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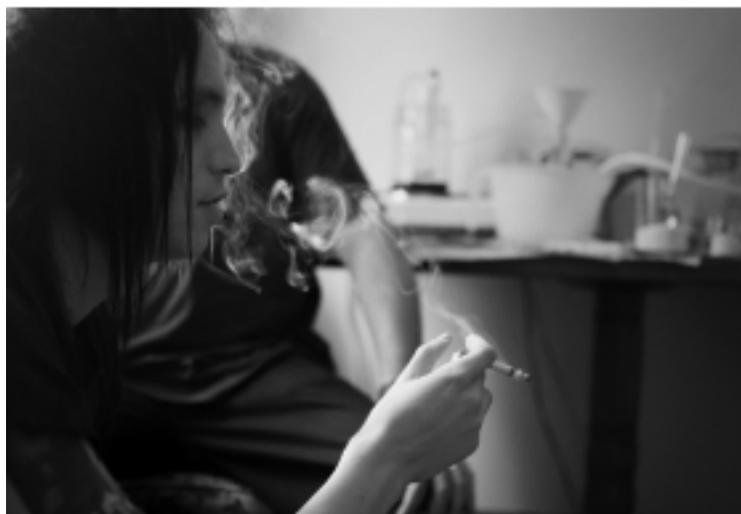
Methamphetamine is a substance that is derived from amphetamine and is a stimulant that strongly affects the central nervous system. Meth can be smoked, snorted, injected, or ingested orally. It is available in many forms such as powder, ice, and tablets with a variety of street names including: ice, crystal meth, chalk, sketch, yellow powder, poor man's cocaine, speed, go-fast, and glass. Methamphetamine use typically starts during the teen years. According to the 2009 Monitoring the Future survey, methamphetamine use in recent years has dropped among teens, however the possibility of harsh behavioral, social, and physical consequences and meth's severe potency keeps it as a concern among many communities. Parents have a critical role in communicating with their teen about the use of meth.

Hazardous waste

The majority of the labs that create meth are found in rural or semi-rural areas, but meth is also gaining popularity as a club drug in cities. In a meth lab, you may find jars with tubing attached and a collection of ingredients including cold medicines, anti-freeze, acetone, lantern fuel, paint thinner, drain cleaner, and battery acid. There are numerous materials and ingredients that can be used to produce meth, but the physical space required for production is quite small. Meth can be produced in the trunk of a car or even in a purse which makes it portable and easy to store. Meth labs have also been found in hotel rooms, car washes, apartments, and storage garages. Each of these drug labs has the potential to become a hazardous waste site putting anyone who comes in contact with these areas at risk.

On the farm

Anhydrous ammonia is another ingredient that can be used to produce meth. Anhydrous is not available to most meth producers, so it is often stolen from



tanks on a farm. It is typically stored as a gas so it can be drained into a propane tank. These tanks are not suspicious looking since they are the type that typically attach to backyard grills. The valves may become bluish-green if they have been used to store or transport anhydrous.

I could give it a try!

Teens need to develop healthy ways of taking risks. If they do not have a good understanding of boundaries they may think it is okay to experiment with drugs such as meth, not fully realizing the potential hazardous effects. Meth use among teens typically starts with casual use. Because of the pattern of rush and crash that develops from meth use, users may quickly become addicted. The rush period begins immediately after the user has smoked or injected meth. This rush or high, which can be described as euphoric, will only last for a few minutes, but the high that follows will last for 4-16 hours. Following this high, a user will crash feeling overwhelmingly low. During this period a feeling of depression can be unbearable which often leads to the decision to use meth again. It is possible to get addicted to meth with the first use.

What are possible signs of meth use?

- Sleeplessness
- Heightened noise sensitivity
- Increased aggression
- Nervous physical behaviors
- Anorexia or severe lack of appetite
- Tremors and/or convulsions
- Lightheadedness
- Feelings of disorder
- Disconnected thoughts

Followed by:

- Feelings of depression
- Extreme lack of energy
- Fatigue
- Irritable and suspicious behavior
- Hallucinations or delusions

Parents can make a difference!

The likelihood of substance use by teens is significantly lower when parents learn the facts and risks about drugs and have frequent conversations with their teen about them. Remember, the most successful conversations between parent and teen should focus on information that is most important to the teen.

Meth appeals to teens:

- Teens who are concerned about their weight may use meth because they have heard it can help control their weight.
- Teens who are involved in physical activities may use meth because they have heard that it can increase their endurance.
- Teens that are sexually active may use meth because they have heard that it can heighten their sexual desire or activity.

What should parents do?

Monitor

Be involved with your teen's activities, friends, and other important adults in their lives. Being informed and monitoring your teen's relationships and behaviors will help you be able to distinguish between possible signs of drug use and typical changes in behavior.

Set Expectations

Teens need expectations. When parents consistently follow through with rules and consequences for behavior teens will learn that they are accountable for their choices.

Discuss

Discuss with teens what is happening in their world. If a teen can feel secure within the family and comfortable sharing their opinions, they are less likely to give in to pressure from friends. Tell your teen to use you as an excuse to get out of an uncomfortable situation such as, "no way, my mom and dad won't let me go!"

Educate

Combine the realities of her world with the information you have to help guide relevant and useful conversations. If you don't know the answer to her question, help your teen find the answer. Deciding whether or not you share your own experiences with drug use is a personal choice. Either way, face-to-face conversations are critical.

Model

Model the values and behaviors that you hold important for your family. Modeling may not seem immediately effective yet will have a lasting impact on the values your teen develops and the choices he makes about drug use.

Where you can go for more information:

Adolescent Substance Abuse Knowledge Base

www.adolescent-substance-abuse.com/meth-use-among-youth.html

Parents. The Anti-Drug

www.theantidrug.com

National Institute of Health and Institute on Drug Abuse

www.nida.nih.gov/infofacts/methamphetamine.html

Minnesota Department of Health

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/meth/methdrug.html

Monitoring the Future

<http://monitoringthefuture.org>