

**“Why Say No to Drugs”  
By: Kelliann Masterson**

The United States is currently fighting two wars, one on terrorism, and the other on drugs. Made popular in the 1960s, drugs have been a major contribution to the rise in crime. In my ROP Law Enforcement class, I learned how the war on drugs has lead directly to an increase in violence throughout the United States. Drug users commit crimes in order to get their fixes. In that sense, they are similar to terrorists on the notion that both change our society by means of negative impact.

While drugs are addictive both mentally and physically to users, they are emotionally damaging to loved ones. Health and mental issues are both common side effects of drug use. These issues have the power to essentially create unproductive people who burden society. Individuals who use drugs often do not hold jobs and therefore turn to crime to support their habit. Unfortunately, many of them will end up in jail or state prison causing us as taxpayers to pay the price for their punishment. Drug users commonly begin dealing drugs to make a living. The cold reality of the matter is that innocent bystanders are often hurt or killed in the act of distribution. Users live solely to get high and will stop at nothing to satisfy their cravings. Addiction becomes the most important thing in their life.

Police Officers see on a daily basis the direct effects drug use has on a family. Unfortunately, children of drug addicts often follow in the footsteps of their parents due to the bad influence and lack of guidance. Raising their children responsibly is not seen as a priority for most addicts who are all too concerned with getting high. The DARE program teaches children at a young age to say “NO” to drugs in order to become successful, upstanding citizens in society. As a graduate of the DARE program, I remember being shown before and after pictures of drug addicts. The dramatic physical effects that drugs can have on a person was made very clear to me. It was difficult to see any resemblance in many of the paired pictures due to the aging effects they had on their appearance. While many people begin using drugs to escape their problems, the dark irony of the matter is that using drugs only creates more problems.

While drugs have absolutely no positive effects, they provide plenty of negative effects. Drugs not only kill brain cells, they diminish a person's soul as well as leave them with a false sense of a better tomorrow. I am creating a lifestyle for myself in which I will follow and stay on the road to a bright future. With the dream of becoming a doctor to positively impact the world, drug use would not allow me to achieve this goal nor would it produce positive results. A future of drugs is an abrupt dead end to life. I know drugs will not assist me in attaining the future I want, but saying “NO” to drugs will.