



Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey

# Your Song! Your Voice!®



Shout Down Drugs® New Jersey

## CONTEST RULES 2025-2026

**ENTRY DEADLINE: Sunday, February 1, 2026 (by 11:59 pm)**

•Registration Required on [ShoutDownDrugs.com](https://ShoutDownDrugs.com)

•Song, Soundtrack/Instrumental, Photo, Lyrics must be uploaded when registering

### ALL CONTESTANTS MUST:

- be a **High School Student**, in Grades 9 through 12, in good standing with their school.  
(For students enrolled in a NJ high school equivalency program, please contact the program coordinator for eligibility.)
- be a **resident of New Jersey**.
- Contestants can enter as an individual or a group [Groups cannot exceed six (6) students]

### ALL SONGS MUST:

- be **completely original music and lyrics** with no copyright infringement violations.
- be **no more than 3 (THREE) minutes in length**.
- contain a **message about preventing substance misuse and making safe, responsible choices behind the wheel.**

**For copyright-protected songs:** Please carefully read Paragraph 5 of the Copyright License, Assignment & Talent Release before entering the contest.

\*All music genres are welcomed – Rock, jazz, R&B, folk, hip hop, gospel, etc.

### MUSIC/LYRICS/PHOTO/VIDEO

Below is what must be uploaded when registering:

- **TWO VERSIONS** of your song must be submitted: **Must be in MP3 format**.  
One version must contain **music and all vocals**.  
One version must contain **music only** (your soundtrack or instrumental) include background vocals, if any.
- **TYPED LYRICS** with a song title, must be copied and pasted into designated lyric field on the upload site.
- **PHOTO:** NO IMAGES PERMITTED IN PLACE OF YOUR PHOTO. Be as creative as you like, but you must follow copyright rules. (Groups: one group photo only). PDFNJ reserves the right to reject any inappropriate images.
- **PERFORMANCE VIDEOS** are encouraged but not mandatory. **Must be in MP4 format**. If you choose not to submit a video, if you are a finalist, your recorded song and photo will be used for the Virtual Prevention Concert.  
\*If you have technical problems, please contact the program coordinator for help – [Julia@DrugFreeNJ.org](mailto:Julia@DrugFreeNJ.org) or 973-275-7985.

### REGISTRATION

**Step 1:** Registration must be completed and submitted at [ShoutDownDrugs.com/register](https://ShoutDownDrugs.com/register).

**GROUPS: All group members must register.**

If under the age of 18, registration must be submitted by parent or legal guardian. If **over the age of 18** proof of age must be emailed to [Julia@DrugfreeNJ.org](mailto:Julia@DrugfreeNJ.org) (copy of **birth certificate** or **driver's license**).

**Step 2:** Recorded Song, Soundtrack/Instrumental, Photo, Lyrics and Video must be uploaded at the time of registering.

### CONCERT

The April 16, 2026, PREVENTION CONCERT will be a pre-recorded virtual event, featuring the contest finalists' music videos (or a recording of the song if video is not submitted). **One Grand Prize Winner** will be announced at the conclusion of the event.

**Groups:** No substitutions are allowed for any group member who withdraws from the contest, but remaining group members may continue with the contest but must contact the program coordinator first for permission.

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## JUDGING

- An independent panel of judges will select **One Grand Prize Winner** who will be announced at the conclusion of the Concert.
- Participants will represent the county where they reside, not where they attend school. *(For group entries, the group leader's residing county is the group's official county of entry.)*
- **Online Voting:**
  - During the voting period, entries that meet the contest criteria will be featured on **ShoutDownDrugs.com**.
    - Contestants' total online votes will be combined with judges' scores to help select the Winner.
    - Contestant with most online votes will receive a cash prize and special recognition.

## WINNER

The winner will be announced at the conclusion of the April 16, 2026, Prevention Concert live on air on 95.9-FM WRAT Radio and WRAT.com. All decisions are final.

## JUDGING CRITERIA ~ *Emphasis will be placed on your Prevention Message* ~

### 1. Prevention Message/Lyrics:

- Is the message clear?
- Does the song inform peers about the dangers of substance use and impaired driving?

### 2. Originality:

- Does the song motivate and inspire peers to be substance-use free?
- Does it connect teens to the message of the dangers of substance use?

## GRAND PRIZE

**One Grand Prize will be awarded to one winner (*individual or group*):**

- **Receive a \$5,000 "Music Contract"**
- **Will be required to perform their winning song at five (5) separate events\***, which shall be determined at a future date. These may include virtual events. Prize will be distributed in accordance with the terms of the music contract and contingent on performance at scheduled PDFNJ events.

**IF A GROUP IS CHOSEN AS A WINNER**, the prize money will be divided equally among group members.

**\*Winner is responsible for their own transportation to all in-person events and minors must be accompanied by an adult chaperone 21 or older.**

## EXCLUSIONS

- Contest is not open to employees or immediate family members of PDFNJ or any Sponsor of this contest.
- PDFNJ reserves the right to reject any entry that goes against its mission.