

# IDAHO METH PROJECT

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## **Idaho Meth Project Releases Results of Statewide Meth Use & Attitudes Survey**

*Statewide Data Shows One Quarter of Young People See Benefit in Using Meth*

**Boise, Idaho—January 22, 2008**—The Idaho Meth Project today released the results of a first-ever statewide survey examining the attitudes and behaviors that Idaho teens, young adults, and parents have toward methamphetamine. The survey, conducted among representative groups across the state, found that 45% of young adults report Meth is readily available and 30% report having been offered the drug.

Particularly disturbing is the fact that many young people perceive significant benefits in using Meth and little risk. The Idaho survey indicated that nearly one quarter of teens believe the drug will make them happy (22%) and help them lose weight (25%); 20% of teens see little to no risk in trying the drug. Four in ten young people (41%) have not tried to dissuade friends from taking Meth, and nearly one in four (22%) believes their friends would not give them a hard time for using the drug, suggesting a pronounced level of social approval.

“Our youth are at grave risk,” said Brent Reinke, Director of the Idaho Department of Correction and Chairman of the Idaho Criminal Justice Commission. “This survey, for the first time, proves what many of us in the criminal justice community have long known—many Idaho teens do not understand the dangers of Meth and see great benefits in doing this dangerous drug.”

Survey results showed that half of young adults and one in three teens have never discussed Meth with their parents, although behavioral research has found that parent-child communication is one of the best prevention methods for reducing risky behavior.

“All evidence suggests that education and communication are critical in preventing Meth use,” said Megan Ronk, executive director of the Idaho Meth Project. “The goal of the Idaho Meth Project advertising is to ‘unsell’ meth, arming youth with the facts about methamphetamine so they can make better informed consumption decisions. To that end, we have launched a sustained campaign of public service messaging to achieve significant, positive, and measurable results to reduce the frequency and prevalence of methamphetamine use among youth in our state.”

The 2007 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* results detail findings from three statewide surveys among teens, young adults, and parents of teens designed to measure Meth-related attitudes, behavior, and prevalence in Idaho, and track changes over time. The 2007 survey will serve as a benchmark to measure progress as the Idaho Meth Project executes the Meth Project’s large-scale prevention campaign to educate the state’s youth about the dangers of methamphetamine use.

Recent data from the Idaho Department of Correction confirms the need for Meth prevention and public awareness activities in Idaho—especially as it relates to females. Of the nearly 2,000 female offenders in Idaho with a substance abuse problem that are either incarcerated or on probation or parole, over 80% indicate that Meth is their drug of choice.

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The state of Idaho spends \$66 million annually to house adult male inmates who admit to having a Meth problem. The costs to state and local governments are even greater when factoring in crime costs, treatment and recovery support services, uncompensated health and dental costs, and impact on the foster care system.

The 2007 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* was executed from September through November 2007, by GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media, prior to the launch of the Idaho Meth Project's public outreach campaign. The survey was conducted among random probability samples of 3,091 12 to 17 year-old junior and senior high school students who attend one of 51 randomly selected schools across Idaho; 346 Idaho residents ages 18 to 24; and 400 randomly selected Idaho residents with children ages 12 to 19. The complete report can be obtained on the Idaho Meth Project's website at [www.idahomethproject.org/survey](http://www.idahomethproject.org/survey).

### **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 2007, 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 non-profit 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](http://www.idahomethproject.org).

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## **Survey Highlights**

Findings from the 2007 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* revealed that many teens and young adults see potential benefits and little risk in taking Meth, find the drug readily available, and have had limited discussions about Meth with their peers or parents. The following highlights some of the survey's principal findings.

All statistics are sourced from the 2007 *Idaho Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* report, which is available at [www.idahomethproject.org/survey](http://www.idahomethproject.org/survey).

### **Availability and Usage**

- 45% of young adults and 30% of teens report it would be “very” or “somewhat easy” for them to acquire Meth
- One in seven young adults (14%) and one in twenty five (4%) of teens admit to have tried Meth
- 30% of young adults and 14% of teens say that someone has offered, or tried to get them to try, Meth
- Nearly one in five teens (17%) has a family member who has been treated for Meth use

### **Perceptions of Methamphetamine**

- One in five teens (20%) sees little to no risk in trying Meth once or twice;
- Many teens and young adults see significant benefits in using Meth
  - 38% of young adults and 25% of teens believe that Meth helps you lose weight
  - 23% of young adults and 22% of teens believe that using Meth will make you happy
  - 21% of young adults and 16% of teens believe that using Meth will help “deal with boredom”

### **Social Approval and Parental Discussions**

- 80% of teens voice “strong” disapproval of trying Meth even once or twice
- 25% of teens say their friends would not give them a “hard time” if they were to use Meth
- 40% of teens report they have not tried to dissuade their friends from using Meth
- 36% of teens and 50% of young adults say they have never discussed Meth with their parents

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