

ARIZONA METH PROJECT

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Arizona Counties to Launch \$5.3 Million Meth Prevention Mass Media Campaign *Statewide Collaborative Campaign Seeks to Initiate Parent-Child Conversations and Heighten Awareness of the Detrimental Impacts of Meth Use*

PHOENIX (March 14, 2007) — Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard and Maricopa County Supervisor Don Stapley — co-chairs of the ARIZONA METH PROJECT Advisory Board — today hosted a live, interactive web cast to give an update on an upcoming public awareness campaign to address methamphetamine use among Arizona's youth.

This collaborative prevention and education effort, with support that crisscrosses the state, is fittingly called the ARIZONA METH PROJECT (AMP) and is backed by \$5.3 million for a mass media effort scheduled to launch next month primarily targeting junior and high-school students, young adults ages 18 to 24 and parents. To date, the 10 participating Arizona counties in the AMP include: Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, and Yuma, as well as funding from the Arizona Attorney General's Office and the Maricopa County General Fund.

"Meth destroys everything it touches and is closely connected with many types of crimes," said Goddard. "This collaborative mass media prevention campaign targeting youth, young adults and parents is a first for Arizona. It will initiate parent-child conversations about meth and compliment the efforts of anti-meth coalitions across the state already working to address this problem at the local level. It is a critical component of the multi-faceted approach to addressing meth use in our state." According to the 2006 Arizona Youth Survey, meth use among Arizona teens is 4.3 percent, almost twice the national average.

Supervisor Stapley noted the importance of results and of localization of the campaign. "This campaign will be carefully measured for outcomes. A survey will assess the awareness of the destructive effects of meth use before the campaign starts, then again after the second phase of advertising concludes. It's also important to note that while we will be using the television advertising from the Montana Meth Project, the radio advertising will feature the stories of real Arizona teens and depict how meth has affected their lives."

"Communities across Arizona are identifying the critical need to increase treatment services for methamphetamine users. My hope is that this prevention campaign makes teens think twice before starting," said Christy Dye, Arizona Department of Health Services Chief for Clinical and Recovery Services. Recently several rural communities in Arizona were awarded \$2.5 mil to construct new facilities and expand treatment services for methamphetamine users.

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Clearly one goal of the campaign is to trigger conversations between parents and children, but it also has potential to jump-start discussions in other environments including the medical environment, commented Dr. Marc Matthews, Medical Director for Trauma Services, Maricopa Integrated Health System. "There is no doubt that the campaign heightens awareness of the toll methamphetamine use takes on the body — rotted teeth, scabs, blisters. From my perspective, the campaign could serve as a catalyst for the medical community to have candid conversations with patients and with the parents of patients about the effects of meth use and the drug's long-term effects on the brain including seizures, anxiety, paranoia and even death."

As co-chairs of the ARIZONA METH PROJECT Advisory Board, Goddard and Stapley used today's web cast to update stakeholders of the participating counties and other interested parties. The discussion was a component of the pre-launch phase and touched upon methamphetamine use by Arizona teens and the drug's impacts on Arizona communities, but mostly focused on outlining the campaign's objective, components and timeline as well as provided suggestions on how local education and treatment partners can interface with this mass media effort.

You can visit the archived web cast at <http://event.netbriefings.com/event/riester/Archives/azmeth/>. For questions about today's web cast, please call (602) 372-METH (6384) within Maricopa County and 1-866-773-8999 (toll free) for those outside of Maricopa County.

About the ARIZONA METH PROJECT

The ARIZONA METH PROJECT (AMP) is a collaborative effort with financial support from Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, and Yuma counties, as well as funding from the Arizona Attorney General's Office. The AMP mass media prevention campaign compliments the work of existing anti-meth coalitions and community-based education and treatment programs. The AMP is overseen by the AMP Board, comprised of members from anti-meth coalitions across the state and representation from the law enforcement, medical and treatment communities. The AMP will implement the "in your face" Montana Meth Project advertising campaign, which according to the Montana Attorney General's Office helped reduce teens' meth use by about 38 percent in Montana through a series of graphic and vivid advertisements and TV spots viewable at www.montanameth.org. Meth use among Arizona teens is 4.3 percent almost twice the national average according to the 2006 Arizona Youth Survey.

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