



Not even once

by Anne Harding

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LEWISTON - It's hard to drive down the road without passing an Idaho Meth Project billboard. And now more funding is becoming available for the Idaho Meth Project.

Thursday, the House of Representatives approved \$1million of funding for the project in 2010. The money will go toward public service messaging, public policy and community action.

Lewiston Police Chief Steve Orr said all three are important for our area.

"The Idaho Meth Project has been instrumental in addressing first time users of methamphetamine," said Orr. "I think that any law enforcement official, or drug counselor or legal agency would agree that meth is the most powerful and addictive drug in today's society"

Christina Wright knows how addictive meth can be. She said she's been clean and sober for almost four years after losing a year of her life to a meth addiction.

Now Wright is the on-site manager of Serenity Place, a clean and sober apartment complex. An anti-meth billboard is right outside. Wright said it's a daily reminder of how bad life can be and thinks messages like this one will help prevent teenagers from trying the illegal drug.

"For me it works," said Wright. "It just reminds me of what I don't want. I don't think there's enough money to help this meth problem, there needs to be even more funding for it."

According to the Idaho Meth Project, Idaho spends between 60 and 102 million dollars to treat and incarcerate offenders who admit to having meth problems. Orr said one of the major areas funding goes to is trying to stop teens from experimenting with the drug.

"One of the most vulnerable people that we're trying to approach are young people, teens that are just first time users of methamphetamine," said Orr. "We're trying to get them the information so they can make better decisions and not take that first step."

And while the "not even once" message is loud and clear, Wright said if you are struggling with addiction to not give up hope. "It can happen. You can get clean just hang in there," said Wright.