

MONTANA METH PROJECT

PO BOX 8944 | MISSOULA, MT 59807 | 888.366.6384 PHONE | info@montanameth.org | www.montanameth.org

Montana Meth Project Overview

The Montana Meth Project is a large-scale, statewide prevention program aimed at significantly reducing first-time Meth use through public service messaging, public policy and community outreach. The program is part of the Meth Project, a national organization that oversees individual state programs currently running in Idaho, Montana, Illinois, Wyoming, Arizona, Colorado, and Hawaii.

Founded in February 2005 with a grant from the Siebel Foundation, the Montana Meth Project was launched as a response to the state's critical methamphetamine problem. The financial and social consequences of Meth abuse in Montana are devastating. It is a contributing cause for much of the crime in the state, costs millions of dollars in productivity, contributes to the increasing jail and prison populations and adversely impacts families and children.

The Project first launched in Montana in September 2005. At the time, the state was overwhelmed by methamphetamine abuse:

- Montana ranked #5 in the nation for Meth abuse¹
- 50% of inmates were incarcerated for Meth²
- 50% of foster-care admissions were Meth-related³

Officials estimated that the total annual economic burden of methamphetamine to Montana was more than \$300 million per year based on the costs of drug treatment, other health care costs, lost productivity, crime, child endangerment, and Meth production⁴.

Strategic Approach

Central to the Montana Meth Project is a research-based marketing campaign that realistically and graphically communicates the risks of Meth use. The campaign's core message, "Not Even Once," speaks directly to the highly addictive nature of Meth.

From September 2005 through September 2007, the Montana Meth Project sustained a statewide prevention campaign in Montana spanning TV, radio, billboards, newspapers, and the Internet.

This paid campaign included:

- 45,000 TV ads
- 35,000 radio ads
- 10,000 print impressions
- 1,000 billboards

¹ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States*. November 2006.

² Montana Department of Corrections, *Montana Department of Corrections Biennial Report*. 2007.

³ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Preliminary Report on Trends and Impact*. January 2007.

⁴ Montana Department of Justice and the Montana Meth Project, *The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in Montana*, 2009

The organization is the largest advertiser in the state, with messages reaching 70–90% of Montana teens approximately three to five times per week.

Recognition for the Program

The Montana Meth Project campaign has received 43 advertising industry awards including:

- 2 Gold Effie Awards
- Grand Effie Award Finalist
- 9 Gold Addy Awards
- 19 Silver Addy Awards
- Cannes Lion Award
- 7 AdCritic.com “Top Ten” Awards for the best ads in the U.S.

In 2006, the Meth Project was cited by the White House as one of the most effective prevention campaigns in history and a model for the nation

Research and Measurement

To track and refine the program’s effectiveness, the Montana Meth Project utilizes a comprehensive research program, including both quantitative and qualitative studies, to measure attitudes and behaviors related to methamphetamine use. Results from the most recent statewide and national surveys can be found at <http://www.montanameth.org/research>.

Program Results

Since the program launched in Montana in late 2005, there have been dramatic shifts in perception of risks associated with Meth use, more frequent parent-child communications, greater social disapproval, and significant declines in Meth use and associated crime.

Montana Market Results Since 2005

- Teen Meth use has declined by 63%⁵
- Meth-positive workplace drug tests have declined by 72%⁶
- Meth-related crimes have decreased by 62%⁷
- Meth-related treatment admissions to public facilities are down nearly 25%⁸
- Children placed into foster care due to Meth-related neglect or abuse are down 11%⁹

⁵ Montana Office of Public Instruction, *2009 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. June 2009.

⁶ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-Up Report on Trends and Progress*. March 2008.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-Up Report on Trends and Progress*. March 2008.

⁹ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-Up Report on Trends and Progress*. March 2008

Project Milestones

- **January 2005:** Meth Project founded in Montana
- **January - August 2005:** Market research conducted
- **August 2005:** Benchmark *Montana Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released
- **September 2005:** Phase I messaging campaign launched in Montana
- **Spring 2006:** Second *Montana Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released, providing initial results on effectiveness of messaging campaign; Phase II of messaging campaign launched
- **Summer 2006:** Public art contest, “Paint the State,” launched, prompting Montana teens to create more than 660 works of anti-Meth art
- **October 2006:** Meth Project awarded White House commendation for most impactful and innovative anti-drug campaign; Montana Meth Project is cited as a model for the nation
- **January 2007:** HBO announces upcoming release of new documentary, “Montana Meth,” produced in collaboration with the Meth Project
- **March 2007:** Phase III of messaging campaign launched in Montana, with television spots directed by Darren Aronofsky; Third *Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released; "Montana Meth" airs on HBO
- **April 2007:** Arizona Meth Project launched with the goal of reducing first time Meth use in the state of Arizona
- **May 2007:** Idaho Meth Project announced
- **September 2007:** First *National Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released
- **September 2007:** Meth Project ads selected for inclusion in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy’s national Meth prevention campaign
- **January 2008:** Idaho Meth Project launched by Gov. Otter during his “State of the State” address
- **February 2008:** Illinois Meth Project launched
- **March 2008:** Wyoming Meth Project established
- **March 2008:** Montana Attorney General Mike McGrath releases *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-Up Report on Trends and Progress*
- **April 2008:** Phase IV of messaging campaign launched in Montana, with television spots directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu. Fourth *Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released.
- **June 2008:** Wyoming Meth Project launched; Second *Arizona Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released
- **February 2009:** RAND study: *The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine in the United States* released
- **February 2009:** Montana Attorney General: *The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine in the Montana* released
- **February 2009:** In the “March Against Meth,” at the Montana state capitol thousands of teens rally for legislatures to continue support of the Montana Meth Project

Project Funding

The Montana Meth Project was initially funded by a grant from the Siebel Foundation. Additional financial support has been provided by PPL Montana, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana, NorthWestern Energy, American Bank, Lee Enterprises, First Interstate Bank, Glacier Bancorp, the Montana Contractors Association, Burlington Northern Sante-Fe, Martel Construction, the Ruth and Vernon Taylor Foundation, the Gilhousen Family Foundation, Rio Tinto Energy, Ila B. Dousman Fund, City Motors of Great Falls, Montana Tavern Association, Dick Anderson Construction, L & L Manufacturing, Sun Mountain Sports, Town Pump, Davidson Companies, Downtown Helena Inc., Greater Gallatin United Way, Swank Enterprises, Oftedahl Construction, Moore O'Connell & Refling, Stockman Bank, Ravalli County Bank, Pacific Recycling and Steel, and Western State Insurance of Missoula.

Project Leadership

Chairman, Mike Gulledge, Publisher, *Billings Gazette*

Director, Tom Siebel

Director, Mike McGrath, Attorney General, State of Montana

Director, Major General (RET) Gene Prendergast, Montana National Guard

Secretary/Treasurer, Joe Mazurek, former Attorney General, State of Montana

Executive Director, Bill Slaughter

Advisory Council:

Dr. Geoffrey Gamble, President, Montana State University

Liz Marchi, President, Montana West Economic Development

Sean O'Donnell, Regional Vice President, Bresnan Communications

Hon. Mike Salvagni, District Court Judge

Anna Sorrell, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor

Additional information available at www.montanameth.org

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