

Drug Policy Alliance

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://drugpolicy.org/resource/healing-broken-system-veterans-and-war-drugs>

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This report examines the plight of returning veterans who struggle with incarceration and psychological wounds of war such as addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder and suggests reforms that could improve the health and preserve the freedom of American soldiers returning from war zones and transitioning back to civilian life. Roughly 30 percent of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan report symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury, depression, mental illness or other cognitive disability. Left untreated, these medical conditions often contribute to substance misuse and addiction, fatal overdose, homelessness and suicide, as well as violations of the law, particularly nonviolent drug offenses. This report recommends alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent drug offenses, increased access to overdose prevention programs and medication-assisted therapy, and research evaluating innovative treatment modalities such as medical marijuana and MDMA-assisted psychotherapy.

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Our new strategic plan takes bold steps to dismantle this war on drugs and our communities. Join us in seeing this vision through.

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