

THE METH PROJECT

Teen Meth Usage in Montana Declined by Nearly 50% Since 2005

National Youth Survey Shows Montana Leads the Nation in Meth Reduction

PALO ALTO, Calif.—September 18, 2007—The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Meth Project, and the Montana Department of Public Instruction today announced the results of Montana's Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which found that Meth use among teens in the state has dropped by nearly 50% since 2005,ⁱ when the Meth Project first launched its Meth prevention campaign in the state. In contrast, the annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health, released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services this month, found that Meth use among teens nationally remained unchanged over the same period.ⁱⁱ

“These results are very impressive. The Montana Meth Project has made a major investment in the people of Montana and it appears to have paid big dividends,” said Dr. Rick Rawson, associate director of Integrated Substance Abuse Programs at UCLA and one of the nation’s foremost experts on methamphetamine. “This report clearly shows that the Meth Project’s campaign is having an impact, and the message is getting through effectively. Teen attitudes toward Meth in Montana have shifted dramatically, especially when compared to the rest of the nation.”

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is sponsored by the CDC and is conducted every two years by 40 states across the U.S. The new findings come on the heels of the first national survey on *Meth Use & Attitudes*, which the Meth Project also released today. That data, when compared to similar data collected in Montana, shows that Montana’s teens have a much better understanding about the dangers of Meth than their peers around the country. For example, 65% of teens in Montana see a great risk in using Meth just once, while only 41% of teens nationally see a similar risk.ⁱⁱⁱ

Parent/child discussions about Meth are also far more likely to occur in Montana than in the rest of the country. In Montana, recent studies show that 96% of parents have had discussions about Meth with their child in the past year.^{iv} At the same time, 55% of teens in the United States say that they have never discussed Meth with their parents.^v The analysis of the national versus Montana data also showed that Montana teens are more likely to disapprove of Meth use among their peers, a stigma not seen in other parts of the country.^{vi}

Since the launch of the Montana Meth Project in September 2005, Meth-related crime in Montana dropped more than 50%, and workers testing positive for Meth declined by 70%, the largest drop in the country.^{vii}

“The Meth Project is very simply changing the nature of crime control in Montana,” said Montana Attorney General Mike McGrath. “As of 2005, the Montana criminal justice system was overwhelmed by the consequences of Meth. If we are able to continue to make the kind of progress we have seen in the past two years, methamphetamine will have changed from a crisis to a manageable problem.”

Methamphetamine continues to be a critical problem nationally. A recent study by the National Association of Counties (NACo) found that 47% of county sheriffs across the country report Meth as their number one drug problem—more than cocaine (21%) and marijuana (22%) combined. Additionally, 49% percent have seen an increase in the last three years in the number of teens abusing the drug.^{viii}

The Meth Project is a non-profit organization focused upon significantly reducing Meth abuse in the U.S. The Montana Meth Project, Arizona Meth Project, Idaho Meth Project, and other state affiliates implement the Meth Project prevention programs in their respective states.

About the Meth Project

The Meth Project is a national non-profit organization headquartered in Palo Alto, California, aimed at significantly reducing first-time Meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach. The Montana Meth Project, Arizona Meth Project, Idaho Meth Project, and other state affiliates implement the Meth Project prevention programs in their respective states. The Meth Project is funded by a grant from the Siebel Foundation. For more information, visit www.methproject.org.

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ⁱ Montana Office of Public Instruction. *2007 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. September 2007.

ⁱⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. September 2007.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Meth Project. *National Use & Attitudes Survey*. September 2007.

^{iv} The Meth Project. *Montana Meth Use & Attitudes Survey*. March 2007.

^v *Ibid.*

^{vi} The Meth Project. *National Meth Use & Attitudes Survey*. September 2007.

^{vii} Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Preliminary Report on Trends and Impact*. January 2007.

^{viii} National Association of Counties. *The Methamphetamine Epidemic: The Changing Demographics of Methamphetamine*. August 2007.

Survey Highlights

The Meth Project's 2007 *National Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* examines attitudes and behaviors that American teens have related to methamphetamine. The survey, gathered from a respondent group of junior and senior high school students from throughout the United States, was executed from March 2007 through June 2007 by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media. The survey group consisted of 2,602 students ages 12-17.

In March of 2007, the Meth Project published a similar survey for the state of Montana.

Key comparisons from the two reports are summarized below. All data are sourced from the 2007 *National Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* and the 2007 *Montana Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* reports, available at www.methproject.org/research.

Availability and Exposure to Methamphetamine

- Montana teens are more likely (33%) than teens across the country (24%) to say Meth is easy to acquire.
- Teens in Montana (13%) are roughly as likely as teens nationally (10%) to say they have been offered Meth.
- They are also about as likely to say they have friends who use Meth (10% compared to 9%) and that they have friends (9% and 6%) or family members (13% and 11%) who have been treated for Meth abuse.

Perception of Risk and Social Disapproval

- Teens in Montana (65%) are more likely than teens nationally (41%) to say there is a great risk in trying Meth once or twice.
- Montana teens (79%) are more likely to say their friends would give them a hard time for using Meth than teens nationally (55%).
- 71% of Montana teens have told friends not to use Meth, versus 44% nationally.

Parental Discussions and Information Sources

- 66% of Montana teens say they have had a discussion with their parents about Meth in the past year compared to 39% nationally.
- Nationally, 55% of teens say they have never had a conversation about Meth with their parents, compared to only 29% of Montana teens. In Montana, recent studies show that 96% of parents have had discussions about Meth with their child in the past year.
- Teens in Montana (98%) are more likely to say they have seen or heard an anti-Meth ad versus 59% for their peers nationally.
- Montana teens (44%) are twice as likely as teens across the country (22%) to say they see value in TV commercials about the dangers of Meth use.

For more information, please visit www.methproject.org/research.

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