

IDAHO METH PROJECT

Statewide Survey Shows Major Shift in Attitudes toward Meth

New research shows significant increases in perceptions of risk of Meth among Idaho teens and young adults

BOISE, Idaho—January 27, 2009—The Idaho Meth Project today released the results of the 2008 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey*, the second statewide survey examining the attitudes and behaviors that Idaho teens, young adults, and parents have toward methamphetamine. The survey findings show that since the launch of the Idaho Meth Project's prevention campaign, more Idaho teens and young adults view Meth use as dangerous, and they are more aware of the specific, negative effects of trying Meth even once.

After one year of advertising, community engagement, and education, 63% of teens and 77% of young adults now believe there is "great risk" in trying Meth (up 8 points from 55% and up 9 points from 68%, respectively). The results also reveal that young people in Idaho increasingly associate specific negative outcomes with Meth use, including tooth decay, brain damage, violence, death, or turning into someone they don't want to be. Significant increases (as much as 13 points) in the perceptions of risk in trying Meth just once were observed in every one of the 14 risk areas measured for both teens and young adults.

"These survey results reflect what we've been seeing on the ground with middle and high school students over the last year," said Amy Bartoo, Executive Director of Idaho Drug Free Youth. "Young people throughout the state now realize how dangerous Meth is, and they're increasingly vocal about their disapproval of the drug."

In addition to the increases in perception of risk, young adults are also less likely to agree that Meth provides certain benefits. 80% of young adults disagree that Meth "makes you feel attractive" (up 9 points from 71%) and 86% of young adults disagree that "Meth makes you more popular" (up 6 points from 80%). There is a growing social stigma against taking Meth, as 91% of young adults disapprove of trying Meth even once or twice (up 6 points from 85%) and 68% of young adults report they have tried to dissuade friends from taking Meth (up 9 points from 59%).

"We have made substantial progress reaching Idaho youth and educating them about the very real dangers of Meth use, and these results indicate our work is having a dramatic and measureable impact," said Megan Ronk, Executive Director of the Idaho Meth Project. "We are encouraged by the latest survey data and will continue to provide the education and community outreach we know is necessary to prevent our young people from choosing to try Meth."

The results also indicate that the Idaho Meth Project campaign is a key driver for parent-child discussions about Meth. Nearly nine in ten parents (87%) say they have discussed Meth with their teens in the past year, with half (49%) reporting that a television advertisement prompted the conversation (up 24 points from 25%).

Teens and young adults also reported they "strongly agree" the Idaho Meth Project's ads make them less likely to try or use Meth (67% of teens, 57% of young adults), help them understand that you can't try Meth even once (61% of teens, 52% of young adults), and make them more aware of the risks of using Meth (54% of teens, 66% of young adults).

State Senator Patti Anne Lodge praised the Idaho Meth Project for its work. “We need more public-private partnerships like the Idaho Meth Project working to improve the lives of all Idahoans. The Idaho Meth Project has been a high-profile force against Meth use for the last year, and the results are truly impressive. I’m grateful for the difference they’ve made here in Nampa, and enthusiastically support the continuation of the prevention campaign throughout the state.”

The 2008 results detail findings from three statewide surveys among teens, young adults and parents of teens designed to measure Meth-related attitudes, behaviors, and prevalence in Idaho and track changes over time. When compared to the 2007 survey, which served as an initial benchmarking study, the 2008 survey demonstrates significant changes in important meth-related attitudes since the launch of the Idaho Meth Project last year.

The 2008 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* was conducted from November to December 2008 by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media. The survey was conducted among random samples of 2,590 12 to 17 year-old students who attend one of 45 randomly selected schools across Idaho; 358 randomly selected residents ages 18 to 24; and 400 randomly selected Idaho residents with children ages 12 to 19. To view the complete survey report, please visit the Idaho Meth Project’s website at www.idahomethproject.org.

About the Idaho Meth Project

The Idaho 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 January 2008, the Idaho Meth Project leverages a proven model that combines extensive research with a hard-hitting, integrated media campaign. The Idaho Meth Project is affiliated with the Meth Project, a national nonprofit 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.idahomethproject.org.

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Media Contacts: Megan Ronk
Idaho Meth Project
(208) 331-2060
info@idahomethproject.org

Toni Haubert
Weber Shandwick
(415) 449-0134
thaubert@webershandwick.com

Survey Highlights

Findings from the 2008 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* revealed that Idaho teens and young adults are more aware of the dangers of taking Meth. While significant progress has been made, the survey findings also stress the need for continued Meth prevention and public awareness efforts. All statistics are sourced from the 2008 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* report, available at www.idahomethproject.org. The following highlights some of the survey's principal findings:

Perceived Benefits and Risks of Meth Use

- Compared to the 2007 benchmark survey, Idaho teens and young adults have come to view Meth use as more dangerous.
 - 63% of teens (up 8 points) and 77% (up 9 points) of young adults now believe there is “great risk” in taking Meth just once or twice
- Idaho teens and young adults are now more aware of the specific dangers of Meth use. Significant increases (as much as 13 points) in perceptions of risk in trying Meth just once were reported in each one of the 14 risk areas measured.
- Now, at least eight in ten teens and young adults believe there is a “great” or “moderate risk” of the following after trying the drug once:
 - Tooth decay (up 13 points for both teens and young adults)
 - Suffering brain damage (up 12 points for teens; up 11 points for young adults)
 - Dying (up 13 points for teens; up 11 points for young adults)
 - Becoming violent (up 9 points for teens; up 10 points for young adults)
 - Turning into someone they don't want to be (up 9 points for both teens and young adults)
 - Having sex with someone they don't want to (up 8 points for teens; up 9 points for young adults)

Key Information Sources and Advertising Effectiveness

- 87% of Idaho parents say they have discussed Meth with their teens in the past year, with half (49%) of parents reporting that television ads prompted the discussion (up 24 points).
- Idaho young people “strongly agree” ads by the Idaho Meth Project make them less likely to try or use Meth (67% of teens and 57% of young adults) and help them understand that you can't try Meth even once (61% of teens and 52% of young adults).

Social Approval and Parental Discussions

- 83% of teens and 91% of young adults strongly disapprove of trying Meth once or twice (up 3 points for teens; up 6 points for young adults)
- Parent-child discussions about Meth are more frequent among young adults than they were a year ago. Four in ten say they have discussed the subject with their parents in the past year (39%, up 8 points since 2007).