

# WYOMING METH PROJECT

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## **Teens Say They Are Less Likely to Use Meth as Result of Wyoming Meth Project Campaign**

*Survey Finds Wyoming's Young People are Increasingly Aware of the Dangers of Methamphetamine*

**CASPER, Wyoming—October 17, 2011**—Wyoming teens are increasingly aware of the risks of using methamphetamine and are less likely to see benefits in using the drug, according to the 2011 *Wyoming Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released today by the Wyoming Meth Project. The statewide survey compares changes in attitude to a 2008 benchmark survey taken before the launch of the non-profit's anti-Meth public education campaign. Four in five teens (80%) report that the Wyoming Meth Project's campaign has made them less likely to try or use the drug.

The survey found that the Wyoming Meth Project's campaign is an important source of information about methamphetamine and has helped stimulate dialogue about Meth use. Most teens surveyed (91%) reported that if their brother, sister, or friend were thinking about trying Meth, they would want that person to see or hear a Wyoming Meth Project ad. Half of Wyoming teens say the Wyoming Meth Project ads caused them to tell someone not to use Meth (53%).

"These results show that the message about the dangers of Meth is getting through to Wyoming teens," said Nathan Bekke, Publisher, *Casper Star-Tribune*, and Chairman, Wyoming Meth Project. "However, Meth remains readily available in our communities. One in four Wyoming teens say Meth would be easy to get and 11% say they have been offered Meth. Our young people are vulnerable, so we need to ensure they get the facts and understand the risks of using methamphetamine."

According to the survey, teens are significantly more aware of the risks of using Meth than they were prior to the launch of the Wyoming Meth Project. Six in ten (62%) say there is great risk in trying Meth once or twice, up nine points from the benchmark, and eight in ten Wyoming teens (83%) say there is great risk in using Meth regularly. Wyoming's young people are also now more aware of the specific, negative effects of trying Meth. Increasing numbers of teens see "great risk" in all of the 14 specific negative effects including: turning into someone they don't want to be (81%, up 13 points), getting hooked on Meth (81%, up 12 points) and suffering brain damage (75%, up 16 points).

Fewer Wyoming teens see benefits in using Meth than they did three years ago. More teens disagree that Meth helps you escape your problems (84%, up 6 points), deal with boredom (74%, up 7 points), gives you energy (73%, up 11 points), and makes you feel euphoric or very happy (69%, up 8 points).

The Wyoming Meth Project today also announced its plans for Red Ribbon Week, the nation's oldest drug prevention program, which reaches millions of Americans through community-based programs during the last week of October each year. During this year's Red Ribbon Week, October 22-30, the Wyoming Meth Project will give out more than 4,000 wristbands in Cheyenne, Fremont County, Gillette, and Casper, and will collaborate with DARE and Safe Schools programs on presentations in Wyoming schools.

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 United States Department of Justice, methamphetamine is the primary drug threat to Wyoming. 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. Recent reports by the Justice Department have shown increases in the supply of Meth, which is at its highest level, highest purity, and lowest cost in five years, largely as a result of the Mexican cartels increased involvement in Meth trafficking.

The 2011 *Wyoming Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* was conducted from March 21 to May 31, 2011, to track attitudes and behaviors related to Meth among Wyoming teens. A benchmark survey was conducted in the spring of 2008, prior to the launch of the Wyoming Meth Project's prevention campaign. A total of 1,226 junior and senior high school students ages 12 to 17 were interviewed for the study. All respondents attend one of 17 randomly selected junior and senior high schools across Wyoming. The executive summary and complete survey report from GfK Roper Public Affairs can be obtained from the Wyoming Meth Project's website at [www.WyomingMethProject.org/Research](http://www.WyomingMethProject.org/Research).

### **About the Wyoming Meth Project**

The Wyoming Meth Project is a non-profit organization that implements a range of advertising and community action programs to reduce methamphetamine use in the state. Launched in 2008, the Wyoming Meth Project leverages a proven model that combines extensive research with a hard-hitting, integrated media campaign. The Wyoming Meth Project is affiliated with the Meth Project, 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. For more information, visit [www.WyomingMethProject.org](http://www.WyomingMethProject.org).

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### **Media Contact:**

Jean Davies  
Wyoming Meth Project  
(307) 268-7136  
[jdavies@wyomingmethproject.org](mailto:jdavies@wyomingmethproject.org)

## **2011 Wyoming Meth Use & Attitudes Survey Highlights**

Findings from the 2011 *Wyoming Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* reveal that, compared to a benchmark survey conducted in 2008, prior to the launch of the Wyoming Meth Project, Wyoming's young people are significantly more aware of the dangers of trying Meth, and more teens disapprove of trying the drug. Teens also report they have told friends not to use the drug, and that the Wyoming Meth Project's campaign made them less likely to try or use the drug. Survey highlights include:

### **Perceived Risks of Using Meth**

- 62% of teens now see "great risk" in trying Meth just once or twice, an increase of 9 points since 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)
  - Being a negative influence on a younger brother/sister (81%, up 11 points)
  - Making their problems worse (79%, up 15 points)
  - Losing control of themselves (78%, up 14 points)
  - Suffering brain damage (75%, up 16 points)
  - Not taking care of hygiene (72%, 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)
  - Becoming paranoid (70%, up 17 points)
  - Getting insomnia or not being able to sleep (70%, up 16 points)
  - Dying (69%, up 15 points)
  - Becoming violent (68%, up 17 points)

### **Social Approval and Parent Child Communications**

- 85% of teens strongly disapprove of using Meth once or twice
- 63% of teens say they have told their friends not to use Meth
- 50% of teens say they have discussed the subject of Meth with their parents in the past year

### **Campaign Effectiveness**

- 80% report the Wyoming Meth Project's ads made them less likely to try or use Meth
- 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
- 53% say the Wyoming Meth Project ads made them tell someone not to use Meth

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