainings are needed, looking at community resources already in place, looking at gaps in services, and setting goals and objectives.

Successful use of a community assessment. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) used National DEC's Community Assessment worksheet to help establish a baseline of DEC efforts in their community. The community assessment opened the door for communication about topics that had not been addressed previously and brought awareness to the issues and voids in their community that the DEC alliance could begin to help address. This assessment helped to guide the tribes' efforts and keep them moving.

Infographics

What are DEC infographics, and why should a DEC alliance use them? Infographics show data in visually appealing ways. DEC alliances can gather a lot of information through community assessments and other data collections; it is important to share that information with partners and community members. Infographics draw readers in and allow them to understand impactful numbers and information at a glance.

Successful use of an infographic. Several local Kansas DEC alliances have created infographics in many of their awareness documents. (Examples can be found at appendices 17–19 at the website.) They use them to provide information on community data, which helps further engage the community in DEC efforts.

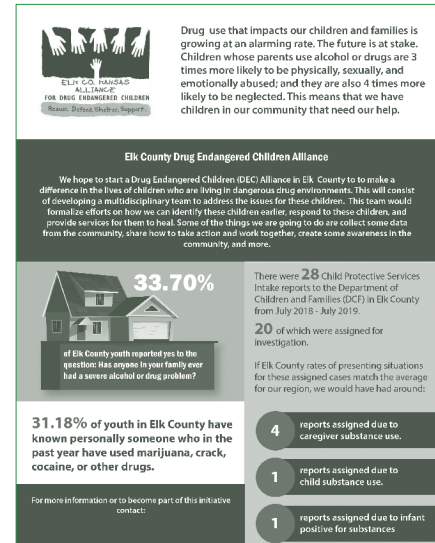
Training

What trainings should DEC alliances offer, and why? Training, by National DEC staff or certified DEC trainers, is an effective way to raise awareness about the risks faced by drug endangered children. *Core DEC Awareness* is our most highly requested training and is proven to be effective.

The Core DEC Awareness Training curriculum effectively highlights the risks faced by drug endangered children. The learning objectives include the following:

- Raising awareness regarding the problem of drug endangered children so that professionals interacting with these victims recognize the need to facilitate multidisciplinary, coordinated responses to better meet their needs
- Describing opportunities to identify children living in dangerous drug environments and encouraging intervention at the earliest possible point when endangerment is suspected to reduce physical and psychological harm to children
- Reviewing a multidisciplinary response that considers the unique and often limited resources within a community and how these resources can be coordinated and applied in a manner that allows the child to receive better care

The Core DEC Awareness Training also delineates a collaborative intervention response model that brings together local law enforcement, child welfare workers, criminal justice professionals, medical professionals, probation officers, and others. This training is being used throughout the country.



DEC alliances can gather and share important data and information through informational graphics which can further engage the community in DEC efforts.

Successful use of the Core DEC Awareness training includes the following:

- Each year, thousands of professionals across the nation receive the Core DEC Awareness training delivered by DEC-certified trainers. Trainings take place in person and virtually.
- National DEC partnered with the Mid-America Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) and has provided the Core DEC Awareness training to hundreds of participants in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas. Participants included substance misuse prevention professionals, law enforcement, child welfare workers, criminal justice professionals, medical professionals, probation officers, and teachers.
- The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of the Flathead Nation provided information to the community in various forms. They first started with the Core DEC Awareness trainings for many disciplines across the reservation and surrounding communities. The training, along with additional awareness efforts, helped the community move DEC efforts forward.
- The Wisconsin DEC Alliance recognized a need to coordinate and work with tribal entities to develop DEC alliances. Through the Core DEC Awareness training, all 11 tribes represented in Wisconsin have been given tools to establish DEC alliances in their tribal communities. Some tribes have operational DEC programs, and other tribes are continuing to work through the process.
- National DEC staff provided Core DEC Awareness training to more than 50 tribal professionals and community members at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Emergency Management Center. Immediately following the training, the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN) Executive Board resolved that all tribal communities in Nevada be trained in Core DEC Awareness and thus formed multidisciplinary groups that included law enforcement, prosecutors, public health professionals, first responders, housing officials, and child welfare to address the welfare of children endangered by drugs. A group of 13 tribal members were trained and certified in National DEC's Core DEC Awareness curriculum and were able to provide training to other professionals across Nevada's Indian country.
- National DEC staff and our network of certified trainers strive to never deny to a request for DEC training. DEC trainings have been provided at numerous conferences and meetings, including U.S. Attorneys' Protect Our Children Conference, the National Sheriffs' Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, Crimes Against Children, meth summits, Indian Nations Conference, Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, state DEC alliance annual conferences, and National Rural Institute on Alcohol & Substance Abuse. DEC trainings are scheduled regularly in various parts of the country with the goal of making them accessible to all who are interested.

Social media

Why should a DEC alliance have a social media presence? Social media has become a way that many people get connected to information. Social media pages can reach diverse populations and provide up-to-date, current information and news stories. They help provide quick resources or data items, and professionals can click on the information to learn more and be directed to websites for more complete information.

Successful use of social media. Many DEC alliances have successfully used social media, particularly Facebook. See links to state, tribal, and local DEC alliances' social media accounts in the online version of Promising Practices for Helping Drug Endangered Children at www.nationaldec.org.

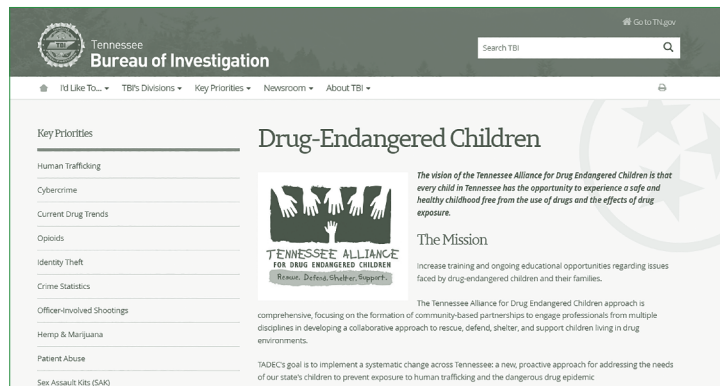
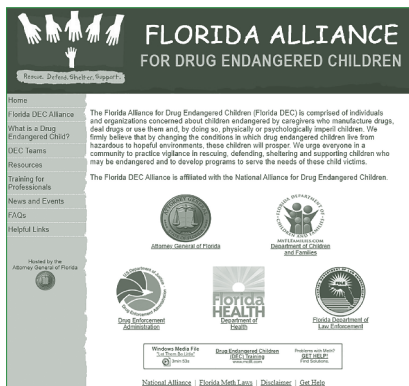


Two examples of successful use of social media by DEC alliances.

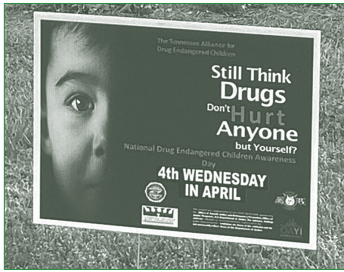
Websites

Why should a DEC alliance have a website? Websites connect professionals to pertinent information that will help them in their efforts of protecting children. Resources, articles, webinars and trainings, tools, and connections to state DEC leaders and events can be hosted on websites.

Successful use of a website. Some alliances have standalone websites, while others have websites that can be connected to through their local supporting organizations.



Two examples of successful use of a website by DEC alliances.



Tennessee DEC's yard signs and pinwheels as part of the effort to raise awareness of drug endangered children.

DEC Awareness Day

What is DEC Awareness Day, and why should an alliance participate?

DEC Awareness Day is the fourth Wednesday of April every year. Across the United States, people can focus one day in their state or community to raise awareness of drug endangered children and the efforts of the DEC alliance to address the issues. DEC alliances have been very creative in developing strategies to raise awareness on this day about the risks faced by drug endangered children.

Successful DEC Awareness Day events and activities include the following:

- Kansas DEC, Iowa DEC, Washington DEC, Nevada DEC, and Colorado DEC Alliances have had the governors of their respective states sign proclamations or promote awareness at their state capitols.
- Nevada DEC, Washington DEC, and Illinois DEC have provided specific DEC training on that day.
- Tennessee DEC developed and provided yard signs and red pinwheels and balloons to raise awareness, had cities turn lights red for drug endangered children, and provided information pamphlets to raise awareness.
- Wisconsin DEC, in partnership with the Wisconsin Attorney General, has done a press release around drug endangered children and the efforts taking place in Wisconsin.
- Missouri DEC conducted legislative visits and provided DEC informational sheets.
- Washington DEC collects shoes and socks for children who are receiving services for child protective services in Washington.

National DEC's foundational resources help educate and bring awareness to alliance members throughout the awareness phase. Our Roadmap and Toolkit, Trainings and Technical Assistance, websites, and CheckDEC app offer the tools and resources needed to educate and bring awareness around drug endangered children issues.

Implementation

No two DEC alliances are alike. Communities may be similar in demographics, and similar drugs may be prevalent within a community, but how each DEC alliance comes together to address their specific needs will be unique. National DEC's foundational resources and Roadmap and Toolkit provide many templates and ideas of how to address efforts to help drug endangered children. Use the ideas that will work for your community; implement strategies that you are able to support and sustain. The following sections discuss some examples of what has worked for some DEC alliances.

QR codes

What is a QR code, and why would a DEC alliance want to use it? A QR (quick response) code is a pixelated image that can be scanned with a mobile device to access information on a website. They can be created online and printed on handout materials, banners, and PowerPoint trainings or included in email signatures. QR codes are quick and easy for the user to access and get connected to more specific, in-depth information and resources. Scan our CheckDEC QR code here to download the app.



QR code to scan and download the CheckDEC app.

Successful use of a QR code. A local alliance in Florida used a QR code to connect professionals to emergency information; over time, the destination has been adapted and now connects people to additional information and resources. The QR codes are printed on a 3"x5" card that can be used as a sticker and attached to a field patrol clipboard or other paperwork that is brought into the field by other disciplines. The QR code links officers and other professionals to resources in the community; it includes what the organization offers, times of day they are available, and phone numbers. The QR code also uses links to connect the professionals to more specific information about the resource.

DEC implemented in Field Training Officer program

Why should law enforcement consider adding DEC to their field officer training? Field Training Officer (FTO) programs help officers convert what they learned in the academy into practical, real-life uses in the field. When drug endangered children training is incorporated into the already established and required training for law enforcement officers, each officer becomes DEC trained and aware of the procedures to use when identifying and responding to situations where drug endangered children may be present. It also helps to connect the children and families with resources as well as keep the officers up to date on local resources.

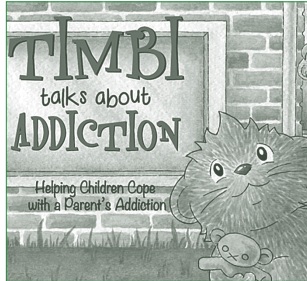
Successful use of including DEC training in the Field Training Officer program. The Polson (Montana) Police Department has successfully implemented DEC training in its FTO program, which means every one of their officers has had DEC training and is better prepared than before to identify drug endangered children and respond.

DEC officer

What is a DEC officer, and why should law enforcement consider adding one? A DEC officer is an expert officer, similar to other crime-specific officers, assigned to address drug endangered children's needs and to be deployed on drug endangered children cases.

Successful use of a DEC officer. Chief Mike Broadhead of the Riverton (Wyoming) Police Department created a DEC officer position when he realized he had animal control officers but did not have officers assigned to children impacted by familial substance use. These officers work hand in hand with child welfare and other disciplines to investigate drug crimes including child abuse and neglect crimes along with getting the families the help that they need to heal. The Great Falls (Montana) Police Department

and the Cascade County (Montana) Sheriff's Department learned of the DEC officer position and saw the benefits happening in Wyoming and have been able to add similar positions in their departments. These officers and deputies work closely with the local DEC alliances to have a multidisciplinary approach to children and families in need.



Children learn strategies to help mitigate the devastating effect of adverse childhood experiences with the help of Timbi.

Timbi Talks about Addiction children's book

What is *Timbi Talks about Addiction*, and why would a DEC alliance want to use it? The children's book *Timbi Talks about Addiction* by Trish Luna provides children who have a parent struggling with a substance use disorder (SUD) with evidence-based tools and trauma-informed resources to protect against the effect of adverse childhood experiences (ACE). Children learn strategies to help mitigate the devastating effect of ACEs. Resilience-building and agency-promoting concepts and practices are introduced and explored in language that is accessible to young children. Those responding to drug endangered children may find it useful to provide the children with a book and stuffed animal to help provide some comfort during the possibly scary and unknown situation they are currently in.

Successful use of *Timbi Talks about Addiction*. Children's Advocacy Centers and response teams provide the book and stuffed animal to kids. Cayuga County Counseling in New York has the book in its reading nook available for children to read, learn from, and even enjoy while at their center. The Tennessee DEC Alliance is implementing use of the book by having it as a resource for each DEC alliance across the state, and they are also working with author Trish Luna to have her read the books in schools statewide. National DEC is helping to spread the word about Timbi and its benefits so that all children impacted by a parental SUD have access to this book and stuffed bear to help them through this difficult time.

Handle with Care

What is *Handle with Care*, and why would a DEC alliance want to have this tool? Handle with Care is a DEC tool aimed at ensuring that children who are exposed to violence in their homes, schools, or communities receive appropriate interventions to help them succeed in school. Trauma can undermine children's ability to learn, form relationships, and function appropriately in the classroom. It often leads to school failure, truancy, suspension or expulsion, dropping out, or involvement in the juvenile justice system. Improved communication and collaboration between law enforcement, schools, and mental health providers has led to great advances in assistance to children exposed to violence.

Handle with Care is one example of this improved communication. It provides the school with a "heads up" when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event, such as a drug arrest or search warrant at their home, a domestic violence situation, a shooting in the neighborhood, witnessing a malicious wounding, etc. Police are trained to identify the children present, find out where they go to school, and send the school a confidential email or fax that simply says, "Handle this child with care." That's it. No other details. Handle with Care is simple: Help kids succeed in school so they will stay in school and graduate.

Successful use of Handle with Care. In conjunction with the U.S. Attorney General’s Defending Childhood Initiative focused on children exposed to violence, West Virginia DEC’s involvement with this initiative is showing significant results and is an example of the value of cross-disciplinary and cross-agency collaboration that considers the full range of issues challenging the well-being of drug endangered children. DEC alliances across the country are implementing this tool during the implementation phase of alliance development, as it can be helpful for law enforcement to identify previously unidentified drug endangered children. DEC alliances are also getting creative and authorizing practitioners of additional disciplines to notify schools; this allows for earlier and more comprehensive identification of Handle with Care children, as not all children and families needing help are involved with law enforcement.

One-page resources

Why would a DEC alliance want to create and use a one-page resource? One-page resources can help professionals have specific, quick information readily available for themselves and for the families they serve. Infographics can be incorporated into one-page resources. DEC alliances are familiar with the local drug-related issues, so they can create resources specific to their communities. National DEC provides many one-page resources, some editable and adaptable to include local resources, on our website at www.nationaldec.org.

Successful uses of one-page resources include the following:

- The Carbon County, Wyoming, DEC Alliance created and implemented a safety checklist for law enforcement to use onsite to help determine best steps for the safety of children. This checklist helped to bridge the gap between law enforcement and child welfare professionals and build collaborative efforts.
- Illinois DEC provides one-page resources called “slicks” full of infographics, information, and resources to families they serve.
- The Polson (Montana) Police Department provides information to families and caregivers about what they should know about drug endangered children. They also connect them to local information and resources.

Training/Facilitation

How can DEC alliances use training and facilitation? Certified DEC trainers teach the Core DEC and DEC Approach trainings in their local communities. They provide trainings in their law enforcement academies and to child welfare, to community coalitions and groups, and to many others. Training brings awareness and knowledge of drug endangered children and recognition of the local DEC alliance and its efforts to connect with all disciplines to help change the trajectory of children’s lives.

Successful use of training and facilitation. All Certified DEC trainers train in their local communities on a regular basis. Connecticut has incorporated a DEC 101 training (appendix 20 at the website) as part of the training curriculum at the state police academy and at every local Peace Officer Standards and Training

(POST) Academy. The state Department of Children and Families includes a section on drug endangered children in its practice guide, further demonstrating the collaborative approach taught in the Core DEC and DEC Approach trainings.

Therapy dogs

Why would DEC alliances want to incorporate therapy dogs? Therapy dogs are trained to provide comfort and support. They have been used in Children’s Advocacy Centers, courthouses, hospitals, and police departments. Offering a child or family the comfort of a therapy dog during their time of stress and crisis can bring some calm, which can allow the child to think more clearly and help lessen their trauma.

Successful use of therapy dogs. The Okaloosa County, Florida, DEC Alliance uses a therapy dog at their local Children’s Advocacy Center. Therapy dogs are also used with DEC alliances in Cayuga County, New York, and in Montana.

National DEC’s foundational resources continue to help educate and support alliance members throughout the implementation phase. The foundational resources offer the tools needed to develop, expand, and implement promising practices in serving drug endangered children.

Institutionalization

State, tribal, and local alliances across the nation have institutionalized their DEC efforts. Institutionalization is key to help ensure DEC efforts continue when their initial champion leaves their position. Building awareness, implementing efforts, and then institutionalizing those efforts takes time and planning. Some approaches to take in institutionalizing your DEC efforts will include the following.



MOUs

What are MOUs and why is it important for DEC alliances to have them? MOUs are an important way for DEC alliances to outline the partnerships among their multidisciplinary team members. An MOU provides guidelines and processes so that all members are aware of and agree on how the DEC alliance will function, and it defines how collaborations will take place. MOUs are also in place between the DEC alliance and National DEC.

Successful implementation of MOUs. The following are examples of state, tribal, and local DEC alliances establishing successful MOUs to develop collaborative relationships and move DEC efforts forward.

- Michigan DEC, Wisconsin DEC, and Tennessee DEC have all signed MOUs with local and tribal alliances and partners.
- With support from National DEC and great efforts within their tribal community supported through grant funding, the CSKT Tribe was able to establish a statewide MOU (appendix 21 at the website) among both tribal and non-tribal partners and the state of Montana.

- Mat-Su Valley, Alaska, has also established an MOU between the tribe and National DEC.
- Many successful MOUs among local alliances across the nation document the partnerships of all involved. A few examples include City of Polson, Montana; Cayuga County, New York; and Worcester County, Massachusetts.

Protocols

What are protocols and why should DEC alliances have them? Protocols help each discipline know what the other disciplines are doing and how they do it: They help get everyone on the same page, working toward the same goal with a better understanding of how all the partners will help achieve the goal. Protocols define the procedures and steps professionals will take as they work together to make a difference in the lives of drug endangered children. At www.nationaldec.org, under the Roadmap and Toolkit's Institutionalization page, worksheets are available on how to build a DEC protocol and example protocols to help alliances in this process.

Successful implementation of protocols. Many DEC alliances have successful protocols that help guide and direct their efforts, such as Okaloosa County, Florida; Jasper County, Iowa; Mat-Su Valley, Alaska; and Great Falls, Montana.

Data collection

What is data collection and why should a DEC alliance do it? Having DEC and other data available and accessible is crucial to providing checks and balances to ensure that children are identified as soon as possible, referrals are made when appropriate, interventions and services are offered as needed, and partnerships are developed and enhanced. Data can show where DEC efforts are lacking and where they are succeeding. Data sharing can be incorporated into MOUs and protocols so alliance members can share the applicable information with the rest of the alliance.

Examples of successful implementation of data collection include the following:

- In Cayuga County, New York, the local DEC alliance collects ACE information on all drug endangered children who come through their center as part of their intake assessment. This allows the alliance to see how children are being impacted and gives them a baseline for services. Every alliance partnering with National DEC is given information on our data collection worksheets that can help their communities and alliance gather pertinent data to address the specific needs of their communities. These data can help alliances move efforts forward successfully.
- The Tennessee DEC Alliance collects data from DEC response teams throughout the state. They report monthly on referrals to treatment for juveniles and adults, overdoses, Narcan distributions, DEC allegations, children in foster care, and referrals to community services. They also collect data on the number of trainings, meetings, participants, and materials distributed.

Grants

Why would DEC alliances write grants? Grant funding allows alliances to develop or expand services and projects. It can help support a position or a specific project or need. Several federal grants have open applications in line with DEC efforts and promising practices such as the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). State and local grant funds are also available, as are private foundation grants. Even local grocery stores may have grant funding possibilities to support local efforts.

Examples of successful grant applications and awards include the following:

- In Montana, the CSKT of the Flathead Nation wrote a three-year U.S. Department of Justice Consolidated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) grant to develop a Community Strong Drug Endangered Children Alliance. CSKT recognized the substance abuse issues that were afflicting their community, and they wanted change. The grant allowed CSKT to partner with National DEC to receive training, facilitation, and technical assistance focusing on drug endangered children.
- CSKT's Community Strong-Drug Endangered Children Project developed a single reservation-wide DEC alliance. It implemented a collaborative community-wide response to substance abuse by providing technical assistance and training to tribal and non-tribal agencies and members of the community, improving community safety regarding the impacts of substance abuse on the tribal justice system, families, and drug endangered children.
- The tribe continues to commit resources to the Tribal Action Plan and the Community Strong Drug Endangered Children's Program. Through this program, the tribe and its partners have expressed willingness to address substance abuse and its impact on children. By design, the action plan is a working document that the alliance can evaluate and modify through continued alliance meetings and partnerships to meet the challenges ahead. Their action plan is intended to be the beginning of an ongoing process and will be evaluated regularly.
- In partnership with National DEC, the state of Michigan received a grant to help build a state DEC alliance and develop local alliances across the state. The grant includes trainings by National DEC staff, including the DEC Academy and Train-the-Trainer. Coaching sessions with Michigan's state DEC coordinator are also included in the grant to help local alliances become established.
- The state of Tennessee received a grant to support and grow its state DEC efforts and to help establish, start, and grow local DEC alliances. Training and technical assistance, including coaching sessions and support from National DEC, were included in the grant.

Laws

Why should DEC alliances get involved with the legislature and laws? DEC alliances can play a key role in educating lawmakers about the DEC issues and efforts specific to your area. Laws protecting and supporting drug endangered children can have a powerful impact on the trajectory of their lives. Laws allow for different interventions that may not always be possible without them.

Examples of successfully incorporating DEC-specific information into law include the following:

- The Oklahoma DEC Alliance, in partnership with the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and with the assistance of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, worked with the Oklahoma Legislature in the 2012 legislative session to pass House Bill 2251, “Children; modifying drug endangered children’s provisions.” This bill modified Oklahoma Title 10-A: Children and Juvenile Code and put forth a protocol regarding child abuse and neglect. The legislation included a definition for a “drug-endangered child:” “a child who is at risk of suffering physical, psychological or sexual harm as a result of the use, possession, distribution, manufacture or cultivation of controlled substances, or the attempt of any of these acts, by a person responsible for the health, safety or welfare of the child, as defined in paragraph 51 of this section. This term includes circumstances wherein the substance abuse of the person responsible for the health, safety or welfare of the child interferes with that person’s ability to parent and provide a safe and nurturing environment for the child. The term also includes newborns who test positive for a controlled dangerous substance, except for those substances administered under the care of a physician.”¹
 - In addition to adding a DEC definition to Oklahoma’s state statutes, the legislation specified that when the state Department of Human Services receives a report that a child may be drug endangered, that department must conduct a safety analysis, forward the report and findings to the district attorney’s office with jurisdiction, and—if the child meets the definition of a “drug-endangered child”—conduct an investigation and evaluate the circumstances and respond accordingly.
 - The legislation regarding drug endangered children passed unanimously in both the Oklahoma House and Senate. Governor Mary Fallin signed the bill into law on April 18, 2012. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services has several policies that coincide with and support this law to ensure safety of drug endangered children.²
- Nevada DEC has developed a key partnership with the state Attorney General’s Office, including the creation of an Office of Statewide Coordinator for Children Who Are Endangered by Drug Exposure with a full-time coordinator position. The duties of the coordinator include helping communities and local governments in establishing programs for children who are endangered by drug exposure and public education about children who are endangered by drug exposure.
 - In 2013, Nevada also defined “child who is endangered by drug exposure” in state law:
 1. A child who is born affected by prenatal illegal substance abuse or who has withdrawal symptoms resulting from such abuse or has experienced other complications at birth because of such abuse as determined by a physician.

1. Okla. Stat. tit. 10A-1-1-105, 22 (2012), <https://law.justia.com/codes/oklahoma/2012/title-10a/>.

2. “Library: Policy 340:75-3-450 Drug-endangered child,” Oklahoma Human Services, last modified April 9, 2019, <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/library/policy/current/oac-340/chapter-75/subchapter-3/drug-endangered-child.html>.

2. A child who illegally has a controlled substance in his or her body as a direct and foreseeable result of the act or omission of the parent, guardian or other person who exercises control or supervision of the child; or
3. A child who is allowed, in violation of NRS 453.3325, to be present in any conveyance or upon any premises wherein a controlled substance is unlawfully possessed, used, sold, exchanged, bartered, supplied, prescribed, dispensed, given away, administered, manufactured, or compounded in violation of any of the provisions of NRS 453.011 to 453.522, inclusive.³

Writing this definition into state law has helped significantly to institutionalize the DEC mission and make it sustainable, as has housing the Nevada State DEC Alliance and its full-time coordinator in the Attorney General's Office. The results of this institutionalization include statewide DEC training across disciplines, creation of local DEC alliances in most Nevada counties, and a partnership with the Statewide Tribal DEC Alliance. The Nevada DEC Alliance's State Law DEC Definition and DEC Coordinator Position are available at appendix 22 at the website.

- A multidisciplinary workgroup including Iowa Department of Human Services, DEC alliance members from across the state, law enforcement, legislators, county attorneys, mental health therapists, Blank Children's Hospital, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, and Office of Drug Control Policy worked together to create a bill (HF 543), which was later signed into law (available at appendix 23 at the website), defining drug endangered children in Iowa and setting procedures for investigating cases related to them.

National DEC's foundational resources should be used as ongoing tools in the institutionalization phase. The resources support the promising practices that are being developed and implemented for success of the DEC alliance.

3. Nev. Rev. Stat. 228.700 (2013), <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-228.html#NRS228Sec700>.

Conclusion

Working on behalf of children is one of the most rewarding experiences a professional can have. When practitioners have a common mission with children's best interest at the forefront, the incentive to collaborate, share resources and knowledge, and work through conflict takes on a greater importance.

National DEC's state, tribal, and local DEC alliance members bring together a variety of practitioners and disciplines with different perspectives and skills, and together they find creative solutions to enhance efforts to help drug endangered children.

There is no single path to success for the DEC mission. By focusing on and repeatedly using National DEC's foundational resources, DEC alliances will find success as they bring awareness to the DEC issues in their communities, work to implement promising practices that are sustainable for them, and institutionalize DEC efforts in their organizations and areas they serve.

National DEC's unique position as a national training, technical assistance, and resource center offers the ability to develop and share innovative promising practices from communities across the United States and internationally to enhance DEC efforts. National DEC is committed to working with communities to continue to develop additional promising practices until 100 percent of children, families, and communities are free from the negative impacts of substance misuse and drug activity.

Together we are stronger. Together we can bring help, hope, and support to children, families, and communities.

About National DEC

The **National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (National DEC)** is a national training, technical assistance, and resource center with extensive knowledge of substance misuse and addiction issues impacting children, families, and communities. National DEC exists to make a difference in the lives of drug endangered children across the nation by providing *HELP, HOPE, and SUPPORT*. National DEC's vision is for every child to be safe, healthy, and free from the negative impacts of substance misuse and drug activity. National DEC staff have decades of combined hands-on experience working with professionals across the nation, in tribal and non-tribal communities, to help address this impact and to change the trajectory of drug endangered children's lives.

National DEC has proven competency in

- developing and providing basic and advanced professional in-person and virtual trainings to thousands of professionals each year;
- delivering technical assistance to professionals, communities, and tribes on numerous topics, challenges, and successes;
- creating training curriculums, training materials, and training activities on numerous topics to increase the knowledge and skills to address the drug crisis in the United States;
- developing and disseminating relevant information, materials, tools, and resources in a variety of formats on a variety of platforms;
- developing innovative technologies to increase access, resources, and information to victims and professionals;
- conducting an extensive multidisciplinary national conference to inform, educate, and bring people together from across the nation to share and network;
- developing and enhancing partnerships at every level to assist in DEC efforts and to help children and families across the nation;
- developing an extensive national network of professionals from all disciplines that support multidisciplinary efforts;
- partnering with and using subject matter experts to enhance knowledge and skills in all trainings and technical assistance;
- and in working with federal/national, state, local, and tribal professionals, alliances, and organizations as well as in underserved and marginalized communities across the nation.

National DEC wants to work with you in your efforts to identify and help drug endangered children by

- providing trainings to professionals and community members;
- assisting in gathering data in the community and completing a community assessment;
- developing and spreading awareness throughout your community;
- helping bring others to the table to discuss solutions and changes in the community;
- developing and disseminating materials for training and awareness;
- identifying, developing, enhancing, and implementing promising practices;
- developing multidisciplinary efforts where silos are broken down so true collaboration can occur;
- conducting peer-to-peer sharing opportunities in your community both in person and virtually;
- developing a multidisciplinary alliance or an addition to an existing coalition, team, or task force;
- providing technical assistance along the way to help as questions or challenges arise;
- institutionalizing efforts through MOUs, protocols, regular meetings, and more!

All of National DEC's information, training, technical assistance, resources, webinars, can be accessed through the National DEC website at www.nationaldec.org and through their staff at info@nationaldec.org.

Information about training events, conferences, technical assistance, webinars, as well as stories about the impact of substance use and drug activity on children, families, and communities is also available by following National DEC on social media:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalDEC4Kids/>
- Twitter: @NationalDEC
- LinkedIn: National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children <https://www.linkedin.com/company/27197259/>

Together we are stronger . . . and together we can change the trajectory of drug endangered children's lives in community across the nation.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 130,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations and the COPS Training Portal.
- Almost 500 agencies have received customized advice and peer-led technical assistance through the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, <https://cops.usdoj.gov>.

The National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (National DEC) has developed resources that state, local, and tribal DEC alliances can use to fit the particular needs of their communities and their local initiatives to help children who are endangered by drug use. To help further the DEC mission, this updated guide outlines these resources and shares promising practices that state, local, and tribal DEC alliance leaders are using as they strengthen their DEC organizations. It is meant to help connect other state, local, and tribal DEC leaders as well as other professionals in the field so they can leverage resources and take advantage of tools to strengthen their DEC organizations and DEC efforts.



COPS

Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

US Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS Office programs, call the
COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at cops.usdoj.gov.



NATIONAL ALLIANCE
FOR DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

Help. Hope. Support.

National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children
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