

# Methamphetamine Impact: Nationwide Statistics

## The Nation's Leading Drug Problem

- More than 12.3 million Americans (approximately 5.2% of the population) have tried methamphetamine, and 1.5 million are regular users.<sup>1</sup>
- Meth making operations have been uncovered in all 50 states.<sup>2</sup>

## Methamphetamine Lab Busts on the Rise

- In 2004, 17,033 methamphetamine labs were seized, compared with 7,438 in 1999.<sup>3</sup> This represents an increase of 129%.

## Methamphetamine Treatment

- Like crack cocaine, methamphetamine is highly addictive and hard to treat—generally, 28-day programs are not sufficient.<sup>4</sup>

## Impact on Crime<sup>5</sup>

- Law enforcement agencies nationwide rank methamphetamine as the #1 drug they battle today. A recent survey polling 500 sheriff's departments in 45 states reports:
  - 90% of those sheriffs interviewed reported increases in methamphetamine-related arrests in their counties over the past three years, packing jails across the country.
  - 70% said that robberies and burglaries have increased because of methamphetamine, as has domestic violence and identity theft.
  - 58% of all counties listed methamphetamine as their most serious drug problem compared with only 19% for cocaine, 17% for marijuana, and 3% for heroin.

## Impact on Children and Social Services

- 40% of child welfare officials surveyed report that methamphetamine has led to an increase in the number of children removed from homes.<sup>6</sup>
- More than 15,000 children were found at methamphetamine labs over the past five years.<sup>7</sup>
- It has become harder to attract and keep foster parents because the children of methamphetamine arrive with so many behavioral problems.<sup>8</sup>

## Impact on the Environment

- The toxic waste generated from methamphetamine production poses significant risks to public health and safety. For every pound of methamphetamine produced, 5 to 8 pounds of toxic waste is generated. Labs can be assembled almost anywhere—in hotel rooms, apartments, cars, trailers, abandoned buildings, and outdoors.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2003 *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*

<sup>2</sup> Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, *Newsweek*, August 8, 2005

<sup>3</sup> Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, *Boston Globe Editorial*, July 15, 2005

<sup>4</sup> Meth Free Montana

<sup>5</sup> National Association of Counties survey polling 500 sheriff's departments in 45 states

<sup>6</sup> National Association of Counties survey polling 500 sheriff's departments in 45 states

<sup>7</sup> Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, *New York Times*, July 11, 2005

<sup>8</sup> *New York Times*, July 11, 2005

<sup>9</sup> Federal Drug Enforcement Administration