

Meth in Colorado - 2016 Summary of Findings



Substance Use & Perceived Risk

- The 2015 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey shows use among high schoolers is at its lowest level (2.4%) since the data has been tracked (1999), which equates to a 25% decline in the last two years (3.2% in 2013) and a 40% decline over the past decade (4.0% in 2005).
- According to trends from the Colorado Teenage Substance Use & Attitude Assessment, teen perception of risk of using Meth once or twice has held at a significantly higher rate compared to baseline data (at 91%* in 2016 versus 79% in 2009). This ongoing high level of perceived risk may be contributing to declining levels of usage.

Access and Peer Influence

- Low levels of use and high perception of risk exist despite increased availability of Meth among teens.
- More teens (17%) report that Meth is easy to get, an increase of 8 points compared to 2013. In addition, more teens have been offered the drug (8%), compared to only 2% in 2013.^a
- Eighty-five percent of teens say their friends would give them a hard time if they were to try Meth, up 9 points from the 2009 benchmark.^a

Colorado Context: Youth Improvements Despite Increased Challenges Among Adults

- Increases in access to Meth may be a cause of the spike in adults seeking treatment from the drug. According to Drug/Alcohol Coordinated Data System data from 2014, Meth treatment admissions in Colorado have surpassed all substances except alcohol, accounting for 19.1% of admissions. The trend has been steadily increasing since 2011. Adults 25 to 34 years old are the most common age range seeking treatment (41.5%), followed by users age 35 to 44.
- According to the Colorado Department of Public Safety, Meth-related criminal offenses have more than doubled between 2012 and 2015. This increase in offenses is only among adults; there has been no change in offenses among those under 18 years of age.

Public Messaging Campaign Awareness

- The vast majority of teens (81%) continue to be aware of the Colorado Meth Project's "Not Even Once" public messaging campaign.^a
- Eight out of ten teens report that the campaign makes them less likely to try Meth.^a
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of teens who are aware of the "Not Even Once" campaign would give a friend a hard time if he/she were going to try Meth, as compared to 87% for those unaware of the campaign, a significant difference of 9 points.^a

Despite increased access to a drug that continues to present challenges among adults, Colorado teens appear to recognize the significant risks posed by Meth. The 40% decline in use among high school students over the last decade suggests the impact of empowering teens with accurate information to make informed decisions.

*based on phone only respondents to maintain trend analysis

^aSource: 2016 Colorado Teenage Substance Use & Attitude Assessment