

IDAHO BUSINESS REVIEW

We have a meth problem in the state of Idaho — Marketplace

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When you listen to Idaho's first lady speak about things she is passionate about, you cannot help but become infected.

She believes in what she preaches and wants everyone to know about it.

Lori Otter wants to stop all teenage Idahoans from having an opportunity to do methamphetamine.

Now, let me repeat that: Her mission is to get Idaho from the top of the list of meth-addicted populations to the bottom of the list.

Idaho, at the beginning of the year, was in the top five for the number of people who had used or were using the drug. This is not based on a per capita basis, but rather on a per person count. Idaho was ahead of some states that had 15 percent or more population. We have a little over a million people in the entire state and yet our addiction level was higher.

Lori made her pitch to the members of the Nampa Chamber of Commerce last week. The slightly vocal crowd was loud enough to interrupt the speakers before her, but when she began to talk, they fell silent. It was the delivery of the message that really caught most of the room off guard.

Idaho has a METH PROBLEM!

She talked openly and frankly about the addiction and the viewpoint that many of Idaho's youth have toward even experimenting with the drug.

The fact that they would consider taking this drug, not knowing its addictive powers, should floor any parent, brother/sister or friend.

She talked about how Idaho's grandparents are raising their grandchildren because their children are addicted to methamphetamine.

She talked about an advertising campaign that is working. It gets down on the level of the kids. It talks to them.

Lori speaks and they are listening. But, there is still a long fight ahead to cut out the addiction.

Even one try is all it takes for people to get addicted. One try.

She says 95 percent of those who try meth become addicted.

While we have a meth problem in Idaho, I'm a little more alert to the signs, symptoms and dangers.

And, with Lori Otter working for our youth, I'm a little more comforted that things are being done to protect them.