

# MONTANA METH PROJECT®

## **Montana Department of Justice Report on Financial Cost of Meth “The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine in Montana” February 2009**

### **KEY FACTS**

The Office of the Attorney General released the first-ever assessment of the annual cost of Meth use to the state of Montana, “The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in Montana.”

According to the report, costs associated with the methamphetamine problem in Montana peaked at more than \$300 million in 2005, and have been decreasing steadily over the past three years. Yet, with an estimated annual cost of \$200 million in 2008, Meth continues to place a significant economic burden on the state.

The report focuses on costs in five areas: crimes and criminal justice costs; Meth treatment; Meth-related child endangerment; health services used in the treatment of medical conditions attributed to Meth use; and lost productivity due to absenteeism, unemployment and premature death.

#### **Meth-related Crime**

- Methamphetamine-related crime cost the state of Montana an estimated \$80 million in 2008
  - \$60 million was spent in correctional costs for offenders of Meth-related crimes in 2008<sup>i</sup>
- Meth-related arrests reported represented 8.9% of arrests in 2007—down from 14.8% in 2006<sup>ii</sup>
- From 2000-2005, Montana reported a 90% increase in Meth-related arrests
  - Meth-related arrests cost the state \$89 million in 2005<sup>iii</sup>
- From 2005-2007, Montana reported a 62% decrease in Meth-related arrests
  - Meth-related arrests cost the state \$9 million in 2007—a 91% reduction in cost from 2005<sup>iv</sup>

#### **Meth Use and Productivity**

- The annual work-related productivity losses associated with Meth use in 2007 cost Montana \$65 million
- The total lost income due to Meth-related unemployment in the state in 2007 is estimated to be \$50.9 million
- Full-time employees in 2007 missed 4,438 days of employment and part-time employees missed 2,053 days of employment due to treatment for Meth

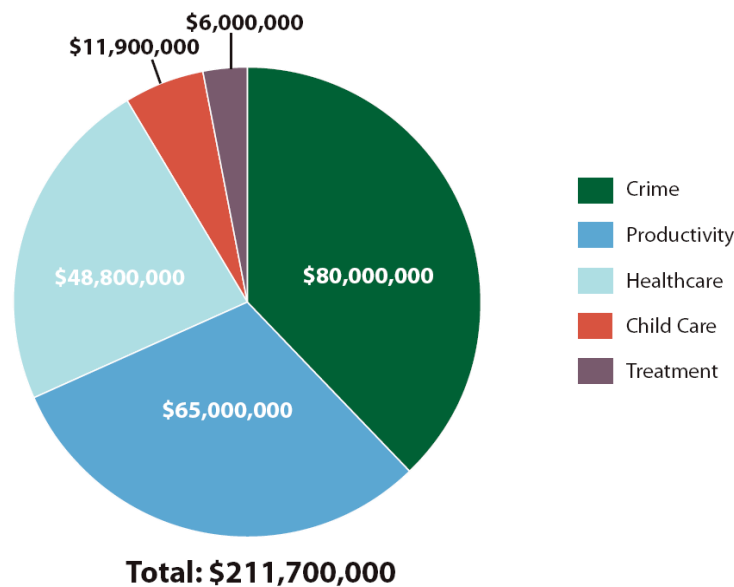
#### **Impact on Social Services and Health**

- In 2008, it cost Montana \$11.9 million to care for children in the foster care system due to methamphetamine abuse
- 44% of drug-related foster care cases in 2007 were attributed to Meth, down to 26% in 2008<sup>v</sup>
- Total health care costs of Meth addiction for Montana in 2007 are estimated at \$48.8 million
- Meth cost the state Medicaid pool, at a minimum, \$6 million in 2007

## Meth Use and Treatment

- Meth-related chemical dependency treatment cost the state of Montana nearly \$6 million in 2007
- The cost of outpatient treatment for methamphetamine was \$3.3 million in 2007
- There was a 24% decrease in primary treatment admissions for Meth from 2005 to 2007
- The number of treatment admissions where Meth was indicated as the primary, secondary, or tertiary drug of choice remained unchanged from 2005 to 2007

### Estimated Cost of Methamphetamine Use in Montana



Many of the models used to develop the Montana report rely on the methods and findings of the RAND Corporation's recently published report "The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in the United States." Much like the national RAND report, the Montana report includes a dollar value of the economic burden Meth places on the state and estimates the social impact that Meth has on Montana's communities including increased crime, larger jail and prison populations, lost productivity and its direct correlation to domestic violence and child abuse.

<sup>i</sup> RAND Drug Policy Research Center. (2009). *Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in the United States, 2005*. Santa Monica, CA: Nicosia, N., Liccardo Pacula, R., Kilmer, B., Lundberg, R, Chiesa, J

<sup>ii</sup> Montana Board of Crime Control. *Drug Task Force drug arrests*

<sup>iii</sup> National Association of Counties. (2005). *The Meth Epidemic in America*. Washington, D.C.

<sup>iv</sup> National Association of Counties. (2005). *The Meth Epidemic in America*. Washington, D.C.

<sup>v</sup> Ibid.