



More meth ads unveiled

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By: Alan Suderman

HELENA, Mont. - The Montana Meth Project on Wednesday unveiled more gritty advertising against methamphetamine, this time focusing on harm users of the drug may inflict on family and friends.

A Capitol news conference, to which legislators were invited, showcased the latest advertising in the project begun in 2005.

One commercial shows a teenager selling his girlfriend for sex to get money for meth. In another, a teenage boy hits his mother.

The advertising was directed by Darren Aronofsky, director of the movies "Pi" and "Requiem for a Dream."

Health officials, law enforcement officers and education leaders have lauded previous Montana Meth Project advertising for its graphic portrayal of meth's dangers.

"We want to unsell meth in Montana," said Michael Gullede, chairman of the project.

The new campaign, which includes nine commercials for radio, four for television and three advertisements for print media, will reach 80 percent of all Montana teens three times a week, representatives of the project said.

Software billionaire and part-time Montana resident Thomas Siebel has underwritten much of the multimillion dollar project and has indicated he hopes public funds will be used in the future.

Supporters of the project say a study has found the number of Montana teens with a negative view of meth increased after the advertising began.

Attorney General Mike McGrath said the campaign had produced "absolutely stunning" results, but he cautioned much work remains and said lawmakers should authorize state money for the project.

"We need to continue to be vigilant," McGrath said. "This is not a quick-fix problem."