

# FRIENDS OF NIDA

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Dear Senator,

We are writing representing the Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to ask that you review the attached pamphlet, entitled Principles of Drug Abuse Treatment for Criminal Justice Populations. This landmark scientific report shows that effective treatment of drug abuse and addiction improves public health, saves communities money, and reduces crime. The brochure, developed by NIDA, has also been designed to raise awareness regarding offenders' access to substance abuse treatment. Due to the prevalence of drug abuse within the offender population, finding and implementing effective treatment methods is imperative. We hope that you will recognize the urgency of this bipartisan issue and assist us in our concerted effort to improve the criminal justice system by using the principles outlined in NIDA's guide.

The guide is intended to describe the treatment principles and research findings that are of particular relevance to the criminal justice community and to treatment professionals working with drug abusing offenders. It is divided into three main sections: the first distills research findings on the addicted offender into 13 essential principles; the second contains a series of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about drug abuse treatment for those involved with the criminal justice system; and the third is a resource section that provides Web sites for additional information. A summary of the research underlying the principles, the FAQs, and various other related materials is available on NIDA's Web site at [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov).

Scientific investigations spanning nearly four decades show that drug abuse treatment is an effective intervention for many substance abusing offenders. Because the goals of drug abuse treatment—to help people change their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors—also apply to reforming criminal behavior, successful treatment can help reduce crime as well. Legal pressure can be important in getting a person into treatment and in improving retention. Once in a program, even those who are not initially motivated to change can eventually become engaged in a continuing therapeutic process. Through this process of change, the individual learns how to avoid relapse and to successfully disengage from a life of substance abuse and crime.

Thank you for taking the time to review this research-based guide to drug abuse treatment. Please contact Anne Bettsworth of the American Psychological Association at [abettesworth@apa.org](mailto:abettesworth@apa.org) or (202) 336-6182 for more information.

Sincerely,

William L. Dewey, PhD  
Chair, Friends of NIDA

