

**NEGATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE
RANDOM DRUG TESTING**
by Jen Cocanougher

The Atlanta Journal Constitution noted that “all junior high and high school athletes in America are now more than just athletes. They are also suspects.” For this reason and those that follow, I am compelled to negate today’s resolution. Resolved: Random testing of student athletes for illegal drug use is justified.

For clarification of today’s round, I offer the following (counter) definitions:

Random: unsystematically

Drug: something that causes addiction or habituation

Student: one who is enrolled or attends classes at school, college, or university

Athlete: a person trained to compete in sports

Justified: to demonstrate or prove to be just to be just, right, or valid

The highest value within today’s round is quality of life. Quality of life encompasses many values such as dignity, privacy, security, equality, and happiness. Quality of Life is the most important thing to achieve within today’s round because quality of life is affected by drug tests.

The criterion of Cost Benefit Analysis best achieves my value of quality of life. Cost benefit analysis is a real-world method for making ethical and pragmatic decisions by weighing the costs of action versus the benefits. Cost benefit analysis achieves the value of quality of life because we have to weigh the cost of individual rights versus the minimal benefit of security that could be attained by random drug tests.

Contention I. Random drug testing invades an athlete’s privacy.

According to the Christian Science Monitor, “Wayne Acton. . .thought that it would be humiliating for his son to give a urine sample while the coach watched. He also felt the test would educate James to think he was guilty until proved innocent.” Although the affirmative may believe that giving a urine sample while the coach watches is the same as changing in a locker room, I strongly disagree. Changing in a room full of other athletes one’s own age is very different than giving a sample in front of a coach who is, in essence, accusing you of using illegal drugs.

Furthermore, singling out student athletes is discriminating. One should not single out one group of students especially when athletes are not the only students that may use illegal drugs.

Privacy, dignity, and equality are all negatively affected by random drug testing. These things embody quality of life. If you vote for the affirmative, you vote against quality of life because random drug testing takes away these things.

Contention II: Random drug testing undermines security.

According to the [Cato Journal](#), “Drug testing, by invading the privacy of student athletes. . .will most probably lead marginal student athletes to quit the team. Freed from the regimen of athletics these former athletes may revert to the drug use patterns of their non-athlete peers – who have higher rates of drug usage than athletes.” Random drug testing is likely to increase drug use for a student athlete if they are barred from sports rather than encourage them to get clean and rejoin the team. Instead of quitting drugs, the student may just continue drugs so all the random drug testing has done is expose their drug use to the public. Random drug testing could hurt quality of life by making drug use go up.

Additionally, drug tests cost up to one hundred dollars per test ([Cato Journal](#)). A school can spend up to \$30,000 per year just to test athletes. That is enough to hire a new teacher and they could teach a drug prevention program. Using the funds to test for drugs rather than having a drug prevention program for everyone could undermine the security for other students. Security is a component of quality of life, so when security is compromised, so is quality of life.

Contention III. False positives have negative ramifications.

The random drug testing of student athletes is inaccurate. There is always the chance of a false positive to occur. An article in [Current Health](#) wrote that [Occasionally], legal, over-the-counter medications are read by lab tests as illegal drugs. To avoid confusion, test subjects are often asked to list the medications they are using. “Revealing this information simply to save yourself from a false positive is exposing your private information. Random drug testing of student athletes is not justified because it is obvious that the athletes will lose privacy and dignity. The athletes’ quality of life will decrease, and the amount of drug use it will stop is nowhere near as much privacy as

they will lose with cost benefit analysis.

(Refute opponent's case)

In conclusion, I have given you three reasons why random drug testing is bad: Random drug testing invades an athlete's privacy; Random drug testing undermines security; and False positives have negative ramifications. I urge you to negate the resolution on these grounds and in the words of Justice Ferdinand F. Fernandez, "Children are compelled to attend school, but nothing suggests that they lose their right to privacy in their excretory functions when they do so."