

# WYOMING METH PROJECT

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## Wyoming Meth Project Overview

The Wyoming Meth Project is a large-scale, state-wide prevention program aimed at significantly reducing Meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach. The program is part of the national Meth Project organization, which oversees individual state programs currently active in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Montana, and Wyoming.

The Wyoming Meth Project was launched as a response to the state's critical methamphetamine problem. Meth use in Wyoming is considerably higher than the national average, and according to the U.S. Department of Justice, methamphetamine is the primary drug threat to Wyoming.<sup>i</sup>

The financial and social consequences of methamphetamine abuse in Wyoming are devastating. Meth use increases crime, costs millions of dollars in lost productivity, contributes to jail and prison populations, and is directly correlated to domestic violence and child abuse, adversely impacting families and children.<sup>ii</sup>

- Wyoming ranks #2 in the U.S. for Meth use by teens ages 12 to 17<sup>iii</sup>
- Wyoming ranks #1 in the U.S. for Meth use by young adults ages 18 to 25<sup>iv</sup>
- Wyoming ranks #1 in the U.S. for Meth use by those 12 and older, up from #13 in 2005<sup>v</sup>
- In 2007, 94% of Wyoming District Court drug offenders were convicted of Meth related crimes, up from 68% in 2005<sup>vi</sup>

## Strategic Approach

The Wyoming Meth Project has implemented a statewide, integrated prevention campaign that includes public service messaging, community outreach, and public policy initiatives. The centerpiece of the program is research-based advertising that graphically communicates the risks of Meth use.

Since its inception in Wyoming, the Meth Project's prevention program has demonstrated significant results in changing teen attitudes about Meth. According to the 2011 Wyoming Meth Use & Attitude Survey<sup>vii</sup>:

- 62% of teens now see “great risk” in trying Meth just once or twice, an increase of 9 points since the benchmark survey in 2008
- Wyoming teens are now more aware of specific risks of Meth use. Increases in perceptions of “great risk” in trying Meth once were reported in all 14 risk areas, including:
  - Turning into someone they don't want to be (81%, up 13 points)
  - Getting hooked on Meth (81%, up 12 points)
  - Making their problems worse (79%, up 15 points)
  - Losing control of themselves (78%, up 14 points)
  - Suffering brain damage (75%, up 16 points)
  - Stealing (71%, up 18 points)
  - Having sex with someone they don't want to (71%, up 14 points)
  - Suffering tooth decay (70%, up 19 points)
- 87% report the Wyoming Meth Project's ads show that Meth is more dangerous to try than they had originally thought

- 91% say that if their brother, sister, or a friend were thinking about trying Meth, they would want them to see or hear one of the Wyoming Meth Project's ads

The program is based on the successful Meth Project model, which was first implemented in Montana in 2005.

- When the program first launched, Montana ranked #5 in the country for Meth abuse; after two years, the state ranked #39<sup>viii</sup>
- Adult Meth use declined 72%<sup>ix</sup>
- Teen Meth use declined 63%<sup>x</sup>
- Meth-related crimes dropped 62%<sup>xi</sup>

### **Recognition for the Program**

The Wyoming Meth Project began airing advertisements in the state in June 2008. The ads, created by the Meth Project, have received 50 awards, including:

- 2 Gold Effie Awards
- Grand Effie Award Finalist
- 11 Gold ADDY Awards
- 19 Silver ADDY Awards
- Cannes Lion Award
- 7 AdCritic.com "Top Ten" Awards for the best ads in the U.S

### **Research and Measurement**

To track and refine the program's effectiveness, the Wyoming Meth Project utilizes a comprehensive research program, including both quantitative and qualitative studies, to measure attitudes and behaviors related to methamphetamine use. This research guides the program's messaging and outreach initiatives.

### **Advisory Council**

The activities of the Wyoming Meth Project are driven by the participation of the Project's Advisory Council. The Advisory Council meets periodically to review the activities, plans, and budget of the Wyoming Meth Project and provide advice and direction. The Advisory Board members play a critical role, as recognized state leaders, in communicating goals and activities of the Meth Project in the Wyoming community.

- *Chair: Nathan Bekke, Publisher, Casper Star-Tribune Communications; Group Publisher, Lee Enterprises*
- *Bill Sullivan, Former Director, KCWY TV 13*
- *Brian Cetak, Vice President, First Interstate Bank*
- *Tom Pagel, Casper Police Chief*
- *Mike Burnett, Director, Central Casper Weed & Seed project*
- *Jaci Schoup, Assistant Director, McMurry Foundation*
- *Brad Diller, Principal, Kelly Walsh High School*

*For more information, please visit [www.Wyoming.MethProject.org](http://www.Wyoming.MethProject.org)*

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<sup>i</sup> Department of Justice. “DEA Fact Sheet: Wyoming.” 2008.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> SAMHSA. National Survey on Drug Use and Health. 2006.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>v</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vi</sup> U.S. Attorney’s Office. District of Wyoming FY07 Annual Report. 2007.

<sup>vii</sup> *2011 Wyoming Meth Use & Attitudes Survey*. October 2011.

<sup>viii</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy. “Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States.” November 2006.

<sup>ix</sup> Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-up Report on Trends and Progress. April 2008.

<sup>x</sup> Montana Office of Public Instruction. “2009 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey.” June 2009.

<sup>xi</sup> Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-up Report on Trends and Progress. April 2008.