



PROGRAM SUMMARY

In January of 2004 the City of Casper, as a community, hosted the Methamphetamine Awareness Conference at the Casper Events Center. The conference itself was a product of a clearly identified epidemic surrounding the use and manufacture of methamphetamine in Casper, and indeed across the state of Wyoming. A diverse group of concerned individuals and organizations came forward and expressed a desire to form a strategy for addressing this issue. The results: The Casper Community **Meth Watch** Program.

Stakeholders: *(See Panel 1)*

Participants in the formation of a community wide action plan to address methamphetamine include individuals from the following organizations and/or disciplines:

- **LAW ENFORCEMENT**
- **TREATMENT** *(Private and Public Facilities)*
- **CORRECTIONS**
- **PREVENTION**
- **INDUSTRY**
- **RETAIL**
- **MEDIA**
- **DRUG COURT**
- **CHEMICAL TESTING** *(Private and State)*
- **CITY/COUNTY/STATE GOVERNMENT**
- **HEALTH CARE**
- **HOTEL/MOTEL**
- **LANDLORDS/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**
- **YOUTH**
- **EDUCATION**
- **DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES**
- **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH-SUBSTANCE ABUSE DIVISION**

- **DIVISION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION**
- **WASTE COLLECTION (*Private and Public*)**
- **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Awareness and Education

Individuals from the core group of community participants make presentations to a wide array of interested individuals, groups, and associations. These presentations are audience specific and conclude with follow up contacts with appropriate services represented by the core group. Already, numerous presentations have been made to community members with extremely positive results. (*Example: Word of mouth has created interest on the part of the Town of Glenrock, who will be hosting 2 members of the core group to make a presentation in April, 2004*) Members of the core group making presentations provide literature to participants with contact information should attendees need further information. (*NOTE: One attendee recently contacted a member of the core group seeking information on treatment options for a family member suspected as being involved with methamphetamine*)

Often, core group members facilitate training opportunities for their constituents. For instance; a member of the hotel/motel industry contacts others within this industry and organizes a mass training opportunity for housekeeping personnel. These personnel have previously voiced concern over finding methamphetamine lab waste, paraphernalia, and the drug itself in newly unoccupied rooms. Training will be provided on the proper reporting, handling, and disposal of these materials. The same holds true for the waste disposal industry and their frequent discovery of methamphetamine precursors, indication that a methamphetamine lab may be in operation in the area.

The media have been overwhelmingly supportive of this program. Television and radio stations, all of whom transmit statewide, have assisted with public service announcements, documentaries, and frequent news stories. Plans for the production of a 30 min. televised awareness program are going forward.

In cooperation with the Wyoming Department of Health Substance Abuse Division packets are being prepared for businesses throughout the community which have involvement with substances conceivably used to manufacture methamphetamine. In addition, postings and attached literature will be available to businesses and organizations where methamphetamine use might occur. This is a dual edged sword in that legitimate substances, which are the precursors of methamphetamine, are identified to the consumer as such. In addition to identifying these products, information is at hand explaining the program, its goals and objectives, and providing contact information should clarification be necessary. Feedback from retailers and their customers is overwhelmingly supportive of this measure. Steve Johnson, Pharmacy Manager of the west side Walgreen's drug store recently commented; " We have people coming in here to buy syringes a couple at a time, I know they're not diabetic, they're using them to shoot up with meth. If we could post these products, that would send a message to them that I know what they're up to".

Businesses such as the Albertson's store on CY Avenue are already "flagging" purchases of ephedra based medication and disallowing purchases when the number is unreasonably high. (*See Panel 2*)

Members of the core group from the education profession have assisted in identifying the needs of public and private school students as well as educators as they relate to the impact of methamphetamine. Information on symptoms of methamphetamine use has been distributed within the school district and presentations have been made to "at risk" students with incredibly positive participation and feedback. Education between stakeholders has also taken place with very productive results. Social service providers from communities across the state have collaborated to address their individual needs and share resources. Members of the petroleum industry, which has identified methamphetamine as a major contributor to loss due to accidents and a drug free employee base, have worked with members of the core group to develop consistent and meaningful drug testing policies and procedures.

Enforcement, Prevention, and Treatment

80% of the felony level crimes committed in Casper are linked to methamphetamine. All of the Homicides occurring in 2003 were methamphetamine related. Aggressive contact with the Casper methamphetamine trade during the investigation of one of these homicides, during a 2 week period, yielded a 50% reduction in total calls for service citywide. Of the 79 children in DFS foster care, 60+ of these were placed due to methamphetamine in the household. One child, an 18 month girl, has required over \$127,000.00 in treatment for health problems arising out of being born with methamphetamine in her system. Clearly, law enforcement has a role to play in addressing this issue. Law enforcement also realizes that there is no way to "arrest ourselves out of this problem".

As part of a community wide prevention and enforcement effort a mechanism has been created which will assist in identifying the methamphetamine trade in our community and providing intelligence information to the appropriate agencies. A user friendly reporting form will be distributed to retailers who sell products which may be used to produce methamphetamine or which are traditionally used for methamphetamine ingestion. Businesses which frequently encounter methamphetamine during their day to day operation, such as the hotel/motel industry, and citizens who suspect methamphetamine related activity will also receive these forms. All will be instructed on proper reporting criteria. Completed reports will be forwarded to the DCI office in Casper and the Casper Police Department Crime Analyst. Intelligence, based on trends and other factors, will be used for case development. All methods of information gathering will be consistent with constitutionally recognized techniques. At no time will confidential information be disclosed to person(s) not entitled, by statute, to receive it.

The development of a typical case based on information retrieved from the public is as follows:

An employee of a local retailer sells a significant volume of ephedra based cold medication to an individual. The employee records sales information and forwards the form to DCI. This individual's name appears on several reports from other retailers, these indicate substantial purchases of methamphetamine precursors. In addition, reports are located from a concerned neighbor who has detected odors coming from this person's garage consistent with methamphetamine production and a City of Casper waste collection crew reported finding "hundreds" of discarded matchbooks in the alley behind this person's home. DCI then initiates surveillance on this person and their property and discovers a methamphetamine lab in this person's garage.

This is, of course, a perfect world scenario. The recent discovery of a methamphetamine lab adjacent to Jefferson Elementary School in Casper comes to mind. A discovery which, due to the hazardous materials associated with the production of this drug, resulted in the evacuation of the school. Property managers, seeking to avoid the significant cost associated with removing the hazardous waste associated with methamphetamine production, have shared insight into ways to prevent the proliferation of drugs within their rental properties. The core group has facilitated this process and continues to work with these and other groups to address their methamphetamine related concerns.

Mercer House, a Casper drug and alcohol prevention agency, is an integral part of this process and has been a member of the core group since its inception. As a consequence of greater public awareness, the need for prevention services will rise. Law enforcement has and will collaborate with prevention agencies in referring individuals seeking intervention with methamphetamine use and the social consequences which accompany it. Prevention is also built in to all presentations made by core group members, regardless of the audience.

As mentioned earlier, both private and publicly funded treatment providers accompany nearly all presenters in order to assist with the identification of those individuals requiring help with issues stemming from methamphetamine addiction. 98% of individuals who use methamphetamine become addicted, as opposed to 10% of individuals who use alcohol. Treatment costs associated with methamphetamine use continue to rise. (*See Panel 3*) Members of the core group specializing in treatment provide insight into this area.

In Casper, during the 4th quarter of 2003, a hepatitis epidemic was identified in the Casper area. Although there are many causes for this disease, this particular threat to public health was linked largely to IV methamphetamine use, this according to the Natrona County Department of Health. Health care, a strong member of the core group, assists with technical advice and support.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE???

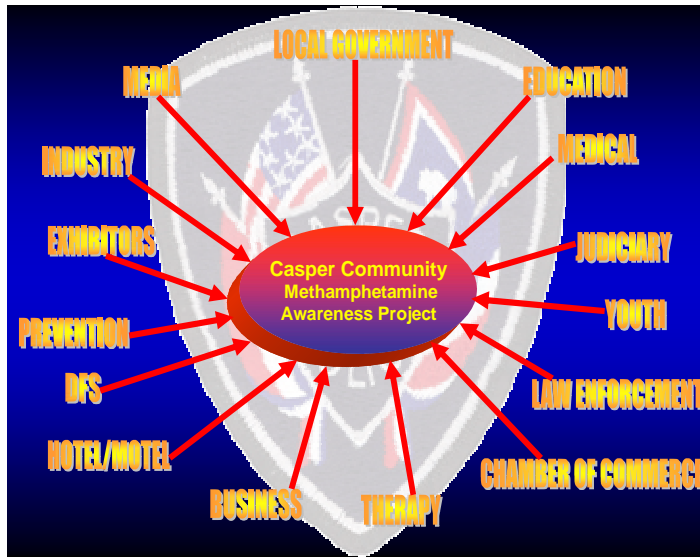
Action Steps

- With the invaluable assistance of the Casper Chamber of Commerce organize an “Open House” with identified businesses, professions, and organizations. Present **Meth Watch** as a program and disseminate materials as appropriate to each field.
- Complete the development of a 30 min. methamphetamine awareness program via the assistance of the televised media.
- Continue presentations (*NOTE: No need has arisen to contact groups and offer to make presentations-groups are contacting the core group at the rate of 1 per day minimum and asking for these presentations*).
- Upgrade intelligence gathering capabilities as needed.
- Promote legislation to address methamphetamine related issues (*NOTE: The Methamphetamine Awareness Conference was repeatedly cited as a major component in the urgency to draft a Drug Endangered Children bill during the 2004 Wyoming Legislative Session.*)
- Continue to work with other communities to develop a statewide methamphetamine initiative.
- Address industries concerns over meaningful random drug testing issues.

CONCLUSION

The success of our community in identifying and taking meaningful action to address the methamphetamine epidemic is due, primarily, to our realization that methamphetamine is THE threat to our safety and wellbeing. Realizing the significance of this issue, the members of our core group, representing Casper, left agendas and egos behind and worked toward a common goal. Members of our group, which seems to grow week by week, have dedicated themselves, their time, and their resources to this issue. No need has arisen which has gone unmet. Members volunteer their time to make presentations and provide constant support.

No doubt there have been participants in this process which have gone unmentioned. We appreciate their tireless dedication and commitment.



PANEL 1

- ### Meth Lab Chemicals
- Toluene
 - Heet
 - White Gas
 - Anhydrous Ammonia
 - Hydriotic Acid
 - Red Phosphorous
 - Lye
 - Brake Cleaner
 - Ether
 - Paint Thinner
 - Rock Salt
 - Rubbing Alcohol
 - MSM
 - Starting Fluid
 - Muriatic Acid
 - Lithium Metal
 - Sodium Metal
 - Ephedra
 - Etc...

PANEL 2

- ### Treatment Costs
- Inpatient Detox.=\$10,500 (28 days average)
 - Inpatient Treatment=\$15,400 (28 days average)
 - Intensive Outpatient=\$3,600 (8 week program)
 - Aftercare=\$5,200 (2 years+ due to depression issues)
- ** Above assumes a "Perfect World" scenario. Wyoming figures are often higher. Bear in mind that over 90% of addicts relapse and must repeat treatment. Figures also vary due to intensity of addiction.**

PANEL 3

2004 METH AWARENESS ADVISORY GROUP

Becker, Lori	Chamber Office/Project Manager
Belz, Dee	Self Help
Bennett, Al	Division of Criminal Investigation
Benton, Mark	Natrona County Sheriff
Branson, Jack	Casper Police Dept. Lieutenant
Bruner, Pat	Community of Hope
Burgess, Renee	City Council
Burnett, Carol	Mercer House
Christensen, Brian	DA's Office
Clothier, Daniel	Addictionology Society/Casper College
Cottam, Keith	University of Wyo/Casper College
Daubin, Maurice	Casper Police Dept. Lieutenant
Davies, Jean	Wyoming Behavioral Institute
de Vries, Janet	Casper College
Delozier, Jim	Department of Family Services
Dixon, Darcy	Youth Empowerment Council
Gilmore, Pastor Robert L.	Teen Care
Graham, Lisa	Department of Corrections
Griffith, Susan	Roosevelt School
Hamilton, Mel	School District
Hill, Christine	Hotel/Motel Association
Hill, Tim	Division of Criminal Investigation
Holden, Chris	Executive Director Chamber of Commerce
Huston, Mike	Central Wyoming Counseling Center
Johnson, Ernie	Casper College
Johnson, Nancy	Mercer House
Jones, Scott	Mall Office Officer
Kiester, Darren	Drug Court Officer
Martin, Sherri	YMCA
McLellan, Sarah	Addictionology Society/Casper College
McNierney, Tim	Department of Corrections
Miller, Mariko	Retired
Moore, Mike	Director Metro Animal Control
Mostaert, Wes	K2 T.V.
Nachbar, Keith	Judge
Padgett, Guy	City Council
Pagel, Tom	Police Chief
Price, Bob	K2 Radio
Schlager, Steve	Personnel/Training Police Sergeant
Scott, Brian	K2 Radio
Stewart, Mary Ellen	Administrative Secretary to Police Chief
Sullivan, Bill	Channel 13
Summers, Barb	Employment Department
Toews, Bert MD	Wyoming Recovery
Travers, Lesley	Addictionology Society/Casper College
Van Houten, Pete	Director of WY Medical Center Foundation
Walsh, Tom	Wyoming Legislator
Welsch, Gail	Stars
Wilks, Shar	Mercer House

