



**Associated Press**

**Idaho Meth Project: Teens see greater drug risk**

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BOISE, Idaho — A new survey by the Idaho Meth Project shows that more state teens believe it's risky to use methamphetamine than in 2007, but that belief doesn't yet appear to be changing any behaviors.

The Idaho Meth Project commissioned the survey to see if its gritty and graphic advertising campaign has been effective in warning youth away from methamphetamine. The questions were nearly identical to those in the 2007 survey, conducted just before the advertising campaign began.

The most recent results show that the majority of teens - about 82 percent - say there is great or moderate risk in trying the drug once or twice. That's a five percentage point increase compared to 2007.

But one quarter of teens still believe that using meth will help them lose weight, about one in five say using meth would make them feel happy, and nearly one in four say their friends would tacitly approve of them using meth. Those numbers were consistent with the 2007 survey results.

"We definitely saw movement in the areas we were most concerned about for year one, and that is: do teens and young adults see risk in using meth," said Megan Ronk, executive director of the Idaho Meth Project. "The results as a whole suggest that we still have work to be done. While we've definitely shifted the needle for teen attitudes about risk, we need to take that to the next level so we can translate that to a change in behavior - and we certainly expected that to take longer than one year."

The survey also showed that, as in 2007, one in 10 teens says he or she has close friends who use methamphetamine.

A greater number of teens said there was a high risk of negative outcomes from meth use, with 78 percent saying that meth could turn them into someone they didn't want to be. That was up nine percentage points compared to the initial survey.

More teens said they saw other negative outcomes of meth use as well, including getting hooked, having sex with someone they didn't want to, becoming violent or stealing. The greatest increase - of 13 percentage points - came among the 61 percent of teens who said the drug would cause them to suffer tooth decay.

"Basically, we're trying to change the attitudes of a generation," Ronk said. "Our goal is to drive this drug out of our state and that may take a decade. But it's this type of research and analysis that can show us where we stand."

The survey was conducted by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media during November and December 2008. The survey was given to 2,590 12- to 17-year-old junior and senior high school students attending 45 randomly selected Idaho schools, and the teens were promised anonymity for their answers. It was also given to 358 18- to 24-year-old Idaho residents recruited through a telephone interview using random digit dial-sampling techniques.