

# MONTANA METH PROJECT

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## Project Overview

The Montana Meth Project is a 501(c)3 charitable organization based in Missoula, Montana. Founded in February 2005 with a grant from the Siebel Foundation, the program is part of the Meth Project, a large-scale prevention program aimed at significantly reducing first-time Meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach.

The Meth 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 abuse<sup>1</sup>
- 50% of inmates were incarcerated for Meth<sup>2</sup>
- 50% of foster-care admissions were Meth-related<sup>3</sup>

Officials estimate that the state's Meth problem cost Montana more than \$60 million per year in direct costs to the criminal justice, health care, and social services systems. The indirect costs in lost productivity were considerably higher.

## Strategic Approach

Central to the program 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

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

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

<sup>2</sup> Montana Department of Corrections, *Montana Department of Corrections Biennial Report*. 2007.

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

## Recognition for the Program

The Montana Meth Project campaign has received 40 advertising industry awards including:

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

In 2006, the Project received a commendation from the White House for its work in Montana. In 2007, the Meth Project ads were selected by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy to be included in a short-term national Meth prevention campaign that the agency launched in September. Ads ran in Alabama, Alaska, California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming through March 2008.

## Research and Measurement

To track and refine the program’s effectiveness, the Montana Meth Project has developed a comprehensive research program, including both quantitative and qualitative studies, to measure young people’s attitudes and behaviors related to methamphetamine use. The Project executes the *Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* nationally and in states that have implemented the Meth Project. Results from the most recent statewide and national surveys can be found at [www.montanameth.org/research](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 results as of March 2008:

- Teen Meth use has declined by 45%<sup>4</sup>
- Meth-positive workplace drug tests have declined by 72%<sup>5</sup>
- Meth-related crimes have decreased by 62%<sup>6</sup>
- Meth-related treatment admissions to public facilities are down nearly 25%<sup>7</sup>
- Children placed into foster care due to Meth-related neglect or abuse are down 11%<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Montana Office of Public Instruction, *2007 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. September 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-Up Report on Trends and Progress*. March 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

## 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
- **September 2007:** Meth Project ads selected for inclusion in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy’s national Meth prevention campaign; First *National Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released
- **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 *Montana Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* released.

## 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 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*** Dennis M. Taylor  
***Strategic Advisor*** Peg Shea  
***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  
Carl Venne, Chairman, Crow Tribe

**Additional information available at [www.montanameth.org](http://www.montanameth.org)**

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