

TALK ABOUT DRUGS AT HOME

Drug use is significantly lower among children who learn about the risks of drugs at home, according to the Partnership's national research, yet only 28 percent of teens — just over one in four — say they've learned a great deal about the dangers of drugs from their parents.

79 % of parents believe their teen sees great risk in trying methamphetamine once or twice; only 44 % of teenagers perceive such risk.

For more information please contact:

**National Clearinghouse for Alcohol
and Drug Information**
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD
1-800-729-6686
www.health.org

**Drug Abuse Information and
Treatment Referral Hotline**

1-800-662-HELP



**Check out our website:
www.attorneygeneral.gov**

METH

Facts Everyone Should Know

Usually considered only a "West Coast Drug," my Office is seeing more and more methamphetamine coming into Pennsylvania everyday. Studies show that today's teenagers are unaware that "Speed Kills." This brochure examines methamphetamine and its deadly smokable form - ICE. Take the time to learn about this deadly drug before it's too late.



Mike Fisher

Mike Fisher
Attorney General

WHAT IS METH?

Methamphetamine was first formulated in 1919. Carrying slang names such as “crystal,” “crystal-meth,” “speed” and “crank,” methamphetamine is a crystal-like powdered substance that can be produced by chemically changing the ingredient ephedrine and/or pseudo-ephedrine. Sometimes appearing in large rock-like chunks, the drug is usually white or slightly yellow, depending on purity levels. Long-term use and/or high doses of meth can bring on full-blown toxic psychosis, often exhibited as violent, aggressive behavior.

THE CRACK OF THE 90'S

Today, methamphetamine is found in its most potent form as a smokable form called “ICE.” Also called batu, ice is colorless and odorless, resembling rock candy. Ice creates a euphoric high similar to that of “crack” cocaine. But unlike crack, whose high lasts approximately 20 minutes, the effects of ice may last eight to 12 hours.

When lit in a glass pipe, the crystals turn to liquid and produce a strong vapor. This vapor enters the blood stream directly through the lungs and is rapidly carried to the brain. Ice reverts to its solid state when cool, thus becoming reusable and transportable.

The use of ice results in the same type of major problems caused by amphetamine use. This includes severe impairment of brain function manifested by paranoia and delusions. Such impairment of brain chemical processes produces lasting symptoms such as paranoid psychosis. A person who has used ice will never be the same due to the powerful memory imprint produced by this devastating drug. Other symptoms include cardiac anomalies and a loss of weight and appetite caused by the release of an adrenaline-like substance in the brain and body. Overdose from ice causes a rapid irregular heartbeat, convulsions, coma and death.

METH IS EVERYWHERE

National indicators underscore the impact methamphetamine is having across the United States:

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, seizures of meth labs have increased dramatically – from 270 in 1993 to 1,270 in 1997.

Nationally, meth-related emergency room episodes have more than doubled — from 2,400 in 1991 to 6,800 in 1996.

Methamphetamine-related arrests made by the Drug Enforcement Administration increased by close to 50 percent between 1993 and 1997.

TO DAY'S KIDS DON'T KNOW "SPEED KILLS"

According to new survey data released in June, 1998, by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA), most teenagers across the U.S. do not see great risk in trying methamphetamine, yet parents believe their children understand the dangers of the drug.

The survey data show that on a national basis:

- 56 percent of teens do not believe there is great risk in trying methamphetamine once or twice;
- Use of methamphetamine among teens is comparable to use of cocaine and/or crack;
- 79 percent of parents believe their teen sees great risk in trying methamphetamine once or twice; only 44 percent of teenagers perceive such risk.
- The majority (53 percent) of regular users of meth are 15-years-old or younger. The majority of regular users are male (64 percent vs. 36 percent, female), middle income (49 percent, vs. 27 percent, high income; 24 percent, low income) and overwhelmingly white (69 percent, vs. 15 percent Hispanic-Latino; 8 percent African American; 8 percent other ethnic groups).

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