2019 - 2020

CHAPTER ORGANIZING MANUAL

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WELCOME TO SSDP!

This Chapter Organizing Manual was created for you by SSDP Global HQ team members who led and supported SSDP chapters on their campuses along with advising hundreds of SSDP chapters on successful policy change initiatives at the campus, local, state, and federal levels. This manual will be your guide for how to get involved with SSDP and help end the War on Drugs, whether that means starting a chapter, becoming a certified Peer Educator, or changing drug policies from campus to the United Nations.

# About SSDP

## Mission Statement

Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) is the only international network of students dedicated to ending the war on drugs. At its heart, SSDP is a grassroots organization, led by a student-run Board of Directors. We create change by bringing young people together and creating safe spaces for students of all political and ideological stripes to have honest conversations about drugs and drug policy. Founded in 1998, SSDP is comprised of thousands of members at hundreds of campuses in countries around the globe.

## Values statement

SSDP neither condones nor condemns drug use, rather we respect the right of individuals to make decisions about their own health and well-being. We encourage honest conversation about the realities of the drug war. We promote youth civic engagement as a critical tool in reforming drug policy. SSDP respects the diverse experiences and identities of our constituents. We develop leaders who advocate for policy changes based on justice, liberty, compassion and reason.

## SSDP Global HQ Team

[Betty Aldworth](https://ssdp.org/bio/betty-aldworth/) | Executive Director

[Stacia Cosner](https://ssdp.org/bio/stacia-cosner/) ‘05\* | Deputy Director

[Lauren Padgett](https://ssdp.org/bio/lauren-padgett/) | Development Director

[Dr. Vilmarie Narloch](https://ssdp.org/bio/vilmarie-narloch/) ‘09 | Director of Drug Education

[Rachel Wissner](https://ssdp.org/bio/rachel-wissner) ‘11 | Development and Events Associate

[Róisín Downes](https://ssdp.org/about/staff/roisin-downes/) ‘15 | Global Program Coordinator

[Moronfolu Adeniyi](https://ssdp.org/about/staff/moronfolu-adeniyi/) ‘14 | Global Fellow

[Orsi Fehér](https://ssdp.org/about/staff/orsi-feher/) ‘16 | Global Fellow

[Luis Montoya](https://ssdp.org/bio/luis-montoya/) ‘16 | Movement Building Fellow - Southeast, Southwest, Mid-Atlantic, Mountain, Heartland

[Robert Hofmann ‘16](https://ssdp.org/about/staff/robert-hofmann/) | Movement Building Fellow - Pacific, Northeast, Midwest

[Hannah Procell](https://ssdp.org/bio/hannah-procell) ‘15 | Advocacy Fellow

*\*Throughout SSDP materials, you will notice years associated with our alumni. This indicates a person’s “SSDP Class of” year, meaning the first year they got involved with us.*

## History of SSDP

In the fall of 1996, members of the Student Drug Reform Movement (SDRM) started chatting over the internet using a Drug Reform Coordination Network (DRCNet) discussion page. In 1997, the Rochester Cannabis Coalition (RCC) at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in New York applied to become the first official student organization in the United States dedicated to fighting the War on Drugs. The RIT administration denied RCC’s application and ultimately expelled the lead organizer, Shea Gunther (‘98), who would go on to become an SSDP founder. In winter 1998, SDRM members at University of Massachusetts- Amherst hosted a conference for about 50 students, many of whom would go on to join Shea in founding SSDP. That conference led to the First National Gathering in Washington, DC the following year, where attendees decided collectively to form SSDP into a national organization and elect a board of directors comprised of one representative from each of the five schools that had chapters operating under the SSDP name (Hampshire College, University of Wisconsin-Madison, George Washington University, American University, and Rochester Institute of Technology). SSDP undertook a series of actions and events which contributed to partial repeal of the Higher Education Act Aid Elimination Penalty (HEAAEP), our first political victory.

SSDP’s efforts to repeal the HEAAEP provided a model that has led to the development of our student network for the past twenty years. SSDP has since expanded from a single chapter in upstate New York created to a global network of about 300 chapters in over 30 countries working to implement that vision on their campuses, in their communities, and at the state, federal, and international levels. For more information about SSDP’s history, including a special episode of the podcast [**Marijuana Today**](http://mjtodaypodcast.com/episode-13-history-of-ssdp/) recorded by several alumni and founders that goes over the history in detail, check out [**www.ssdp.org/about**](http://www.ssdp.org/about).

GETTING STARTED

# Connecting with your Global HQ Outreach Team Member

After you submit your [New Member Applications](http://ssdp.org/chapters/start), a Movement Building Fellow or Global Program Coordinator will contact you via e-mail and request to set up a time to chat about starting up your chapter. Each Movement Building Fellow and Global Program Coordinator supports chapters in different regions, and the MBF or GPC who contacts you will depend on where you are located. To find out who is the Global HQ Outreach Team member for your region, email [outreach@ssdp.org](mailto:outreach@ssdp.org).

Your movement building fellow or global program coordinator will be your best resource as a new member of SSDP. Each of SSDP’s MBFs and GPCs are former chapter leaders who have years of experience organizing students at their schools, and can help guide you through everything you will need to do to set up a strong, active SSDP chapter. During your first call, they will ask why you are interested in drug policy reform, what you hope to accomplish through SSDP, and co-develop a plan on how to get started.They will also connect you to other SSDP chapters all over the world, especially in your region, by adding you to SSDP facebook groups and other communication platforms utilized by SSDPers.

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# Becoming an established SSDP chapter

There are three things you need to do in order to become an officially established SSDP chapter:

1. **Start hosting regular SSDP meetings OR become a recognized student organization on campus**
2. **E-Sign the** [**Staff/Chapter Agreement**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1smfFiSOKEkXAoQgvgIR2Hgf1hztoZYRZ9761XyrVFa4/edit?usp=sharing)
3. **Submit your first** [**chapter roster**](https://goo.gl/wIrLuC)

During your first call with your Movement Building Fellow or Global Program Coordinator, you will develop a plan to achieve these three steps. Once you have completed the required steps, be sure to let your MBF or GPC know. You are now an established chapter of SSDP! **Established SSDP chapters are listed on our website, receive an SSDP email address, are recognized with a welcoming blog post**, and can start reporting their chapter’s successes through our online tool, the [**SSDP Chapter Activity Tracker**](http://cat.ssdp.org) [(](http://cat.ssdp.org)A[K](http://cat.ssdp.org)At[h](http://cat.ssdp.org)eS[S](http://cat.ssdp.org)D[P](http://cat.ssdp.org) [C](http://cat.ssdp.org)A[T](http://cat.ssdp.org)). Chapters and members also receive benefits including:

* Access to the SSDP Points store, where you can exchange your CAT points for SSDP swag
* Resources on policy change and community organizing, as well as educational resources on drugs and drug policy
* Networking, training, and career opportunities
* Access to student scholarships to attend select events

## Start Hosting Regular SSDP meetings

As you are planning your first meeting, focus on the content and make an agenda. Start by briefly introducing SSDP and our mission but try your best to do as little talking as possible and instead hold a conversation where everyone is contributing.

## Preparing for the meeting

Preparation takes time - sometimes more time than the meeting itself - so start to prepare at least a week before your next meeting. First, select a date and time that is convenient for people who want to attend the meeting. Then, choose a location that is accessible to young people in your community. **Consider meeting at local coffee shops, parks, or other public spaces off campus to reach the most amount of non-student young people**. Create a Facebook event, Google Calendar invite, or send emails so members and supporters can save the date and time. If you hold meetings at a set time & place every week, see if you can list it on a community calendar or bulletin board.

## Set an agenda

Come up with an agenda for the general membership meeting. Include introductions, announcements from chapter leadership and SSDP global leadership, topics of discussion, and anything else you might anticipate coming up at the meeting. When planning for meetings, always ask yourself: How will this meeting contribute to our chapter’s policy change goals? Your Global HQ Team member can help you brainstorm and solidify your agenda too!

## Establish meeting responsibilities

If you don’t have a secretary or moderator, ask a volunteer to take notes and and a volunteer to moderate the meeting. Both are important responsibilities that should be carried out by someone other than the chapter president. Notes can be given to absent members and used to plan the next meeting, while the moderator can ensure that the meeting is moving along in an efficient manner. It’s not a bad idea to rotate these roles every meeting.

## Promote

* **Online.** Publicize your meetings online by creating a Facebook event. Update your status to let people know the time, place, and location of the meeting. Snapchat, Instagram, and other social media platforms can also be used to remind people of upcoming meetings.
* **On Campus.** Get the word out about your meeting by tabling and handing out quarter-page flyers with meeting information. Make announcements in your classes and put up posters around campus. **And never underestimate the power of sidewalk chalk!**

## Remind members about upcoming meetings

Send an email and Facebook reminder to prospective members about the meeting several days in advance with the date, time, location, and any other important details. Follow that up with a text message around 24 hours before the meeting begins. Include the agenda and ask for additions. Send an additional reminder on the day of the meeting, especially if it is an important meeting. Make phone calls or send text messages to core members to ensure that they haven’t forgotten.

## Offer incentives such as food

Think about how many times you decided to go to something because you heard there would be food. If you don’t have any money in your budget for food, ask core leadership members to pitch in a few bucks for some pizza and soda or reach out to your local pizza place to request a donation. Chapters can get creative about negotiating sponsorships with local businesses as well. For example, if Local Pizza Place provides free pizza for a meeting, they can send along flyers to be handed out at the meeting.

## Additional meeting tips

* **Start on time.** Wait no more than 5 minutes for people to show up. Waiting longer will set the precedent that it is okay for your members to show up late. Avoid this by setting the standard that meetings will always begin on time, even if people are still trickling in.
* **Pass around a sign-up sheet.** This will allow you to generate an email list and keep track of how many people are attending meetings. Some universities even require logging this information to legitimize student group recognition and funding! **Bonus tip:** Pass around a computer with the chapter roster spreadsheet so people can add their information directly, and you can skip data entry!

## Submit the chapter roster to Global HQ

Once per quarter (or every three months), your Movement Building Fellow will request that you submit a chapter roster, which helps the SSDP Global HQ Team accurately measure the size of our student network. Collecting rosters also helps us communicate timely action opportunities to the SSDP network, makes it easier to contact chapter members interested in conferences or other events, and allows us to share the latest news from SSDP and the global drug policy community. Once you have your first meeting, use the sign-up sheet to create an official roster and send it to your Movement Building Fellow. You can find the sign up sheet template [online](https://goo.gl/wIrLuC).

## Become a recognized student organization on campus

Being a recognized student organization has many benefits, such as the ability to reserve meeting and event space on campus or apply for funding. Very likely, your school has the requirements for becoming an official student organization listed on its website. Go to your school’s website and search for “student organization” or “clubs” and you should be able to find details on the process. While the process is different at every school, typically this process includes the following three steps:

1. **Paperwork:** Your school will likely require that you write and submit a Chapter Constitution or Student Organization Charter. We have created [several templates](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IdKu-rxEapuPys6ND-C8pZIHg0iL4DImibU_GIi81NU/edit) so you don’t have to start from scratch.
2. **Find a Faculty Advisor:** Typically, your school will also require that you find a faculty advisor or staff advisor to oversee your chapter activities.
3. **Demonstrate student support:** Your school may ask you to gather a number of signatures in support of your efforts to start an SSDP chapter on your campus. Remember to collect contact information, so that you can invite anyone who signs your petition to your first meeting.

We also recognize that the process can take a long time at some schools, and that other schools may even reject your proposal. If this happens, do **not** get discouraged, contact your Movement Building Fellow or Global Program Coordinator, and chat about the impediments towards achieving recognition. **Also remember that you can still become an Established SSDP chapter before you are a recognized student organization by holding an inaugural meeting.**

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## Finding a faculty advisor

**Research the faculty.** Check your school’s website for faculty bios: you may find that various professors at your school have studied or worked on drug policy, law, criminal justice reform, or other intersecting issues. When inviting a faculty member to be your sponsor, make sure that you are prepared to clearly explain SSDP neither condones nor condemns drug use and that our goal is to promote open, honest, and rational discussion about drug use and drug policies.

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**Be clear about what the advisor’s role would be.** While having an advisor who is heavily engaged in your chapter activities, meetings, and events can be very beneficial, many SSDP chapter advisors are minimally involved with chapter activities beyond the initial paperwork. If you are unable to find an enthusiastic and engaged advisor, it’s O.K. to make it clear to busy faculty that they will not need to spend any time working directly with your chapter if they are unable to do so.

## Create a social media presence

After your first call with your Movement Building Fellow, we will create a Facebook group, Facebook page, and Twitter account for your chapter. A Facebook group is a great tool for internal organizing with your chapter, while a Facebook page and twitter serve as a way for your chapter to communicate with the public as well as the rest of the SSDP network. We encourage you to utilize these platforms to share drug policy news, SSDP announcements, and chapter updates. You are also welcome to create profiles on other social media sites; just make sure you send links over to your MBF so they can include it on your chapter’s page on the SSDP website. We encourage email and group chat updates alongside social media updates to reach members and supporters who don’t often use social media.

## Celebrate your victory

**When you become an Established SSDP Organization, we celebrate!** We hope you are as excited about telling the world about your chapter as we are. When your Movement Building Fellow is writing your new chapter blog post, they may ask to do a short interview with you. Feel free to prepare a few paragraphs about why you decided to form an SSDP chapter and what you would like to accomplish as a chapter leader and beyond.

## What if I don’t have time to start a chapter?

Maybe you are interested in SSDP and committed to ending the Drug War but you don’t think that you can commit to organizing and building an SSDP chapter. Let your Movement Building Fellow know that you are interested in being an **SSDP Ambassador**. As an Ambassador, you get to participate in SSDP’s drug policy reform campaigns without forming an official chapter. Student ambassadors represent SSDP on campus and in their local community, distribute SSDP literature, work to address policy goals from an individual standpoint, submit op-eds and LTEs to campus papers, and may identify students with the time and resources to establish a chapter of SSDP. In return, SSDP provides limited staff support as well as the full breadth of SSDP benefits including access to the SSDP Points store; policy change, community organizing, and educational resources; networking, training, and career opportunities; and application for student scholarships to attend select global events.

# Recruiting Members

One of the most important parts of managing your chapter is recruiting new students. The best way to make your chapter sustainable is to continually attract new members and to train your existing members to do the same. Every time someone joins your SSDP chapter they give your chapter a better chance to have an impact on policy, increase student safety, positively impact your community, and spread the message of reform. Your ultimate goal is to create an active chapter which is welcoming to people of all backgrounds, so we encourage you to be creative when recruiting members.

Check out this [recruitment webinar](https://issuu.com/dtackels/docs/leadershipwebinar-recruitmentfall20/2) from our former outreach team about recruiting members, and employ the following strategies to get the word out.

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## Community Outreach

SSDP members often engage their communities in a myriad of ways, including:

* Organizing meetings and events in spaces where the members of the community regularly frequent or consider familiar
* Volunteering with a local syringe exchange, homeless shelter, food kitchen, or other services aimed at supporting marginalized communities impacted by the War on Drugs.
* Collaborating with local organizations to pass sensible local, state, federal, and international policies.
* Invite local leaders to share their knowledge and expertise on some of the issues associated with drugs, drug use, and drug policy in the area.
* Showing up to partner organization events and meetings
* Organizing community-based voter registration drives
* Organizing free or affordable Sealing and Expungement clinics for eligible community members with past convictions
* Attending Town Hall meetings on local drug policy and intersecting issues
* Tabling at community events, cultural festivals, and rallies where people who use drugs and their loved ones will be

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## Tabling

Tabling is a very effective way to get the word out about your SSDP chapter and recruit new members. Set up a table in a high-traffic area so that you can talk to people about the War on Drugs and why you are starting an SSDP chapter. Pass out materials to prospective members and collect contact information to add to your chapter roster. It is also a good idea to make a sign, a banner, or flyers so you can effectively display the SSDP logo and messages connected with the SSDP mission.

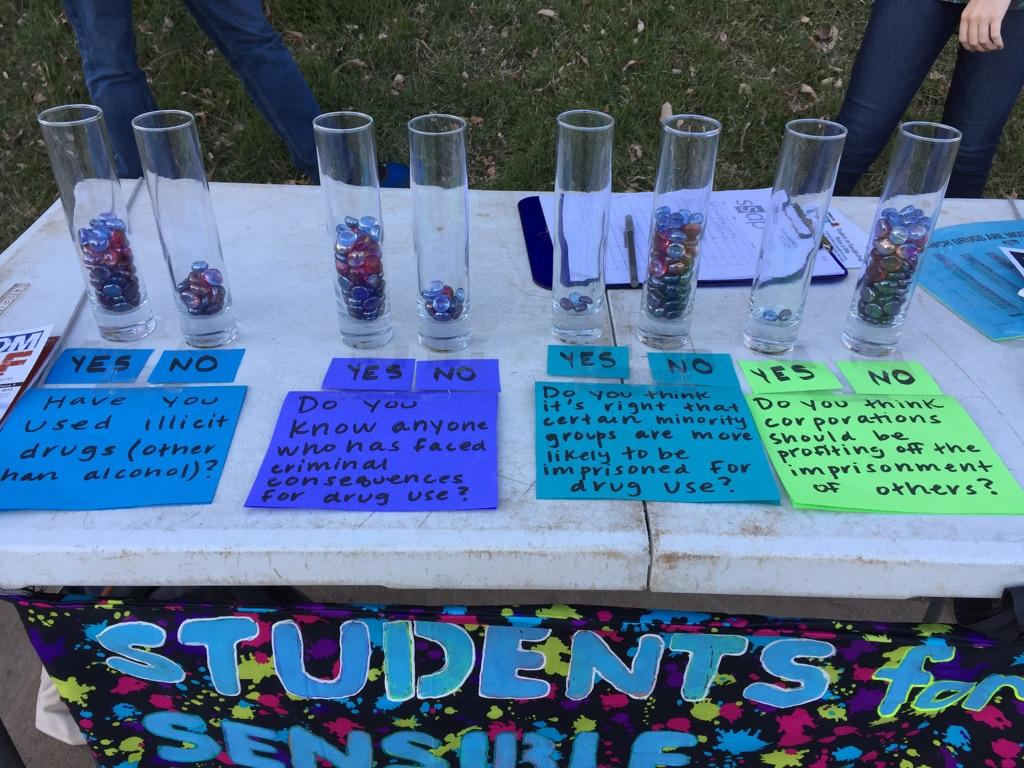
**Use your care package materials.** Your Movement Building Fellow will send you a care package of SSDP materials which will include promotional items like SSDP stickers, bookmarks, and brochures to hand out and use to educate your peers.

**Build a chapter roster.** Tabling, educational events, and campus actions will help you build a [chapter roster](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1R67iNcAQwezCkIOSnQzVJsowQzVyUBeEm4rABlO8HbE/edit?usp=drive_web) that can also serve as an e-mail list. Not every person whom you make contact with will join your chapter, but you can still encourage them to sign up to receive email alerts and reminders about SSDP-related actions, meetings, and events.

**Professionalism is key.** Cover your table with a tablecloth whenever possible since it makes you look more professional. Wear an SSDP shirt if you have one. Stand up instead of sitting down, and always appear friendly and approachable. Also, never underestimate the attraction of free candy.

**You already know what to say.** You decided to start an SSDP chapter because you believe the War on Drugs has failed. You don’t need to know all the stats, facts, and history to be a great representative of SSDP -- you already are! Over time, bolster your knowledge with the drug policy resources we’ve made available to you, but for now you can start simply, with current events, news, and basic questions that will spark a conversation..

* “Do you think people who use drugs should go to jail?”
* “Have you ever considered the arguments for legalizing all drugs?”
* “Are you aware of how harm reduction can save lives?”
* “Did you hear what happened in Portugal after they decriminalized all drugs?”
* “Did you know that psychedelics such as LSD or Psilocybin can be used to treat PTSD, depression, and other mental illnesses?”



If they stick around long enough, tell them about your chapter and what you do (or hope to do) in your community. Ask if they’d like to get on your email list. Make sure you don’t do all the talking. Make each interaction while tabling a conversation by asking questions. A great question to ask after you have introduced SSDP is “have you seen the effects of the War on Drugs??” If they say something relevant to what your chapter is working on, ask them if they would like to be involved in your efforts. If they see something that your chapter isn’t currently focused on, invite them to your next meeting to discuss their ideas.

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### Make sure to follow up.

* Take all of the email addresses you collected and add them to your chapter roster and any other relevant lists immediately.
* Invite the new sign-ups to join your chapter’s Facebook group and like the Facebook page.
* Send a follow up message as quickly as you can to enlist new members while they are still excited about your conversation. In your follow-up messages, be sure to give people the details about your next meeting/event.

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## Outreach to other local organizations

There may be other local organizations who will want to work with your chapter. Check your school's website for a complete list of campus organizations. A simple Google search of local advocacy organizations, organizer trainings, and other relevant events will also help you find some potential allies in the community at large.

* **Groups disproportionately impacted by the drug war** are a natural ally. If your community has active groups which focus on economic, racial, or social justice issues there will likely be some overlap with your goals. Show up for their events or actions that you align with. Reach out to them to partner on a meeting or event.
* **Politically oriented organizations** like College Democrats, Young Socialists, Black Student Unions, Latin American Student Unions, Students Against Mass Incarceration Feminists Collectives, Students for Liberty, Progressive Student Alliances, and others may want to collaborate with your chapter. Don’t be afraid to bridge across political boundaries to create a stronger alliance on campus.
* **Health and wellness organizations** such as your campus’ health services program, a sexual health and/or violence community group, or counseling and psychological services.

Attend meetings of these organizations so that you can make an announcement about the formation of your SSDP chapter, recruit some new members, and learn from other successful organizations on campus.

## Other recruitment activities

* Ask your professors if you can make a 2 minute announcement about SSDP at the beginning of your classes and pass around a signup sheet.
* Attend new student orientations and club fairs designed to connect students with campus organizations. Be sure to bring signup sheets and SSDP materials to distribute to students.
* Distribute handouts or post flyers on bulletin boards.
* Attend community events and meetings about intersecting issues and, if you ask a question, be sure to introduce yourself as a member of Students for Sensible Drug Policy. Even better: talk to the organizers and offer your chapter’s help as co-presenters.
* Socialize and make new friends. Do your best to organize social events for your members outside of your core SSDP activities. One of the best ways to get buy-in from your chapter’s members and encourage follow through is by developing friendships with your chapter’s members and facilitating friendships between them. Building and maintaining these relationships is a critical component to making sure that members stay with your chapter and are motivated to follow through with delegated responsibilities. Nobody wants to let down their friends!

STAYING ACTIVE

Now that you are an official SSDP chapter, your next step is to develop a plan of action.

# Events

Organizing events that spread awareness, call people to action, or organize people around a cause are an important part of policy change both on and off campus. They can also be a fun and engaging way to attract new members to your chapter. Events like film screenings, guest speakers, or debates draw people in and give them an opportunity to learn about drug policy. At the event, you can pass around the sign-up sheet, talk about SSDP’s mission and the chapter’s policy priorities, and announce the date, time and location of your next meeting. At least two or three people should share the responsibility of organizing the event to prevent anyone from feeling overwhelmed.

## Determine what kind of event is right for your chapter

There is no formula to fully anticipate what events and activities will be the right fit for your chapter; however, there are some guiding questions that you could use to help you along the way. Does it serve the future goals of the group? Take into account the goals of the chapter overall. Ask yourself, should we be training for this? Should members know anything in advance of this event or action? Are there any timely issues or opportunities that you and your members could educate, organize, or advocate around?

Most importantly, ask yourself, does it spark joy? SSDPers join and stay for many different reasons, ranging from skills and professional development to education to making friends. Events that speak to these core reasons and ambitions, for you and your members, will likely generate a bigger impact.

### Event ideas

* Screen a movie or documentary about the drug war or an intersecting issue
* Host a guest speaker
* Hold a panel discussion with professors, staff, students, local advocates, and/or professionals
* Host a debate on campus
* Hold a “Know Your Rights” event
* Organize a rally or demonstration
* Paint the school rock, or other creative art projects
* Hold a discussion on one of SSDP’s recommended Days of Action (list below)
* Host a social event at a local restaurant or cafe
* Hold a chapter fundraising event
* Register voters
* Host a community-police forum

### Past successful events

* Voices of Change: Building Stronger Communities through Drug Policy Reform
* Know Your Rights: 10 Ways to Survive a Police Encounter
* University of Michigan SSDP Visionary Art Auction
* Urban Crime Fighters: How Our Drug Laws Affect Your City
* The War on Drugs is a War on Women
* Law Enforcement Against Prohibition: Why Cops Want to Legalize Drugs
* Film Screening: The Union: The Business Behind Getting High
* The War on Drugs is a War on Us: Why Students are Fighting Back
* The War on the Environment: Why Our Drug Laws are Killing the Amazon Basin
* [Just Say Know](https://ssdp.org/justsayknow): Reality-Based Drug Education

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## Incentivize attendance

* Ask professors to offer extra credit to students who attend.
* Invite other campus organizations to co-sponsor your event
* Try to partner with a local business to sponsor your event by providing food or giveaways for attendees.
* Hold a drawing for prizes.

## Book the event venue

Start booking your event early. The more time you have to plan, the easier it will be to resolve any issues that come up. Determine a date, time, and location for your event that works for the chapter, the speaker, and your target audience. Check with the community calendar and other student organizations to avoid competition with other meetings or events likely to attract the same audience. You should also expect to have to navigate an approval process to reserve a space for your event that can take weeks on many campuses. Be prepared to have your events loosely planned at least 2 months in advance.

## Document the event

Make sure you take plenty of pictures of your event while it’s happening. Assigning a chapter member with a good camera (or a newer phone) to take pictures is a great way to ensure that your event will be documented. While phone pictures are great for quickly uploading to social media, try and find someone with a decent camera (or rent one from your campus media center) and get at least a few high quality pictures that you can use in the future. Post your photos on your chapter’s social media pages afterwards and share it with your community. Invite a representative from the campus newspaper to attend: they will often have better cameras and can do a write up of the event! Also be sure to send your pictures to your Movement Building Fellow so they can share it with the rest of the SSDP network.

## Follow up

If you collected sign-ups during your event, send out an email the next day thanking everyone for coming. Also include the date & location of your next SSDP meeting or a schedule of events if you have one. Be sure to thank any speakers that came from out of town with a thank you note or email, and invite them to keep in touch or come back again if it was a successful event. If any members of the faculty or administration attended the event, invite them to participate in future SSDP events and meetings. Finally, thank and reward your chapter members who helped make the event happen!

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# Recommended Days of Action

Every month of the year there are at least a few coordinated days of action run by allies and intersectional organizations that your chapter can organize around. This list has one such action for each month of the year. If you want to learn more about how you can get involved with any of these actions, reach out to your SSDP Movement Building Fellow.

January 22 - 28: [NIDA Drug Facts Week](https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week)

February 20: [World Day of Social Justice](http://www.un.org/en/events/socialjusticeday/)

March 31: [International Drug Checking Day](https://drugcheckingday.com/)

April 22: [Earth Day](https://www.earthday.org/)

May 1-31: [Mental Health Awareness Month](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may)

June 26: [Support. Don’t Punish.](http://supportdontpunish.org/)

July 28: [World Hepatitis Day](http://www.worldhepatitisday.org/)

August 31: [International Overdose Awareness Day](https://www.overdoseday.com)

September 20: [920 Psilocybin Day of Action](http://www.920coalition.org/)

October 22 - [International Day Against Police Brutality](http://www.october22.org/)

November 25 - [International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women](http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/)

December 1 - [World AIDS Day](https://www.worldaidsday.org/)

LEADING YOUR CHAPTER

If you’ve gotten this far, it means that you have successfully established your SSDP chapter and are ready to lead your chapter toward policy change. This section will cover resources and tips you should utilize throughout your time as an SSDP chapter leader, and knowledge you should make sure to pass on to your next chapter leader.

# Chapter structure

The way you choose to organize your chapter’s leadership is up to you. No matter what structure your chapter decides to use, it’s important that everyone is on the same page about expected roles and responsibilities at the beginning of each semester. This can help prevent conflict if everyone knows exactly what the chapter expects of them, and if a leader is no longer able to fulfill their duties, they can find a replacement or inform the President that they will be stepping down.

## Recommended Chapter Executive Board

### President

* Facilitates officer and regular chapter meetings if the facilitator role is unfulfilled
* Leads development of the organizational vision, goals, and strategies for the chapter
* Maintains communication with SSDP’s Global HQ
* Shares important information from the Global HQ with the chapter
* Builds and maintains strong relationships with other student groups, legislative bodies, alumni, and other organizations
* Leads implementation of chapter campaigns including policy change initiatives
* Keeps accurate records pertaining to meetings, events, members, committees, finances, schedules, etc.
* Manages the Executive Board (officers) including running officer meetings, delegating tasks to officers, ensuring completion of deadlines, and facilitating communication among officers
* Ensures online information about the chapter is accurate and complete (including Facebook groups, email listservs, global SSDP website, etc.)

### Vice President

* Assists President with all of their duties and responsibilities, including communicating with the SSDP Global HQ
* Is able to take over presidency should the President be unable to fulfill any of their duties or responsibilities
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### Treasurer

* Keeps track of finances in detail
* Stays aware of important funding deadlines and communicates relevant information to other officers
* Submits budget to appropriate campus bodies on time
* Distributes funds to speakers, vendors, and other entities
* Keeps track of incoming donations, fundraising dollars, etc.
* Keeps inventory of materials used for fundraising and for general use
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### Secretary

* Updates the chapter’s SSDP CAT page regularly
* Attends all meetings or arranges for a replacement
* Writes and distributes agendas prior to each meeting
* Manages the chapter’s roster & email list and keeps them updated
* Records meeting minutes for both officer and general meetings
* Disseminates minutes after each meeting as appropriate
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

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## Other Officer Positions

Additionally, large and active chapters will want to consider other positions which will contribute to effective chapter management and activities. Examples include:

### Lead Event Organizer

* Reserves rooms, AV equipment, etc. for meetings and special events
* Identifies opportunities for collaboration with other student organizations on campus or in the community for events
* Maintains contact with local media/news outlets and conducts outreach to local/state news/media outlets, and updates leadership team with possible PR opportunities
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### Social Media Coordinator

* Manages and maintains the organization’s social media outlets
* Communicates with other SSDP chapters and the Global HQ on social media strategy
* Provides meaningful and frequent content for both chapter members and outside observers on social media
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### Membership Administrator

* Recruits and trains new members and officers
* Plans organizational social gatherings
* Serves as a resource and facilitates bonding between all chapter members
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### Policy Director

* Serves as the chapter’s expert on campus, local, state, and federal policy
* Identifies opportunities for policy change campaigns
* Collaborates with other SSDP chapters and the international office on policy campaigns
* Tracks policy at all levels
* Directs efforts towards organizational vision, goals, and strategies

### 

### Civic Engagement and Community Outreach Coordinator

* Manages community relations and partnerships and promotes civic engagement
* Community outreach and event organization
* Hosting and participating in community forums and projects
* Building strategic coalitions with other organizations
* Managing civic engagement events such as volunteering, voter registry, community organizing, etc

### Certified Peer Education Coordinator

* Completes SSDP’s Just Say Know Peer Education Curriculum
* Assists other chapter members in completing the curriculum
* Assists and supports the other SSDP certified peer educators in the chapter in completing JSK-related activities including:
  + Organizing JSK peer education events and activities, including presentation of JSK drug education modules
  + Conveying factual information about drugs and drug policy, including resources for students
  + Organizing small-group educational programs in residence halls, in fraternities and sororities, for other student groups and high schools, and during Orientation Week
  + Developing and maintaining a list of support services and professional referrals
  + Providing students with informal support and professional referrals
  + Planning campus-wide events in collaboration with other student groups, academic departments or community organizations
* Communicates directly with the Director of Drug Education about any and all JSK-related activities in which the chapter engages.

# SSDP Chapter Activities Tracker (CAT)

## What is the SSDP CAT?

The SSDP CAT is an online interface for SSDP chapters to log the activities they are engaged in. When chapters log activity on the CAT, they earn CAT points. CAT points can be spent on SSDP materials, conference scholarships, and other items that help support your work. Think of the CAT as a way to earn resources that would otherwise cost money by logging your activism. Only established chapters are given access to the CAT, although other chapters may be given access to it on a case-by-case basis. If you are not an established SSDP chapter but would like access to the CAT, talk to your Movement Building Fellow.

**You can access the CAT at** [**cat.ssdp.org**](http://www.cat.ssdp.org)

## Why Should My Chapter Use the CAT?

Logging your activities in the CAT will earn you points that you can trade in for materials, resources, and other items from SSDP headquarters. Additionally, the CAT serves as an effective means of data tracking for SSDP as a whole. The more accurately you use the CAT, the better we can tell the story of SSDP. It helps the staff determine what activities our chapters care most about and in turn we can tailor our chapter support to best suit your needs and priorities. By keeping track of your chapter’s activity you are leaving a visible legacy for future leaders of your chapter. It’s also a fun way to engage in healthy competition among other SSDP chapters. You can see where your chapter stands in our leaderboard.

## Examples of Point-earning Activities

* Distributing educational materials on campus
* Attending a leadership or lobbying training
* Facebook group/online presence
* Tabling on campus
* Direct service volunteering
* Writing & submit LTE/op-ed
* Getting a LTE/op-ed published
* Recruiting and training officers
* Submitting content for the SSDP blog
* Passing a student government resolution endorsing policy reform
* Recruiting and training your next chapter President
* Changing a campus, local, or state policy
* Completing a SSDP Just Say Know training lesson
* Presenting a Just Say Know peer education module

**A full and up-to-date list of point earning activities can be found here:** [**http://cat.ssdp.org/available-activities**](https://cat.ssdp.org/available-activities)**.**

# Fundraising

## Apply for School Funding

If your chapter is recognized as a student organization by your school, your chapter likely has the opportunity to apply for funds through your student government, activities board, or other funding body. This is an easy way to get money that can help your chapter buy materials, put on events, or travel to conferences. Typically, you will have to submit requests for funding by a certain deadline. Take some time to research these dates and of all the guidelines for submitting your completed funding request. Many organizations will be competing for funds, so don’t wait until the last minute. **Remember, this is your money! It is included in your tuition.** DO NOT miss budget deadlines or pass up the opportunity to get funds from your school.

## Departmental Support

If you have an idea for an event on campus, check with faculty departments about co-sponsoring the event. Faculty departments on campus often have large budgets to fund speakers, movie screenings, conferences, and more. Set up a meeting with a department head, present your idea, and ask if they will partner with your chapter for an event.

## Sales, Events, and Drawings

If you’re unable to request funds or your request is not approved, you’ll have to raise money on your own. To have a successful fundraiser, chapter members must be very dedicated and establish concrete sales projections. Advertise any fundraising event as effectively as possible. Use banners, posters, flyers, chalk, radio spots, newspaper advertisements, and Facebook to get the word out. SSDP chapters have successfully raised money to support their work with bake sales, t-shirt sales or tie-dying, coffee/tea sales, car washes, grilled cheese sales, and concerts/open mic nights.

## 

## More Bang for Your Buck

Sometimes it takes money to make money! If your chapter is short on available funds and needs working capital to start a fundraising event, there are some options:

* See if your school offers underwrites (loans).
* Identify co-sponsors, i.e. other campus organizations or department sponsorships.
* Use personal funds which can be reimbursed following the event.
* Contact local business about sponsorships. Many SSDP chapters have successfully forged partnerships with local businesses to donate food for meetings & events or to sponsor chapters by providing travel funds for students to attend SSDP and other conferences.
* Bring a donation jar to every chapter meeting/event and ask those present to chip in their spare change. Over the course of a semester, this will add up.

If you need help with raising money, don’t be afraid to ask for help from your Movement Building Fellow, faculty advisor, or student government - that’s what they’re for!

## Sensible Society and Other Ways to Donate to the Global Organization

SSDP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity. Every dollar we use to operate the organization comes from tax-deductible donations from members of the public who are interested in ending the War on Drugs. [**Be sure to review the website resources on ways to donate**](https://ssdp.org/ways-to-give/).You never know when you might have a chance encounter with a person who may be in a position to make a one-time or a recurring donation to SSDP. For those who are interested in recurring monthly donations, refer them to the Sensible Society.

## Additional resources

* Fundraising webinar from former outreach staff: <http://issuu.com/dtackels/docs/leadership_webinar_fundraising?e=0>
* Conference Fundraising Webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg3h7cTiE84&t=20s>
* How to Ask Anyone for Anything: <http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/fundraising-basics/how-to-ask/>
* What to do when donors say no: <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/What-to-Do-When-Donors-Say/190629>
* Political Framework for Grassroots Fundraising: <http://www.grassrootsfundraising.org/why-gift/political-framework/>
* Contact Rachel Wissner at [rachel@ssdp.org](mailto:rachel@ssdp.org) or Lauren Padgett at [lauren@ssdp.org](mailto:lauren@ssdp.org) for 1-1 fundraising mentoring sessions for yourself or your chapter!

# Retaining members

While recruitment is one of the main goals of chapter building, retaining those members is the cornerstone of your chapter’s continued success. It can be frustrating to go from having meetings with 25 people attending to only 3 or 4 attending the next semester. Try these tips to make sure that doesn’t happen to your chapter, but if it does, hang in there! **Members will stay with your chapter if it is fun, exciting, and rewarding.** By staying organized, holding effective meetings, and engaging chapter members in compelling educational opportunities and campaigns, you will be able to keep your members engaged and coming back.

## Stay active

You will lose members -- and you won’t attract new activists -- if you don’t stay regularly active. The most successful chapters have a member-informed vision they are working toward throughout any given semester. These chapters will form strong bonds with community leaders, send representatives to community and campus events, provide relevant trainings, host education events, organize direct actions, and find other meaningful ways to empower and mobilize their community. Make it easy for your members to know when meetings take place by announcing them well in advance. Make it easy for your members to prepare for meetings by letting them know what to expect and what is expected of them. Work with your members to make sure things stay on track, and be ready to re-delegate or intervene if things are stalled.

## 

## Create an inclusive, engaging dialogue

The most successful SSDP chapters strive for a strongly inclusive decision-making process. Chapter priorities and actions should emerge from an ongoing dialogue among the chapter membership.

## Ask for feedback from chapter members

Effective leaders seek regular feedback, so encourage chapter members to give honest viewpoints about their experience as members, leaders’ performance, the decision-making process, and the goals the chapter would like to accomplish so that you can make sure you are providing them with an enriching experience that builds their desire to be a part of SSDP. This could come in the form of Google Surveys (which include the option of anonymity) and/or bi-semester group discussions, for example. Remember that as chapter leaders, you are essentially a volunteer leader and the best way for you to keep your “volunteers” engaged is to make sure they feel heard and appreciated.

## Delegate responsibilities

Give your new chapter members responsibilities so you can show them how important they are to your chapter and generate buy-in from your members. Do your best to tailor your delegation to fit the skills that your members have to offer. For example, if you have a member who is studying graphic design or marketing, have them make posters or flyers for tabling and upcoming events. A business or accounting major might be able to manage your fundraising efforts and help you develop a budget for your chapter. If a member comes to you with an idea for a project or campaign, encourage them to start working on it themselves in addition to bringing it to the rest of the chapter. When you delegate a project, tell them, “You own this.” Be consistent in following up with your members to see how they are feeling, but be wary of micromanaging. Your job as chapter leader is not to tell your members how to do things, it’s to ensure things are getting done. If you’d like to learn more about effective delegation, watch this [delegation webinar](https://issuu.com/dtackels/docs/leadershipwebinar-delegation) from our former outreach team

## Conflict resolution & inappropriate conduct

Students for Sensible Drug Policy recognizes that ending the War on Drugs rests on building an inclusive community dedicated to consciously addressing the disparate impacts of the War on Drugs and the ways in which its policies have marginalized specific, targeted people and communities, most particularly people and communities of color. We are committed to working with allies across ethnic, gender, national, religious, health, political, ideological, experiential, and all other spectrums of difference to co-create sensible drug policies which achieve safety and justice by recognizing that our liberation is bound together.

Students for Sensible Drug Policy implements and enforces a conduct violation complaint and restoration procedure as one practice among a set of practices intended to cultivate and sustain a community free of harassment or assault, unethical behavior, or personal attacks where a vibrant debate of ideas is upheld by a foundation of personal respect. These practices endeavor to align to the following principles:

* Every member of the SSDP family is entitled to participation in our community free from threat or intimidation.
* Student safety will be paramount in all considerations.
* Conduct violation complaints will be handled with care and in confidence in alignment with our [Conduct Violation Complaint and Restoration Procedure](https://docs.google.com/document/d/15F-PW9t1T7YNR0RP6U9io7JG6TH64e_X-WElzQdsD3M/edit#heading=h.5wb6jljiklr7) and [Whistleblower Policy](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JCjM5oFMkitgONGi8zvj1OIX9m0-AL3dtXwGM9LHqBE/edit?usp=sharing).
* Restorative procedures will follow the best practices of restorative justice, centering student safety and the experience of those who were harmed.

Chapters are entitled to resolve conflict using their established democratic processes. SSDP staff are available to provide guidance and advice in all such cases. We strongly hope that leadership will provide all parties in a conflict with the contact information for the Executive Director, Deputy Director, and your Movement Building Fellow in order to provide equal resources to all parties.

Chapters may elect to restrict the privileges of the accused individual (the “respondent”) including restriction from certain events, certain types of events, or meetings; that could include expulsion from the chapter upon a vote of the members.

Respondents who are dissatisfied with the decision of the chapter may [appeal](https://docs.google.com/document/d/15F-PW9t1T7YNR0RP6U9io7JG6TH64e_X-WElzQdsD3M/edit#heading=h.xqa2nfvm6rbr) to SSDP staff, who will investigate and respond. When possible, [restitution or restoration](https://docs.google.com/document/d/15F-PW9t1T7YNR0RP6U9io7JG6TH64e_X-WElzQdsD3M/edit#heading=h.5wb6jljiklr7) of privileges should be available at the discretion of the complainant(s).

In any case which involves violence, threats, intimidation, harassment, or sexual misconduct, chapter leaders or members are expected to engage the support of SSDP staff. In the case that chapter leaders are accused of such behavior, chapter members are expected to engage the support of SSDP staff.

## 

## Take care of your SSDP family

Students who change the world together stick together! SSDPers worldwide are connected by a shared commitment to ending the drug war. Start a mentor/mentee program with older and newer members of your chapter. Encourage collaboration on projects between members who may not know each other too well. Challenge everyone to have a 30 minute conversation with each other. It can be harder to create a culture of care when your chapter gets bigger and bigger, but it’s definitely worth the effort.

## Make it fun!

The best way to get your chapter members to engage -- and keep coming back for more -- is to make it a priority to ensure that your members are having fun being a part of SSDP. If you have a particularly successful meeting or event, reward your members with a social gathering or some pizza at your next meeting. It will be up to you and your fellow chapter leaders to approach your meetings and events with positive energy and enthusiasm. Ending the War on Drugs is serious business and living within its reality can be overwhelming at times. The best way to avoid burnout and keep people hopeful about the future is to have fun and enjoy a laugh and a smile as often as you can.

LIFE BEYOND YOUR CHAPTER

One of the greatest things about being a part of SSDP is getting connected to our global network of fellow students and alumni. Working with other chapters is a great way to meet your own policy goals, and engaging with some of SSDP’s various committees and programs can help guide you towards more specific resources on your drug policy interests. Your Movement Building Fellow can help connect you with chapters both near and far.

# Intersectionality Committee

## What is the Intersectionality Committee?

The Intersectionality Committee is a committee comprised of staff, Board members, students, alumni, & community members dedicated to ensure SSDP builds an inclusive movement and that our work to end the War on Drugs is done through an intersectional framework. Additionally, Intersectionality Committee strives to remove barriers and identify opportunities for more intentional inclusion, and provide resources to our network to strengthen our understanding of the intersectional nature of the global War on Drugs.

## 

## Our objectives

We will create welcoming, open, and safe spaces for all participants in our global movement to ensure the perspectives of directly impacted individuals are centered and represented. We will provide recognition of individuals’ lived experiences, i.e. first-hand accounts and impressions of life as a member of marginalized groups around the world.

We will identify and seek to break down barriers preventing marginalized individuals from participating in SSDP events, actions, organizing and advocacy work.

We will strive to ensure SSDP events, including conferences, provide a welcoming environment for current and potential members. We will be intentional about making SSDP events and spaces accessible to people who are disabled.

SSDP Staff and Board will hold ourselves accountable to dismantling structural racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression through addressing bigotry and discrimination within our network and the movement at large.

## How can I get involved?

Intersectionality committee meets by conference call monthly. Contact the staff liaison Rachel Wissner at [rachel@ssdp.org](mailto:rachel@ssdp.org) if you're interested in getting involved.

# 

# International Organizing Committee

The War on Drugs is a global humanitarian crisis. SSDP has chapters in over 34 countries in every inhabited continent, with more countries being added every month. The International Organizing Committee (IOC) identifies ways for the SSDP network to engage on global issues relevant to drug policy, manages SSDP’s engagement with the United Nations, and helps bridge the cultural gaps between SSDPers in different countries. The committee meets once a month and is open to all SSDP members, along with representatives of allied organizations such as Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy, SSDP UK, Youth Rise, and YODA. To find out when the next IOC meeting is, e-mail Roisin Downes at [roisin@ssdp.org](mailto:roisin@ssdp.org).

If you are interested in learning more about global drug policy in general, check out [Global Drug Policy Toolkit](https://ssdp.org/campaigns/#global_drug_policy)

# Just Say Know Peer Education Program

SSDP believes that students should be an important part of any campus/community prevention and intervention strategy. Just Say Know seeks to empower students in our network to analyze the relationship between drug policy and drug use by providing evidence-based drug information, teaching students to recognize and address dangerous behaviors and unhealthy attitudes, and promoting prosocial and harm reduction oriented behaviors and attitudes.

SSDP is in a uniquely qualified position to do so because:

* Students turn to their peers first when they encounter and experiment with drug use. SSDP can meet students where they are.
* SSDP does not condone nor condemn drug use, but seeks to reduce drug-related harms both personally and in their campus communities.
* SSDP complements existing campus health and wellness programs, and fills in important gaps when it comes to open and honest discussion of drug policy. SSDP peer educators are able to challenge and critique campus policy and culture in ways that campus administration often cannot. While campus programs seek to change individual behavior, SSDP can change campus culture.
* SSDP students have a unique perspective on the relationship between campus drug policy and campus drug use culture. Sensible drug education must acknowledge how drug policy and culture shapes attitudes and behaviors.

To get involved with the program, check out [ssdp.org/justsayknow](https://ssdp.org/justsayknow). For questions, e-mail Dr. Vilmarie Narloch at [vilmarie@ssdp.org](mailto:vilmarie@ssdp.org)

LIFE AFTER SSDP

# Passing the torch

As chapter leaders, one of your primary responsibilities is to make sure that your chapter lasts after you graduate. Recruiting freshmen and sophomore students is a key part of this. Keep an eye out for active members with leadership potential, and encourage them to take on a leadership role in the chapter. Get these chapter members in touch with your Movement Building Fellow so they can establish a relationship.

For many chapters, leadership transitions take place toward the end of a semester (when officer elections occur), but it can happen suddenly, gradually, or at any time. If someone is the perfect fit to be the next chapter leader, let them know explicitly by saying, “Based on your passion, attention to detail, and ability to execute, I can really see you as the next chapter leader.”

There are many other “torches” to be passed that lie outside of primary chapter leader responsibilities. Anytime senior chapter members have mastered a task, the next step should be to transfer that knowledge to new members and encourage them to take ownership of that task moving forward. The ultimate goal is for everyone in your chapter to be engaged in continual learning and personal growth. A good way to do this is to have outgoing chapter executives document their SSDP experience, so there are notes to pass along to future chapter leaders.

## 

## Transition checklist:

* Make the new officers administrators of the chapters’ online accounts (ex: Gmail, Facebook, YouTube, etc.)
* Connect the new officers with your movement building fellow and describe the resources we offer
* Submit your updated [chapter roster](https://goo.gl/wIrLuC) for the semester
* Consider the things you wish someone would have told you about when you became a new officer, and share what you learned with the new leadership
* Document and share tips, tricks, or shortcuts you discovered that made your work easier
* Document and share the strategies, tactics, and systems that have proven effective in supporting your chapter
* Brief the new leaders on any ongoing projects or campaigns
* Brief the new leaders on challenges they should expect or prepare for, including what your relationship with the administration has been like
* Share your transition strategy with you Movement Building Fellow so they can improve these resources

## Additional Resources

[Leadership Transition Checklist](http://www.rochester.edu/college/rccl/assets/pdf/LeadershipTransitionChecklist.pdf) – from Rochester University

# Join the Alumni Association

One of the best parts of being an SSDPer is that you will meet hundreds of genuinely amazing people who you will form lifelong kinships with. Once you graduate, you can remain directly involved with the SSDP by joining the Alumni Association. Alumni Association activities are centered around four key pillars:.

* **Connection.** Alumni-managed networking events and networking groups on social media platforms connect alumni within states or regions with each other regardless of age or school of graduation.
* **Mentorship.** Alumni have opportunities to enter into formal one-to-one mentoring relationships with current students as well as be appointed to “chapter adviser” roles to provide a consistent presence for chapters, which by their nature have transitioning leadership.
* **Advocacy.** Alumni are encouraged to participate in actions and events alongside the student network.
* **Philanthropy.** Through the Sensible Society, fundraising at events, and other opportunities, Alumni are able to support the work of SSDP and ensure future cohorts of students are able to continue raising the youth voice against punitive and dangerous drug policies.

**Visit** [ssdp.org/alumni](http://www.ssdp.org/alumni) to join the Alumni Association. Also, check out <http://ssdp.org/alumni/members> to see a list of current members of the Alumni Association. Feel free to reach out to anyone who went to your school, who is in your area, SSDP alumni are thrilled to serve as resources for you and your chapter.

**SSDP Style Guide**

The style guide helps align SSDP materials along a set of standards that are universally applied throughout all chapters. **When producing SSDP materials for your chapter, please follow this set of guidelines to aid in presentation of SSDP content.** While we encourage your chapter to be creative when designing advocacy materials, remaining on-brand is important because it establishes strong ties between the chapters in our network, presents a unified image of SSDP to decision makers and supporters, and helps us add a level of professionalism to our work.

# Colors

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **John Walsh**  **Blue** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK  Pantone | #136F8D  195,87,55  19,111,141  87,21,0,45  634 U, 7698 C | **Orange** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK  Pantone | #FAA732  35,80,98  250,167,50  0,33,80,2  7408 U, 1375 C |
| **Teal** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK  Pantone | #17BEBB  179,88,75  23,190,187  71, 0, 33, 0  7472 U or 7471 U (light) | **Navy** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK | #003249  199,100,29  0,50,73  100,32,0,71 |
| **Chartreuse** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK  Pantone | #DAF702  67,99,97  218,247,2  12,0,99,3  396 U | **Gray** | HEX  HSV  RGB  CMYK | #636467  225, 4, 40  99, 100, 103  4, 3, 0, 60 |

# Text style

## Fonts

Montserrat, in all caps, is used for document titles, section titles, and occasionally in other design elements.

Open Sans is used for all other text.

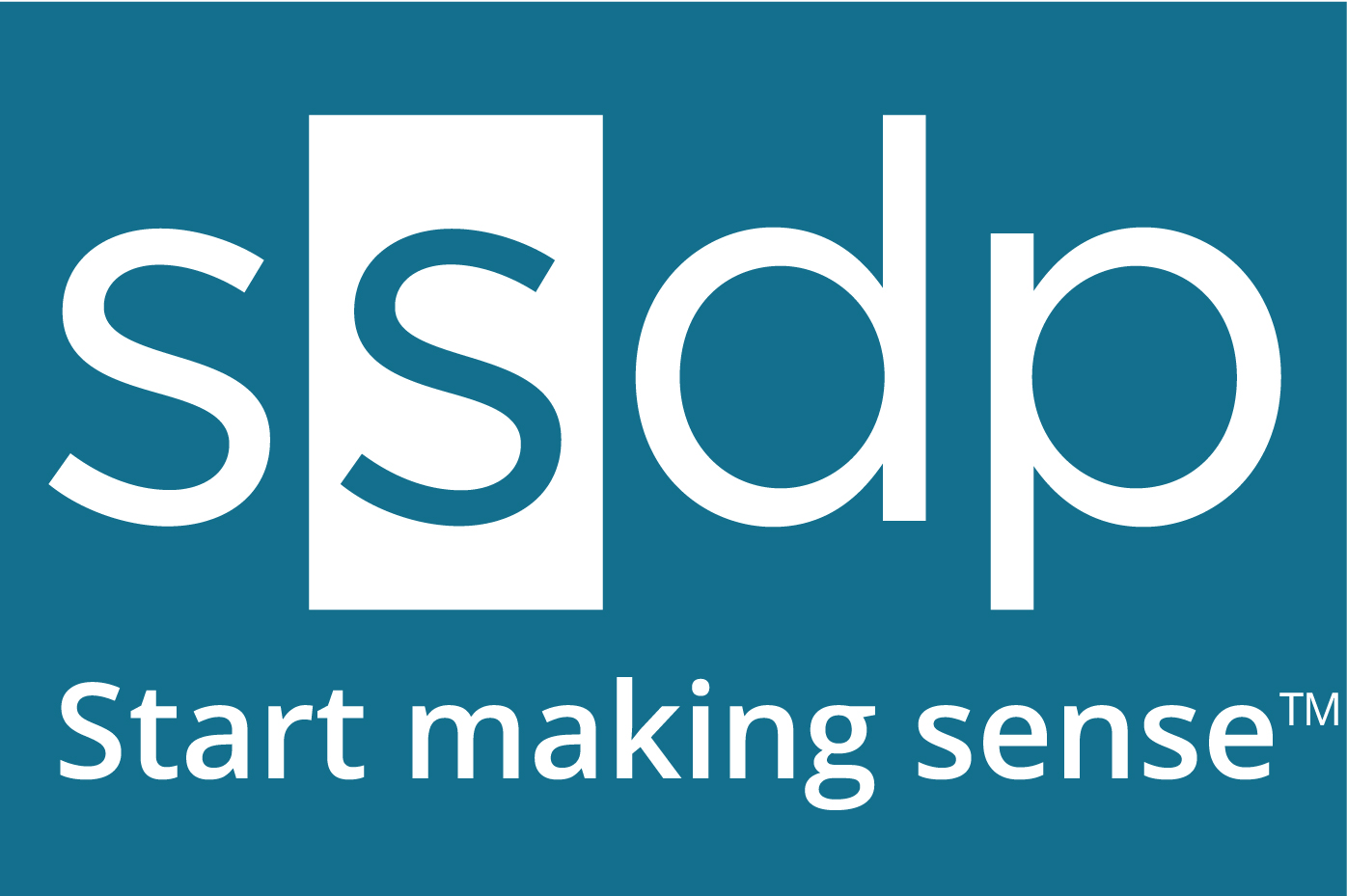
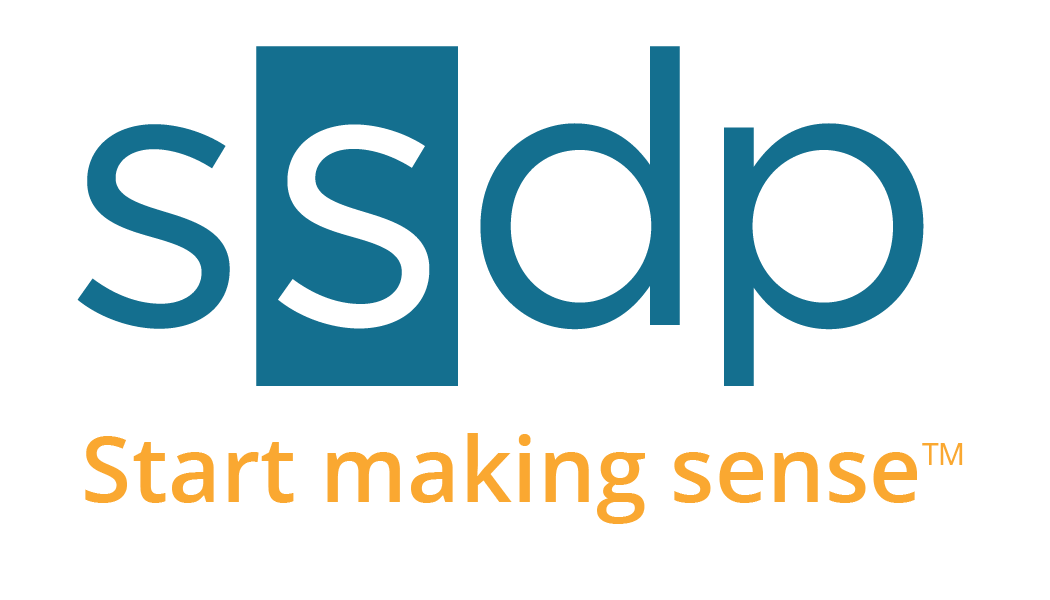
## Alignment

Text should generally be left-aligned. In limited presentations, text may be right-aligned or justified. Text should never be centered.

# Logo presentation

## Approved use

All SSDP logos are available on our website at [ssdp.org/resources/materials](https://ssdp.org/resources/materials/). Preferred logos are:

## Unapproved use

Old logos, reformatted logos, and other iterations of the SSDP logo are not approved.



[**The full Style Guide can be found here.**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rxhhV-nqiJnQr2l6zY8h1ymP3LZvw98bi3YEuGCM4uA/edit?usp=sharing)

ENGAGING WITH MEDIA

Media -- both on and off-campus -- is a great tool to use in order to get the word out about your chapter’s activities, as well as help your policy change efforts. This section will cover various forms of media you can utilize.

**If you are contacted by a national reporter or major news outlet for an interview, it is important that you first contact your Movement Building Fellow before replying to the reporter.**

# Print media

## Letters to the editor

The easiest and single most effective media activity you can do is write letters to the editor (LTEs). **Because LTEs are among the most widely-read parts of newspapers and are always read by decision makers, many people will learn about SSDP’s issues every time you get a letter published.** LTEs are generally 150-300 words long, so once your research is complete, writing a letter is fast. Take a look at a copy of the paper before you start writing so you can see what kind of letters they usually publish, and be sure to check for print guidelines. Always include your full contact information (name, phone number, address, and organizational affiliation) below your letter so the paper can confirm your identity. Your chances of publication will be greater if you are writing in response to a timely news story or a previously published article, editorial, column, Op-Ed, or another LTE. If you’re writing in response to a previous piece, you can dispute or elaborate on a point that was made, or highlight some aspect of the issue that wasn’t covered. You usually have a better chance of being published if you live in the geographical area being covered by the paper, but local papers often print LTEs from people outside of their immediate readership areas. Once a letter is written, you can alter it slightly and send it to several papers, multiplying your effectiveness with just a little more effort. **However, you should avoid sending the exact same letter to more than one paper in a given geographical area.** Read more about LTES [here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1znFshKpMXGzxi5_QfXWntSLmEN8I7j9_JBH7GmpzetU/edit?usp=sharing).

## Opinion pieces

Op-Eds are opinion pieces from outside writers that are selected for publication by newspapers. **Op-Eds are longer than LTEs, usually 600-800 words.** As opposed to LTEs, papers usually only accept Op-Eds from “important people,” such as heads of organizations, public officials, celebrities, and experts. You can easily make the case that you do have special expertise on the issue because you are a student advocate affected by the policy about which you’re writing. However, you may have to ghostwrite a piece for someone else to sign, depending on the newspaper. For example, you may want to think about asking a professor, student government leader, your college president, or someone directly affected by drug policies to edit and sign an Op-Ed that you’ve drafted from their perspective.

## Editorials

Newspapers’ editorial boards frequently take official positions on matters of public policy. As activists, we can influence editorial boards to write in favor of drug policy reform. This is especially easy on campus. Get to know the editors of your campus paper and provide information about issues they care about. You can also influence off-campus papers to write favorable editorials. Put together a concise and captivating email pitch and follow up with phone calls. At some papers, the editorial board may request that you meet with them in person to lobby for your position. Bring some concise printed materials to leave behind. Also consider bringing someone who has been individually affected by the Drug War to show the personal importance of reform.

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# Interviews with reporters

When doing interviews, **remember that anything you say can be quoted**! Take some time to prepare in advance and nail down your core talking points. Stick to these during the interview. Try to anticipate potential questions, partly by thinking about some of the common arguments against your position. Practice being interviewed with a friend beforehand and come up with some effective responses to these questions and arguments. Formulate sound bites (5-12 seconds long) in advance and practice saying them naturally. Repeat them throughout the interview. You will probably only get a small quote in print or appear on TV or the radio for a few seconds, so you want that brief comment to sound credible and convey the importance of the issue. Remember that anything you say can be used against you in the court of public opinion, no matter how friendly the reporter seems. Sound bites should include compelling action verbs, i.e. “Students are being FORCED out of school.” Deliver some sound bites in the form of questions: “Why would we want to remove at-risk students from school?” or, “How, exactly, will closing the doors of education help solve our nation’s drug problems?” **It is ok to admit when you do not know something.** Never make up an answer or lie to a reporter. Instead, pledge to find the answer and get back to them later. Don’t get bogged down in small and boring details unless a reporter asks for more in-depth information. Speak slowly and clearly while delivering sound bites and answering questions. Dress conservatively, especially for TV interviews. You don’t want to go through all the trouble of setting up an interview and then alienate the audience with your appearance.

**Make sure you have an idea of the length of the interview** so that you can go through your bullet points and highlight the most important sub-points. If you have less time to answer interview questions than you anticipated, you will still be able to communicate your point effectively.

**Always answer a related question you wanted to be asked** as opposed to the exact question you are asked. Good interviewers will recognize that you are doing this and see it as a sign of experience. This often leads the interviewer to give you more time to answer. Don't be afraid to use language like “I've heard that question asked before but the more compelling and important question in terms of student safety is ...".

**Focus on student safety.** When asked specifically about drug use, if all of your answers focus on student safety, then listeners or viewers will be less inclined to incorrectly suspect that your agenda is promoting drug use.

# Cultivating relationships with reporters

Reporters write articles for a living – it’s their job. They’re looking for interesting things to write about, and we have interesting things to tell them, so don’t be afraid to reach out and pitch stories. After an interview, always follow up with reporters promptly if you promised to get them more information. After a piece is published, send a short note or make a quick phone call to thank a reporter for writing a fair and balanced article, or to politely point out any gross inaccuracies or glaring omissions that you noticed. Once you’ve worked with a reporter, try to maintain the relationship. Let them know when you’ve got something new going on. If you have business cards, be sure to give one to a reporter you talk to.

LOBBYING

Whether you are meeting with school administrators or elected officials, lobbying is crucial step towards policy change. Lobbying is a mixture between policy and politics. It is scrutinized heavily and demands a lot of work, but is the most effective form of interaction with elected officials that will yield results in influencing public policy. Here are just a few tips to ensure your chapter lobbies efficiently and effectively.

# Scheduling a meeting

* Find out who you need to meet with in order to enact the policy change you are seeking. If you’re on campus, determine who the main decision makers are when it comes to drug policy and schedule a meeting with them. Your federal representatives and senators can be found by visiting [Democracy.io](https://democracy.io/#!/) or you can visit the state legislature’s website for your state representatives.
* Call the elected official's local office (or DC office, if you plan to be there)
* Identify yourself as a constituent by saying where you live
* Ask to set up a meeting with the member. If the member is unavailable to meet, ask specifically to meet with “the aide who handles drug/health/human rights/criminal justice policy (as appropriate for the issue you are working on).”
* Schedule a meeting with the elected official or the aide. Note that meetings with aides can often be as or more effective than meetings with electeds, as they are the primary expert the elected turns to.

# Be prepared

* Come to the meeting with specific talking points.
* If you are in a group, make sure that you have already discussed which issues should be raised and that you are all in agreement on how best to articulate your position.
* Rehearse responses to potential questions or concerns that might be raised regarding your position.
* Make a one-pager with your primary talking points so you have something to leave behind with staff.
* If you have business cards, be sure to bring them. If you don’t have any, this is a great opportunity to get some printed.

# Be professional

* Dress professionally.
* Never be late. Members and their staffers work at a frantic pace with extremely tight schedules. It’s good practice to arrive at least 10 minutes before your scheduled meeting.
* Always address and refer to members as “Senator”, “Congressman/Congresswoman”, or their state or local title.

# Be courteous

* It’s polite to introduce information with phrases like “as you may know...”
* When responding to concerns, do not be argumentative or confrontational.
* When you’re asked a question that you don’t have the answer to, don’t guess or try to make something up on the spot. Say, “I’m not sure about that, but I can get back to you.” Always be sure to get back to them.

# Be specific

* Make sure to make a specific request (e.g. co-sponsor/ oppose/introduce/repeal H.R./S. \_\_\_).
* If you are unable to refer to a bill number or law, be sure to make a very specific and limited request so that the member knows exactly how to address your concerns.

# Follow up

* Make sure to exchange business cards with the staffer handling your issue before you leave.
* Offer to keep in touch on the issue, and offer yourself as a resource.
* Leave them with a one-pager with your primary talking points, or at least a list of resources to check out.
* Write a brief thank-you e-mail to the member and/or staffer you met with, mentioning the date and subject of your meeting.
* Inform SSDP Global HQ of the results of your meeting so we can keep track of all chapters’ accomplishments.

CRISIS RESPONSE

There may come a time when your school or a member of your SSDP chapter becomes the focus of media attention. This can happen as a result of a drug-related arrest, student overdose on drugs (including alcohol), or changes in school policy related to drugs including alcohol. Such events, particularly those not resulting in tragedy, can provide a compelling opportunity to talk about why bad drug policy is more dangerous than drugs themselves, but are rife with potential problems for even the most experienced advocacy and media relations professionals. SSDP was founded in part to help protect young people from the harms that can be associated with drug use and overly punitive drug policies and our global staff is trained to help you in the event you or the students in your chapter are in need of support.

# Let SSDP staff know right away

If there is a crisis situation, as described above, make sure to let your Movement Building Fellow know right away (once everyone is safe, of course). If you have trouble contacting your Movement Building Fellow, you can call the Global HQ emergency hotline at 202-393-5280 and choose extension 9 to be connected to any member of the staff. Be sure to communicate to your chapter members that they should call you in the event of a crisis and that they too can contact the global staff for support in crisis situations (once everyone is safe).

# Forward media contacts to staff

In the event that a crisis situation occurs, DO NOT speak to the media unless and until you have received direct instructions from the SSDP staff to make an appropriate statement. It is important that you also instruct your chapter members not to make any statements to the media, as such statements could prove problematic for students involved in the situation.

APPENDIX

In this section, you will find some tools & resources that will help your chapter with all of the things listed in this manual. Many of these are also included as physical copies in SSDP care packages. All SSDP chapters are free to use these materials. If you would like to get creative and come up with some of your own original chapter materials, go for it! **We only ask that you stay on brand with SSDP and follow the guidelines outlined in our** [**style guide**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rxhhV-nqiJnQr2l6zY8h1ymP3LZvw98bi3YEuGCM4uA/edit?usp=sharing)**.**

# Basic tabling materials

[Sign-up Sheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F6THfI03QQuZBHoywoC-kpcP7HaFiZ6Fw9gtoigP-Pc/edit?usp=sharing). You can use this for tabling, meetings, events, and just about everything else you do as a chapter to collect contact info of interested students. Make sure someone in your chapter is responsible for adding sign-ups to your mailing list.

[Just Say Know Fact Sheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uzPWK1vKFI1GUzddjJ5qrUyl9R3-4he_98P8_xZkYQw/edit). A one-page review of SSDP’s Peer Education Program, Just Say Know. Have this handy when tabling so you can show people how SSDP engages in drug education, or print out multiple copies to hand out.

[The War on Drugs is a War on Ideology](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CtnAU6QdnjW7mc4mavSE72SBf7FxzUgAvp3SaVxykvw/edit). This two-sided page explains how the War on Drugs is a war on both progressive values and conservative values.

[List of SSDP Campaigns](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Esmj9K-ZvVix-k4F5yxxov1xgVgg5cXcvFbaGBYNx80/edit?usp=sharing). Another great thing to put out while tabling in case anyone asks what kind of campaigns SSDP works on.

# Chapter materials/templates

[Sample Budget](https://docs.google.com/a/ssdp.org/spreadsheets/d/11ZwDmc7WAu-NwBSdvxQKfHMMUJtPBG-roia0k2oScqQ). Your budget will obviously be different than this one, but if you’ve never written a budget before, this is a good example to start from. Keep in mind that in order to apply for school funding, you may be required to submit a budget in a specific format provided by the school.

[Sample Chapter Constitution](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IdKu-rxEapuPys6ND-C8pZIHg0iL4DImibU_GIi81NU/edit) . Like the budget, your school may require this in a specific format, but this is a great place to start. [You can also view a simpler version here.](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EXAhqtclu8msqgnw17jyI6c3yifUgWW6AtaptBqomzU/edit)

[Roster Template](https://goo.gl/wIrLuC). Use this template when submitting your chapter roster to your Movement Building Fellow.

# Training materials

[Just Say Know Peer Education Training](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Fcl6NZ1AFs)

[#SSDP2017 Fundraising Webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg3h7cTiE84&t=20s)

# SSDP on social media

Facebook

* [Official SSDP Page](https://www.facebook.com/ssdp/)
* [SSDP Family](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdpfamily/)- for all members, alumni, and supporters of SSDP
* [SSDP Chapter Leaders](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdpchapterleaders/) - only for SSDP chapter leaders
* SSDP Regional Groups - [Northeast](https://www.facebook.com/groups/northeast.ssdp/admins/), [Mid-Atlantic](https://www.facebook.com/groups/midatlantic.ssdp/admins/), [Southeast](https://www.facebook.com/groups/south.ssdp/admins/), [Southwest](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdp.southwest/), [Midwest](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdp.midwest/), [Heartland](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdp.heartland/?ref=br_rs), [Mountain](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdpmountainplains/admins/), [Pacific](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdp.pacific/admins/), and [International](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ssdp.international/admins/)
* [Diversity, Awareness, Reflection & Education (DARE)](https://www.facebook.com/groups/SSDPDARE/)
* [SSDP Jobs and Opportunities](https://www.facebook.com/groups/344729335623349/) - must be an SSDP member or in the Alumni Association to join

[Twitter (@SSDP)](https://twitter.com/ssdp)

[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/studentsforsensibledrugpolicy/)

[Reddit](https://www.reddit.com/r/SSDP/)

[YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/SSDP)

# Conference keynotes and select panels

[#SSDP2017 Conference Recap Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1tZAuRqDNU)

* [Staying Woke: Allyship, Racial Politics, and the Collateral Consequences of the Drug War](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ1twxy3uhU&t=1044s)
* [Just Say Know Peer Education Training](https://youtu.be/5Fcl6NZ1AFs)
* [Going Global: Becoming an Effective Advocate for International Issues](https://youtu.be/EmdI-lYYiF8)
* [The Future of Psychedelic Law and Policy: Past, Present, and Beyond](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gr7w26SiZi8)
* [The Activist’s Toolkit: How to Make Direct Actions Count](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o47E2PzR12s)

[Start Making Sense: #SSDP2016 Recap](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1J3VgpUiaQ)

* [Opening Address and Maia Szalavitz Keynote](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKE3YtT-8RI)
* [Kemba Smith Keynote](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DblIIva7I8&t=319s)
* [Drug Policy Reform Movement Leaders Plenary](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ylIEgyLj9sU)
* [Criteria for a Psychonauts License - Richard Hartnell](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRGq-vxUv_k)
* [Addiction is a Health Issue - Molly Davis](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kn_HnSM5s5w)
* [Making Peace with the Police - Brett Phelps](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru1r01tTSE4)
* [A Future of Freedom, Love, and Acceptance - Lauren Parasconda](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad509pRjKto)
* [Completing the Policy Process - Miranda Gottlieb](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGQVE_fxFp8)

[SSDP2014 Conference + Lobby Day Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1XoKo_B3Ls&index=1&list=PLC5VLOYYsLDFSY96zl8v6Ljv9teFScISN)

* [Keynote: Neill Franklin, Law Enforcement Against Prohibition](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5PQDamFXN0&index=26&list=PLC5VLOYYsLDFSY96zl8v6Ljv9teFScISN)
* [Keynote: Troy Dayton, ArcView Group](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBqM9IlB9ns&index=28&list=PLC5VLOYYsLDFSY96zl8v6Ljv9teFScISN)
* [Rick Doblin SSDP 2014 Video Message](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=facbq1unK8A&index=14&list=PLC5VLOYYsLDFSY96zl8v6Ljv9teFScISN)
* [Ethan Nadelman SSDP 2014 Video Message](https://youtu.be/qbQG-xhDSqE?list=PLC5VLOYYsLDFSY96zl8v6Ljv9teFScISN)

[SSDP2012 Conference Highlight Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CeeGegeh8w&index=1&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)

* [Keynote: Rick Doblin, MAPS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3X2YsG7-Nc&index=3&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)
* [Keynote: Adam Smith & Kris Krane](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lX9qjyHMrVY&index=5&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)
* [Keynote: Ethan Nadelmann, Drug Policy Alliance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRPEj9iaMzE&index=7&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)
* [Practicing Nonviolent Communication](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YmkjnaigIQ&index=4&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)
* [Drug Policy Reform as a Non-Partisan Issue](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icqF68cIhJw&index=6&list=PL31E5061C1B96EB37)

# SSDP publications

[Lobbying: A Tactical Guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dbQcLnsG5RqoMwbIvlFgDf0pq1arg0GRWAgiaVEM9-M/edit?usp=sharing)

[Getting Politicians On The Record: A Tactical Guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ERPvost06pltbHuEPGLTO_6kApECDG5blROAq0VyPd0/edit?usp=sharing)

[Global Drug Policy Reform Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B7fh6jX33lH5T2ZJM0FEQ3Zaek0)

[Marijuana Policy Reform Toolkit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DQvhU0KQK1qkiwj0ht2ExBEonsACc1TvJzELOm8wVa4/edit?usp=sharing)

[911 Good Samaritan Policy Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B7fh6jX33lH5VF9xbGF6WjV6REU)

[Protecting Confidential Informants Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B7fh6jX33lH5Q0ZVMmJ4U0pLTTQ)

[Increasing Access to Harm Reduction Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0BwME1eOPsFgQR1YzVzVHNEF2Ukk?usp=sharing)

[Higher Education Act Policy Reform Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B7fh6jX33lH5NnRBLUwtX1ZZNjA?usp=sharing)

[End Student Drug Checking Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B7fh6jX33lH5bUExZVRDUml6X0E)

[Amend the RAVE Act Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B7fh6jX33lH5ZVNlRk5JQjhsTnc)

[Psychedelic Policy Reform Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B7fh6jX33lH5YzZlZ1daUldGZDQ?usp=sharing)

[Working With the Media Guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xCn6JZar48OCokfGLfEz2kGXkxlQvQiae_XlKWYnhGw/edit?usp=sharing)

[Annual Reports, Financial Statements, and 990s](http://ssdp.org/reports)

[SSDP Blog](http://www.ssdp.org/blog)

[The Movement](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAH_XfP8Ssk&index=2&list=PLC5VLOYYsLDGGvcjGBDn6Lm96mp0BZzQ5) - A short film on the 2016 UNGASS made by members of University of Copenhagen SSDP

[Drug Reform, Students, and the 2016 Election](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jiKZ2ZSu3w&t=984s) - Panel of SSDP staff, students, and alumni at the 2016 New Hampshire Primary Student Convention

[Youth Coalition Statement at the 59th CND (2016)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u91ZHyXAlwY&t=72s) - Intervention from the floor by SSDP Board member Sara Velimirovic at the 59th CND in Vienna

[Alternative Global Youth Coalition Consultation](http://ssdp.org/assets/Alternate-Youth-UNGASS-Consultation.pdf) - Statement from SSDP and our global allies that describes our recommendations for the UNGASS

[Are Drug Policies Protecting Youth?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHlDRdKhT2Y&t=89s) - Side event with CSSDP and Youth Rise at the 59th CND in Vienna

[Protecting Youth from Drug Policy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iViOoLKI3vw&t=7s) - Side event with CSSDP and SSDP UK at the 58th CND in Vienna

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