



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY

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## **Denver Drug Strategy Plan Executive Summary**

The Denver Drug Strategy Commission, in collaboration with the Mayor's office, developed **The Denver Drug Strategy Plan** to guide the Denver Office of Drug Strategy and the citizens of Denver in making improvements to current substance abuse programs in a cost-effective manner. With the plan in place for five years, Denver will have increased capacity to respond to people seeking treatment and will have more coordinated recovery support systems. In short, Denver will be more effective in delivering services to prevent and treat substance abuse and underage drinking.

The comprehensive plan, which prioritizes the City & County of Denver's response to substance abuse for the next five years, was developed with the full participation of the Commission's now 28 members. Members have varied backgrounds in substance abuse treatment and prevention, K-12 and higher education, business and foundations, advocacy, public health, public safety, mental health, recovery and faith organizations. Some are parents and youth.

The plan operates under the timeframe of the State fiscal years 2008-2013 (July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2013). It depends on the support of neighboring communities in the Denver Metro area as well as the support of donors and foundations to render technical and financial assistance and to facilitate implementation in a timely manner. The Office of Drug Strategy will work under the direction of the Commission to execute the plan with measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes.

The Commission began with four subcommittees to help guide its ongoing planning and implementation work. These subcommittees were Treatment, Prevention, Community Awareness & Fundraising, and Data & Evaluation. The subcommittees began meeting monthly in February 2007 and, with active participation from the community, have conducted open meetings and encouraged public dialogue. Due to the recognized overlap in topics and concerns, the Prevention and Treatment subcommittees merged in January 2008 and is now the Prevention, Intervention, & Treatment (PIT) subcommittee.

The document is organized into chapters that present to the reader a summarized background of the Denver Drug Strategy Commission and the Denver Office of Drug Strategy, the open community planning process involved in the formation of this plan and problems related to drugs and alcohol in Denver. The document also provides the economic impact of substance abuse.

The goals, objectives, action steps, costs, and evaluation methods have been detailed and broken into six goals. These goals are:

1. Treatment
2. Prevention and Intervention
3. Coordinated Integration of Services
4. Education
5. Research
6. Evaluation

While the plan is representative of goals and objectives identified through an extensive community process, it is not an exhaustive inventory of all that needs to be done to improve substance use and abuse systems. This plan represents the necessary first step in developing an accessible, inclusive, culturally competent and sustainable continuum of care for the alcohol and drug service system in Denver.



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