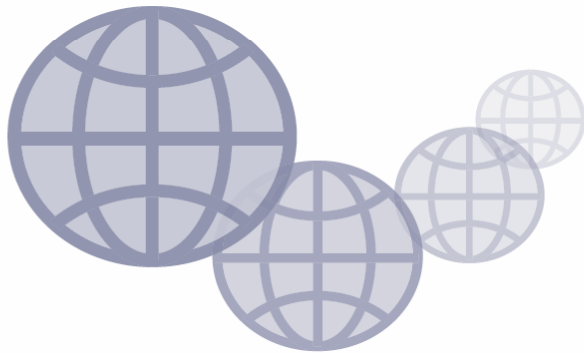


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# What is Substance Abuse Prevention? ●



## The history of substance abuse prevention

Substance abuse prevention is a decades-old discipline that has played an important role in reducing many of the serious and costly problems associated with alcohol and other drug use in our country.

In the early 1970s, the federal government invested in prevention programs that educated schoolchildren about the dangers of substance abuse; trained teachers; educated adults; provided counseling and early intervention services; and equipped

community leaders and organizations to solve local problems.

Research over the years has led to greater knowledge about how substance abuse affects individuals, families and communities. We know, for example, that substance abuse during adolescence is a predictor of substance abuse problems later in life.

Such research also has led to more advanced studies, including those into community-based interventions. Today, one of the most successful prevention strategies is the establishment of broad-based community anti-drug coalitions. Working together,



## What is prevention?

**A process that brings us together to promote conditions that guide people to make healthy lifestyle decisions and helps people to resist decisions that will lead to unhealthy consequences.**

use and/or such problems as depression or bipolar disorder. Do your child's emotions swing up and down constantly? Has your child developed a violent side to his/her personality? Is he/she exhibiting sudden, uncontrollable fits of anger? These all can be signs that your child is using drugs.

**Changes in Sleep Patterns:** Drugs can dramatically affect sleep patterns and habits. Does your child frequently stay up well into the night and sleep late in the mornings? Has the amount of sleep your child gets changed from his/her normal patterns - sleeping much longer or much less than normal?

**Lying/Dishonesty:** Kids who use drugs commonly lie to cover up their behavior. They also become good at manipulating their parents. If you sense that your teen is not telling the truth, your instincts are probably correct.

**Skiping School/Tardiness:** If your child is involved with drugs, he or she may cut class from time to time. Kids who do this often don't skip school entirely. They will show up in the morning for attendance check and then skip out in the middle of the day. They may use drugs at a location near the school and return to class before day's end. Parents can make the mistake of assuming that the school will catch these behaviors and notify them. However, children may use various means to cover this up. For example, they may forge notes for doctor's appointments or fake illnesses. It is a good idea for you to check your child's school attendance record.

## Warning Signs

It is sometimes difficult to know the difference between "normal" childhood behavior and behavior caused by drug use. Changes in hairstyle or dress may alarm parents but often are behaviors many children engage in during adolescence. On the other hand, extreme or sudden changes may signal drug use.

### It may help to ask yourself the following questions:

- Does my child seem withdrawn, depressed or tired?
- Has my child become hostile or uncooperative?
- Have my child's relationships with other family members changed?
- Has my child dropped his old friends?
- Has my child lost interest in or drastically changed his appearance?
- Has my child lost interest in hobbies, sports or other favorite activities?
- Have my child's eating or sleeping patterns changed?
- Does my child suffer from headaches, nosebleeds or other physical problems for no apparent reason?
- Have I noticed the odor of chemicals or drugs around my child?
- Do aerosol products at home seem to be used much too quickly?

Answering yes to such questions may indicate drug use. However, these signs may also apply to a child who may have different problems, such as depression or an eating disorder.

Be aware of common drug paraphernalia. Possession of items such as pipes, rolling papers, small medicine bottles, cans of whipped cream or other aerosol products, or syringes may signal that your child is using drugs.



Youth-led prevention projects can be highly effective at raising public awareness through the media. One such project is a “chalk talk” in which youth create human outlines in chalk on sidewalks. Inside the drawings they write messages about activities they enjoy without alcohol and other drugs and the harms of youth substance use.

editors and upper managers of media companies; your coalition can gain valuable knowledge and ideas about how best to gain media coverage of your issues; and your coalition can develop partnerships that allow it to leverage its financial resources and gain pro bono support for public service announcements.

### Achieving “Earned” Media Coverage

“Earned” media includes coverage of issues via news and feature stories, letters to the editor, guest commentaries and calendar listings. Reporters and editors often are inundated with news releases and story ideas.

However, keep in mind that you have an advantage given that the impacts of meth and other drugs are important to the health and safety of your community. Creativity and patience are important in working with the media. The following tips will help you build those successful relationships:

#### *Make a list and check it ...often.*

An important first step in working successfully with the media is to develop a list of newspapers and radio and television stations in your community. Include the name of the publication or media outlet, its address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address and website. Update this list often to ensure its accuracy, and maintain both a hard copy and electronic version. Remember to include weekly newspapers,

**Spreading your message in rural communities:** We don’t all have major television stations in our communities. So if these large media outlets are not available, how can you spread prevention messages through your community? Consider the following options:

- Local newspaper
- Local radio stations
- Billboards
- Reader boards at banks and other local businesses
- Church bulletins and newsletters
- Civic club calendars and newsletters
- School district mailings to parents

## **Meth 101 (PowerPoint slides)**

This section provides a broad overview about meth. It discusses the drug's health and social effects, environmental impacts, economic costs and action-oriented strategies. Choose relevant slides to create a presentation about meth, or use specific slides from this section to include as part of a broader presentation.

## **Prevention (PowerPoint slides)**

This section features information about the importance of substance abuse prevention and effective prevention strategies that can improve community health and safety.

## **Law Enforcement (PowerPoint slides)**

This section provides an overview of the various issues law enforcement officials face regarding methamphetamine. Topics include types of meth labs, the toxic chemicals used to make meth, the dangers inherent in meth manufacturing, the process of meth lab cleanup and common signs of meth labs.

## **Treatment (PowerPoint slides)**

Topics include: The health and behavioral consequences of methamphetamine dependence that need to be addressed in treatment; a review of the epidemiology and pharmacology of methamphetamine; and reviews of evidence-based and other promising approaches to treating methamphetamine dependence, as well as treatment effectiveness studies.

## **Drug Endangered Children (PowerPoint slides)**

This section discusses the dangers meth manufacturing and use pose for children and provides an overview of the benefits of community-based programs that focus on drug endangered children.

## **Why Should You Care? (PowerPoint slides)**

This section includes information about the impacts of meth on children, families, the environment, businesses, property owners and the general public, underscoring that meth manufacture and use is an issue that requires a communitywide response.

## **Statistics (PowerPoint slides)**

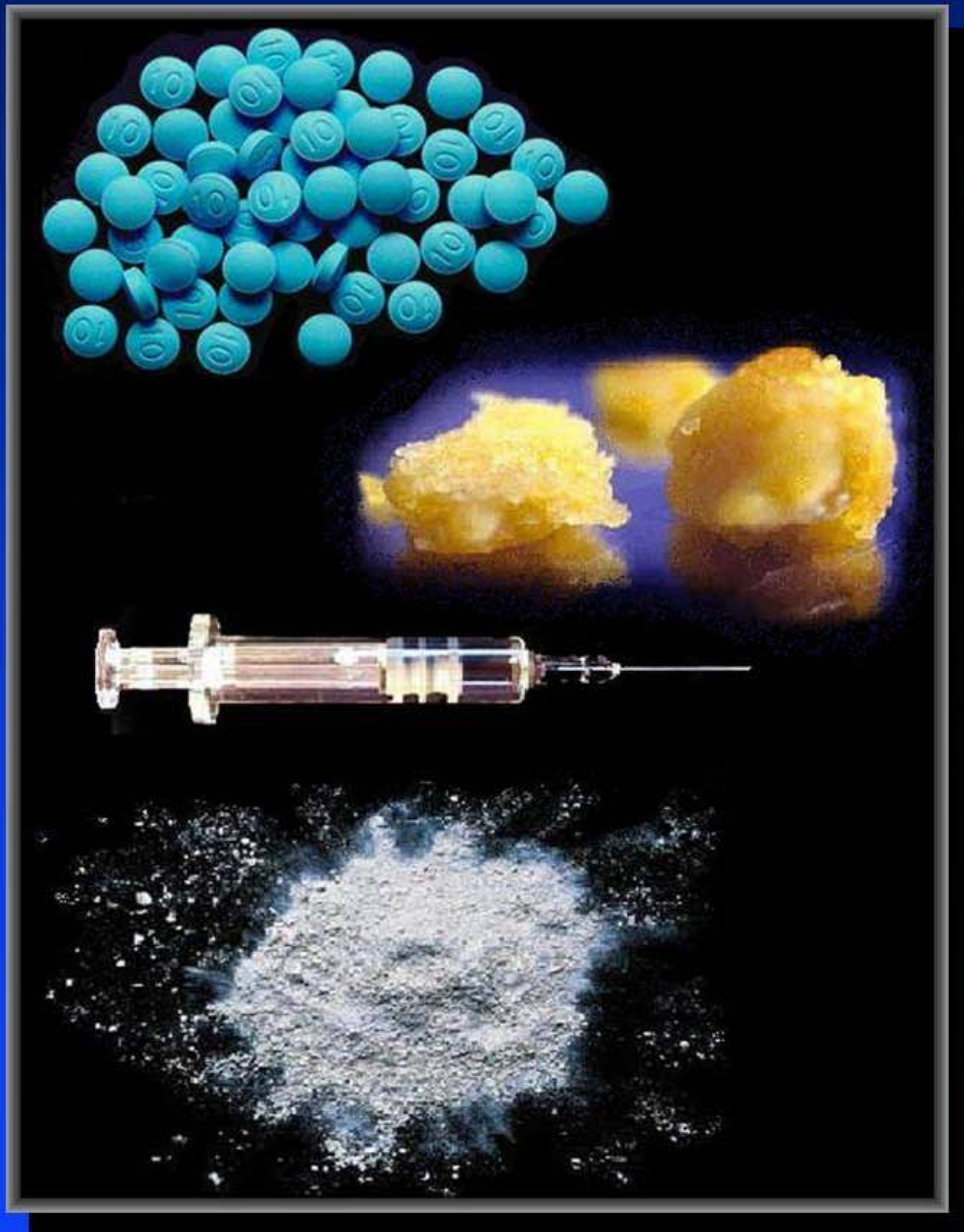
This section includes information about how methamphetamine is used as well as meth and other substance abuse treatment data for youth and adults. Also featured are statistics focusing the link between meth and child welfare cases, meth-related emergency room visits and meth lab seizures.

## **Creating Your Own Slides**

In this section, we show you how to create your own slides so you can highlight and add local data to your presentations. This section contains ten blank template slides with specific instructions on how to maintain the same "look" as the rest of the program.

**NOTE: Talking points accompany some of the slides to assist you in your presentations.**

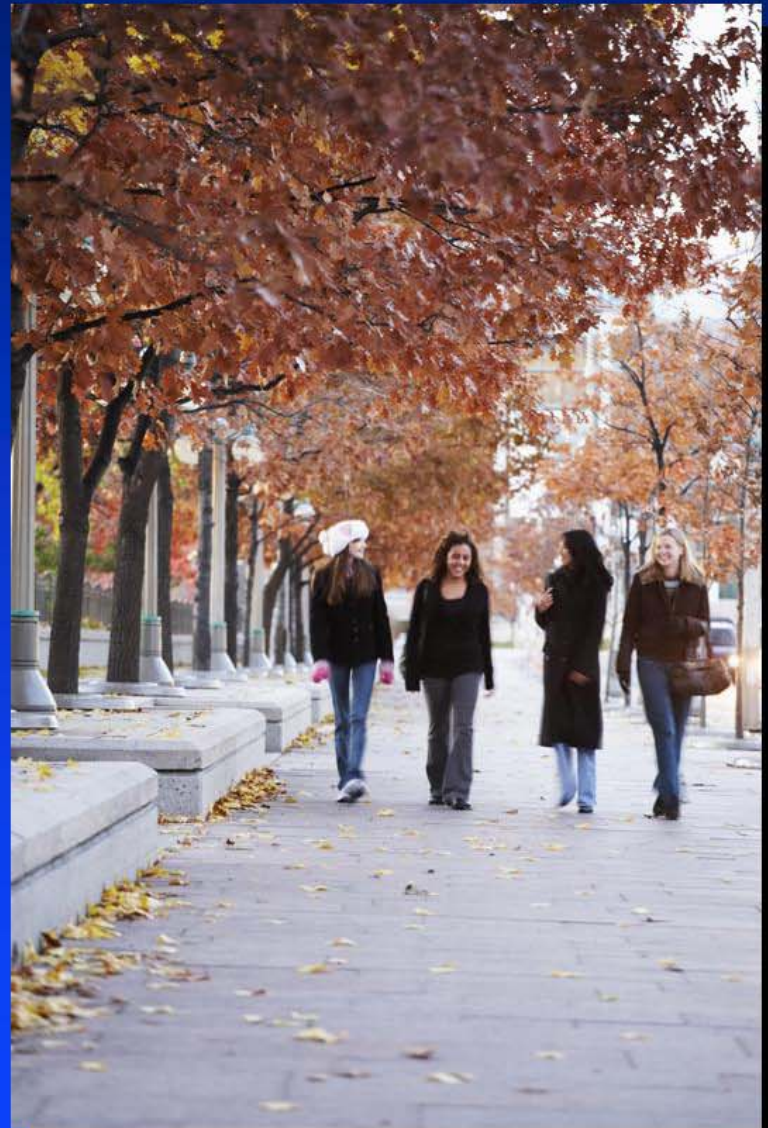
# What is Methamphetamine?



- Methamphetamine is a synthetic stimulant drug which induces a strong feeling of euphoria and is highly addictive
- Meth can be eaten, smoked, injected or snorted

# Community

- **Community prevention efforts should affect the entire local environment**
- **A community-wide approach promotes the development of strong bonds to family, community and school**



# Common Signs of a Meth Lab



- Unusual odors
- Blacked out windows
- Lots of traffic - coming and going at odd hours
- Excessive trash - including large amounts of precursors
- Unusual amounts of clear glass containers being brought into the home



# Drug Endangered Children



- Meth lab found in the refrigerator of a home with children
- Notice the toxic materials right next to the milk