

# Developing a Community Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Team

www.DRUGENDANGEREDCHILD.org

**The mission of Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Teams is to rescue, shelter, defend and protect children. Each DEC Team will consist of two units:**

The Response Unit and the Educational Unit

## **Step 1:**

*County DEC Teams should join with existing efforts to prevent duplication of work within the county.*

**Are there any existing substance abuse prevention groups or tasks forces in your local community?**

**YES or NO**

**If YES, list the existing substance abuse prevention groups or taskforces:**

---

---

---

**If NO, proceed to Step 3.**

## **Step 2:**

*County DEC Teams may become a sub-part or sub-committee of an existing group.*

**Are the existing organizations (listed in Step 1) or any other organizations in the county addressing Drug Endangered Children (DEC)?**

**YES or NO**

**If YES, list the groups or organizations in the county addressing DEC:**

---

---

**If NO, would the existing groups or organizations in the county addressing substance abuse prevention be willing to discuss addressing drug endangered child issues as part of the coalition and advocate for the creation of a DEC Response Team?**

---

---

---

**Are any of the existing groups or organizations in the county working as DEC response teams or educational teams?**

**YES or NO**

**If YES, list the groups or organizations in the county that are working as DEC response teams or educational teams. Specify if the existing team is working as a response team or community awareness team.**

---

---

---

**If NO, proceed to Step 3.**

### **Step 3:**

*If interest in DEC efforts is not present within an existing Coalition or Organization we recommended that representatives from the following community service areas are invited to a forum or presentation of child drug endangerment to discuss the development of a local (county) DEC Team:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Law enforcement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community Based Services (child protection)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Medical Providers (emergency room)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency medical responders (fire/EMS)
- \_\_\_\_\_ School Counselor Representative
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community Mental Health
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Cooperative Extension, Public Health, Family Court, County Judge Executives, Family Resources Center, Prosecutors, Faith Based Organizations, Early Childhood Care Professionals, Child Advocacy Centers, Regional Prevention Centers, and other groups or individuals known for child advocacy and education).

**Determine who will be the designated DEC representative from each of the various programs, organizations, and agencies. Representatives from law enforcement, children’s protective services, emergency room medical providers, and emergency medical services will compose the Response Unit. Any DEC member willing to go through training from the DEC Training Network can serve on the Educational Unit.**

Use the table on the next page to list the designated DEC Team members and the organizations they represent. Indicate which members are part of the Response Unit and the Educational Unit

Once Representatives for the County DEC Team are designated, the list should be copied for each DEC Team Member and sent to:

**Doug Burnham  
DEC Training Network  
KU Building, One Quality Street  
Room 705  
Lexington, Kentucky 40507**

**Or**

**Email to [burnham@uky.edu](mailto:burnham@uky.edu)**

List the designated DEC Representative(s) for each program, organization and agency:

<b>Designated Drug Endangered Child Team Representatives</b>		
<b>Representative Type</b>	<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Agency Representative and Contact Information</b>
<b>Law Enforcement</b>		
<b>Community Based Services</b>		
<b>Emergency Medical Providers</b>		
<b>Emergency Medical Responders</b>		
<b>School Counselor Representative</b>		
<b>Community Mental Health</b>		
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Other</b>		

**SOME AGENCIES OR ORGANIZATIONS MAY HAVE MORE OR LESS REPS DEPENDING ON THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTY**

## **Step 4:**

*As the life of the DEC Team continues, the Team can determine how formal its structure should be.*

**Determine who will serve as the Facilitator for the DEC Team. The Facilitator will call and facilitate meetings, schedule trainings, keep data, and report to the DEC Training Network.**

List the Team Member who will serve as the Team Facilitator:

---

## **Step 5:**

*The Team Facilitator will provide all Team members with the protocols established by law enforcement, emergency medical services, children's protective services, and the National DEC Medical Protocol.*

**The DEC Training Network will supply the Team facilitator with copies of these protocols.**

## **Step 6:**

*Working within the accepted professional or agency protocols, establish procedures for a 'new' County DEC Protocol that is tailored to suit the resources and need of your particular county.*

**Read each protocol, as a Team and negotiate any perceived conflicts between the various agency/discipline-specific protocols. The Team Facilitator should lead the conflict negotiation discussion.**

**The County DEC Team protocol should clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of each agency representative what when a child is discovered in a drug endangered environment.**

## **Step 7:**

*Working with the DEC Training Network, all potential first responders in the locality should be trained on the 'new' County DEC Protocol that has been developed.*

**Design and deliver local training for all potential first responders. Local DEC Teams are encouraged to work with the DEC Training Network to provide training in their community.**

The training should familiarize the participants with the protocol of each first responder agency or organization AND the 'new' County DEC Protocol established by the County DEC Team.

## **Step 8:**

***Deliver DEC Training Network developed or approved educational programs concerning the dangers to children who are in the presence of the production, use and selling of illegally manufactured drugs.***

The DEC Training Network will provide “train the trainer” education for members of the County DEC Team Educational Unit. Educational Units will be provided with training materials and technical support from the Network. All trainings will include a presentation of procedures to follow when reporting suspected child abuse or neglect related to the production and/or use of illegal drugs or diverted prescription medication.

## **Suggested DEC Community Education and Awareness Activities:**

- **Host local DEC training for all initial responders.**
- **Plan a mock response for your County DEC Team.**
- **Involve the local media in awareness efforts. Provide them with information and stories that help the community understand the realities of the problems associated with children living in drug-endangered environments.**
- **Work with the Drug Endangered Children’s Training Network to distribute printed materials that will inform the community about the problem and tasks they can perform to help address the needs of drug endangered children in the local community.**
- **Collect clothing and toys for children who have been removed from a Meth-contaminated home.\***
- **See that clothing and toys from Meth environments are properly disposed of rather than given to other children, donated, or sold in yard sales.**
- **Provide DEC community training to identify signs of Meth production and use.**
- **Arrange to provide respite care for foster parents who are caring for drug-endangered children.**
- **Hold a ‘Recognition Ceremony’ for members of the local community who have provided service and leadership for your community’s children.**
- **Plan and implement community strategies that will create a positive and affirming community environment for all children and youth.**

### **\*DID YOU KNOW?**

*Rescued drug endangered children are not allowed to take clothes, toys, or personal items from the drug scene.*

*DEC Teams can recruit local organizations (civic organizations, women’s clubs, churches or faith based organizations), businesses, and youth organizations, to collect and donate clothing, blankets, shoes, gloves, toys, back packs, toothbrushes, books, snacks, or food gift certificates for use by the rescued DEC children.*



## **Step 9:**

**Assist in the delivery of profession-specific or work-specific training in the local community.**

The DEC Training Network will establish training programs and packages tailored to meet the needs of specific professional or work related groups. County DEC Team Members, in partnership with Network staff and trained trainers, will have access to the training resources needed.

County DEC Teams may determine that job-specific training is necessary in the local community. Job-specific training might include training for the following occupations:

- health care and mental health care providers
- in-home care providers
  - home health programs
  - early childhood intervention programs
  - nutrition programs
  - children's protective service programs
- law enforcement personnel
- motel and hotel owners and operators
- park personnel
- property managers
- local prosecutors
- road clean-up crews
- school personnel
- storage unit owners and operators
- trash collectors
- utility companies
- other groups specific to the local community

## **Step 10:**

**Promote the development or modification of public policy (local, regional, state, and national levels) that will best ensure the safety and health of drug-endangered children.**

As teams work together, they will become aware of administrative and legislative policies that need attention. They will also discover that there is a need to develop new policies. DEC Teams are encouraged to become advocates for change of policy that promotes community assets for children and families and, thus, decrease the level of substance abuse.

**During any phase of this work, the DEC Training Network staff is willing to consult with you and provide assistance.**

[www.drugendangeredchild.org](http://www.drugendangeredchild.org)

**Doug Burnham**  
[burnham@uky.edu](mailto:burnham@uky.edu)  
859-257-4785

**Holly Hopper**  
[hehopp2@uky.edu](mailto:hehopp2@uky.edu)  
859-257-5678; ext. 82318

**Priscilla Baierlein**  
[priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu](mailto:priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu)  
859-257-5678; ext. 82317

## THE DRUG ENDANGERED CHILD TRAINING NETWORK

The DEC Training Network is an Appalachian Regional Commission funded project that seeks to increase community and professional awareness of the impact of adult drug involvement on children.

### Goals:

- Each community in the East Region of Kentucky will form a county or regionally based Drug Endangered Child Response Team.
- Each community will form an Educational Team that becomes part of an existing UNITE or ASAP Coalition, that is active and has the interest of community members.
- Local medical providers will identify children through implementation of the Medical Protocol for Drug Endangered Children and the practice of updated “best practices” recommended by state and national advisory boards.
- Professionals will take advantage of training opportunities and request trainings that meet the specific needs of their community.
- Community medical providers will take advantage of the 24-hour guidance if puzzling cases present in the local Emergency Room including those involving drugs other than methamphetamine.
- Development of DEC Response Teams will improve multi-disciplinary communication thus improving outcomes and care for children impacted physically or emotionally by adult drug use, sale, or production.
- Oral health screenings are offered and will be funded by the DEC Training Network. Referrals will be received by contacting Dr. Susan Pollack through UK MD’s **1-800-888-5533**. Oral health screenings can also be provided by Dr. Jim Cecil as arranged by Dr. Pollack.
- Kentucky State Police has funds available to pay for drug testing of children. Information on how to access these funds is available and should be implemented as part of the local DEC response protocol.
- Community trainings are encouraged. These can be requested by contacting Holly Hopper at [hehopp2@uky.edu](mailto:hehopp2@uky.edu) or [Priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu](mailto:Priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu).

### Project Staff:

Holly Hopper  
[hehopp2@uky.edu](mailto:hehopp2@uky.edu)

Priscilla Baierlein  
[priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu](mailto:priscilla.baierlein@uky.edu)

Eddie Napier  
[eddien@email.uky.edu](mailto:eddien@email.uky.edu)

Doug Burnham  
[burnham@uky.edu](mailto:burnham@uky.edu)

Jessica Mullins  
[jlmull2@uky.edu](mailto:jlmull2@uky.edu)

Mark Schneider  
[mark1@email.uky.edu](mailto:mark1@email.uky.edu)

Chris Flaherty  
[chris.flaherty@uky.edu](mailto:chris.flaherty@uky.edu)

Jim Cecil  
[jim.cecil@ky.gov](mailto:jim.cecil@ky.gov)