

PREVENTING DRUG ABUSE



METH ADDICTION: A NATIONAL CRISIS



As part of its commitment to corporate citizenship, A&E Television Networks is dedicated to preventing drug abuse. We have an ongoing campaign for drug abuse prevention in alliance with Partnership for a Drug Free America. Today, methamphetamine (meth) addiction is a growing problem in America. Our heartland states have been particularly hard hit by the social costs of this scourge, but it is spreading to all regions. A&E® is working to educate Americans about the seriousness of this problem through on-air, online, and educational resources. We are looking for allies to work with us on this important effort to start a national conversation on meth prevention and treatment.

The Crisis

- Meth is so addictive (three times more than cocaine according to research by the National Institute of Drug Abuse) that recovery is especially difficult and lengthy.
- Emergency rooms report that 47% of all drug-related entries are from meth.
- Meth addiction overwhelms our local social services, from the sheriffs' offices to emergency rooms to dentistry to child protective services.
- Meth can be made in "home labs" from ingredients such as pseudo ephedrine (an ingredient in over-the-counter decongestants) that are unregulated in many states.
- The average meth addict is a 30-year-old white male, but users range from young teenage girls to boomer professionals. There are a few proven tools in the fight against meth.

Combating Meth

- State regulation of pseudo ephedrine and other ingredients is an effective way to fight toxic home labs. Several states have regulated the purchasing of the key ingredients with positive results. Regulation should be expanded on a state level to all states. Meth addiction continues via imports, primarily from Mexico, but at least the extremely dangerous home labs are reduced.
- County drug courts are cost effective and actually reduce addiction rates. Jail sentencing for addicts is very expensive and does not work well. Kentucky has a great model.
- Education and communication to all age groups are key components to preventing the spread of meth addiction. Hard-hitting public service announcements combined with realistic school and community programs can make a difference. A&E can help with this aspect.

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NEXT STEPS THE FIGHT AGAINST METH ADDICTION

Developing A National Action Plan

- Hold 2nd National Town Hall Meeting on Meth – Developing an Action Plan*
- Create Online National Information Clearing House for best practices in the following areas:
 - Prevention and education
 - Law enforcement
 - Drug Courts
 - Treatment
 - Social services (emergency rooms, dentistry, child services)
- Encourage Public/Private Partnerships to participate in effective plan implementation
- Increase funding for research, response, and treatment

*On January 23, 2006, the first National Town Hall Meeting on Meth was held by Senators Coleman, Burns, Baucus, Hagel, Pryor, and Thomas, and included presentations by US Attorney General Gonzalez and Drug Czar John Walters, as well as three panels of national experts establishing the extent and danger of meth addiction. Recovering meth addicts presented personal testimony as well. This panel was moderated by Libby O'Connell, Senior Vice President for Corporate Outreach, AETN and was web cast live nationally and to town halls in the senators' home states.

To find out more, visit us at

www.aetv.com/intervention or call Cara Tocci at 212-210-9083

