

Parenting Matters

Quarterly Newsletter

July 2005

For Colorado Parents

The Methamphetamine Crisis

Preventing drug use before it starts is the most effective way to eliminate the problem. By encouraging young people to develop their intellectual, personal and social skills, prevention programs produce benefits beyond the immediate goal of preventing drug use. Children exposed to quality prevention programs are more equipped to make positive choices in all areas of their lives and to become productive members of society.

It Is Better To Prevent
Than To Heal

Effective prevention programs operate on as many levels as possible, and are designed to lessen *risk factors* and increase *protective factors*.

School based prevention focuses on children's social and academic skills and aims to enhance peer relationships, self-control, coping skills and assertiveness.

Family based prevention focuses on strengthening family relationships, increasing communication and developing active parental roles.

Community based prevention works with civic, religious, law enforcement, and government agencies to enhance the anti-drug message and positive social behaviors.

Effective prevention programs also address different levels of exposure to Methamphetamine.

A universal program such as the Life Skill Training Program, promotes overall health and well being among young people who have not yet used methamphetamine or become involved in other risky behaviors.

A selected program targets a specific group of young people who may be at risk of using methamphetamine. In some cases, they may have been exposed to methamphetamine because of a parent or guardians addiction.

An indicated program intervenes with young people that have already used an illegal drug like methamphetamine and are behaving in ways consistent with addiction.

A Caring Adult In A
Parenting Role Is The
Hallmark Of Effective
Prevention Programs

Methamphetamines prevention programs must emphasize the role of "gateway drugs". Current research on methamphetamine users indicates a history of substance abuse involving tobacco, alcohol or marijuana. More than 80 percent of offenders convicted of methamphetamine related offenses reported prior abuse of alcohol and marijuana

Parents should not assume that their children understand the risks associated with methamphetamine use. Parents must emphasize the high rate of addiction, so their children do not risk getting hooked after just one use.

PARENTING TIP- Keep the discussion factual and focus on the present .

Methamphetamine Facts:

- ◆ Methamphetamine causes brain, heart and kidney damage.
- ◆ Users eventually grind their teeth until their teeth crack and the enamel wears away.

Source: Illinois Attorney General- MethNet Prevention

Original article not represented in full and was edited to fit publication.

PARENTING MATTERS, PREVENTION WORKS

Methamphetamine: Fools Rush In

Methamphetamine (Meth) can take a novice user and transform him or her into an addict in record time. Meth is not just a big city problem; in fact, methamphetamine use has become the most dangerous drug problem in small-town America. Traffickers make Meth in small labs in their own kitchens and garages which makes it very accessible. This accessibility increases the opportunity for first time users to try Meth as well as creating enormous risk for everyone in the community .

Methamphetamine Street Names

- Meth
- Crystal Meth
- Ice
- Speed
- Zip
- Go
- Go Fast
- Tweak
- Amp
- Glass
- Chalk

Methamphetamine affects the dopamine and serotonin receptors in the brain tempting users with dramatic bursts of energy and excitement. The effect on the brain also causes Meth users to display exaggerated sexual and defensive behaviours. Meth users often display random, repetitive, and compulsive behaviours called *punding*, in addition to not sleeping and a loss of appetite. Over time Meth users show signs of paranoia, schizophrenia, insomnia, tremors, jerking, and extreme nervousness.

People have various reasons for trying Meth - some users are looking for the burst of energy, others want an appetite suppressant and others use Meth to achieve heightened sexuality. The users pay an enormous price for the desired effect. In return for the energy boost, addicts will be unable to sleep. In return for the loss of appetite addicts will deplete their immune system. Their increased libido results in

participation in frequent, unprotected sexual activity which increases their risk of sexually transmitted illnesses such as HIV and hepatitis.

Behaviours and Traits of an Addict

- Dilated Pupils
- Tooth Grinding
- Missing or Broken Teeth
- Loss of Appetite
- Acne
- Repetitive Behavior Patterns
- Picking at Skin,
- Pulling Out Hair
- Dry Itchy Skin
- Incessant Talking
- Open Sores
- Confusion
- Excessive Rage
- Sweating
- Tremors

Source: In The KnowZone
Original article not represented in full and was edited to fit publication.

Meth Crisis Soars In Colorado

By David Olinger

In many Colorado counties, methamphetamine has become the leading cause for child neglect. Child welfare officials estimate the drug accounts for up to 80 percent of the cases in which they consider taking kids from their parents. Larimer County's child-protection agency takes two methamphetamine complaints a day. Jefferson County puts more kids into protective custody because of meth than either physical

or sexual abuse.

Denver tracked a 230 percent increase in drug abuse related child-protection cases in the past two years. Tom Papin, Mesa County Human-Services Director says " we are seeing 80-85 percent of our child-welfare cases have meth involved parents."

In Adams County, juvenile court Judge Chris Melonakis estimates

continued on page 3

Available in Spanish by request

**Parenting
Matters**

Published quarterly by Partners in Parenting
**Colorado State University
Cooperative Extension**
Program Coordinator:
Christine Cerbana-Whaley
Editor: Laura Benavente
Questions or comments?
Call us at (800) 457-2736

PARENTING MATTERS, PREVENTION WORKS

continuation from page 2
 "Meth Crisis Soars In Colorado"

40 percent of his child-welfare cases involve Methamphetamine. In response he has created a special Thursday "drug court" for selected families he hopes can recover with appropriate treatment, employment, housing and supervision. In the state of Colorado, methamphetamine treatment program admission doubled from 1999 to 2003, surpassing cocaine treatment in 2004.

FOSTER PARENTS AND KIN CARE GIVERS SHOULD BE ATTENTIVE TO :

- Over eating
- Hoarding Food
- Sleep Disorders
- Attachment Disorders
- Anxiety

Children living in Meth households are often neglected because they are forced to live the addict's life-style. It is important for foster parents and kin caregivers to recognize that children from Meth households will have specific behavioral problems. The children may have witnessed sexually explicit activity, exposure to pornography, experienced sleep deprivation or starvation.

The Methamphetamine Crisis is being called the "Walk Away" drug, because that is what parents do.

Adapted from: Denver Post Article, December 28, 2004



by Rich Batten
 Family and Consumer Science Agent,
 Douglas County
 CSU Cooperative Extension

Connecting With Your Kids

National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health indicate that "connectedness to parents/family" is perhaps the most important protective factor for adolescents in reducing behavioral risks.

Ken Canfield, President of the National Center for Fathering, has developed a fathering framework that is a valuable guide for dads who aspire to becoming the kind of father their child needs them to be. The framework consists of the following overarching functions (*I CANs*) of a father: *involvement, consistency, awareness, and nurturance.*

Involvement Research on fathers clearly demonstrates that children who have positively involved fathers do better socially, emotionally, and academically. Positive involvement means that a father spends quality and quantity time with his children. Being involved with your child can take a variety of forms. It may consist of coaching a baseball/softball team, helping with homework, reading together, tucking a child in at night, or simply being accessible.



Consistency Responsible parenthood is rooted in consistency. Fathers build a trusting relationship with their children by providing consistent encouragement, discipline, protection, care, and love. Consistency in behavior on the part of fathers promotes a sense of security and confidence in children, which in turn, lays the groundwork for a healthy self-esteem.

Awareness Becoming aware of your child's needs will help you to be better equipped to meet those needs at various stages of your child's life. Effective fathers have insight into both general developmental issues and how their particular child experiences life.

Nurturance Fathers play a critical role in the nurturing of their children by providing responsible and loving care that meets their emotional and social needs.

- Original article edited to fit publication

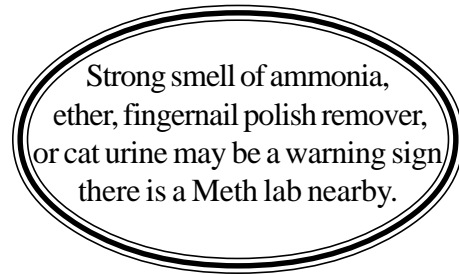
Cost and Effect of Meth

Methamphetamine labs can appear almost anywhere, all it takes is a counter, a hotplate and a sink. The problem with the easy manufacturing is the toxic waste associated with the lab. For each 1 pound of Meth product there is 5-6 pounds of toxic waste being dumped in backyards and down the drain.

The chlorinated solvents and other toxic by-products used in making methamphetamine pose long term hazards, because they can persist in the environment for years.

The effects on a condo or apartment are enormous as well, since the fumes will permeate the building and get trapped in the heating

and air conditioning system. Exposure to these potent fumes can cause neurological damage, kidney and liver damage, as well as burning and irritation of the eyes, nose and skin. The toxic nature also increases the risk of explosions and fires.



There are some signs you can watch for if you think there might be a Meth lab in your neighborhood. In

addition to strong chemical odors you may notice excessive amounts of antifreeze, lantern fuel cans, batteries, coffee filters or cold medication in the trash.

The hazardous nature of the chemicals found in Meth labs makes the clean up extremely labor intensive and beyond the financial capabilities of most communities. The average cost of a clean-up is \$5,000-\$10,000.

Source: KCI The Anti Meth Site
Original article not represented in full and was edited to fit publication.

PARENTING MATTERS, PREVENTION WORKS



Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado counties cooperating. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.



Colorado State University
Cooperative Extension
135 Aylesworth Hall NW
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(800) 457-2736
www.coopext.colostate.edu/CFERT



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FORT COLLINS, CO 80523
PERMIT NO. 19