

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAMS

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NEWS RELEASE

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**ADP LAUNCHES NEW CAMPAIGN
TO REDUCE METH USE IN CALIFORNIA**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) today unveiled a new media campaign to fight methamphetamine use in the gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (G/B/MSM) communities.

“Methamphetamine use is a problem in California and we are committed to doing all we can to address it,” said Renée Zito, Director of ADP. “We believe that targeting messages about meth use in the communities it affects can improve the lives of Californians.”

The \$11 million “Me-Not-Meth” campaign includes television, outdoor and print advertisements designed to curb methamphetamine use by highlighting personal losses.

The campaign is being launched as research and data suggest that methamphetamine use and abuse has significant negative public health effects among gay men, bisexual men and men who have sex with men. A survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that methamphetamine use was more common in men infected with HIV. The odds for becoming infected with HIV double or triple for MSM who use methamphetamine compared to those who do not.

Outdoor advertising began this week and television ads will begin airing on March 17 and will continue for 12 weeks. The advertisements were developed by GMMB and Better World Advertising, and the television spot was directed by award-winning director Joel Schumacher.

With the launch of the campaign, ADP also announced the results of a statewide survey of Californians’ perceptions of methamphetamine use and abuse. The survey showed that:

- 71 percent of G/B/MSM surveyed say that they have been asked to try methamphetamine
- More than half of G/B/MSM surveyed (55 percent) reported using methamphetamine in their lifetime
- 54 percent of G/B/MSM respondents have a close friend who uses methamphetamine

“Sadly, the study findings do not surprise me,” said Cathy Reback, Ph.D., research sociologist at the Friends Research Institute, Inc., and the UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs. “I have been working in the field of research and treatment with a focus on providing resources for gay and bisexual men for the past 13 years. Methamphetamine use, particularly the association between methamphetamine use and HIV infection, is a serious public health concern in California.”

The benchmark survey data was collected via telephone among a geographically stratified representative sample (1,215) of households in the state of California and an online survey of 549 recruited gay and bisexual men.

The media campaign was tested extensively among the target audience through formative message testing focus groups, quantitative advertisement testing, and one-on-one interviews. Research found that a personal appeal from someone who has lost important things in his life is the most persuasive way to engage the G/B/MSM community. Those in need are directed to visit the campaign's Web site www.MeNotMeth.org or call the state's toll-free hotline 1-866-STP-METH (866-787-6924).

The campaign is part of the California Methamphetamine Initiative (CMI), which is designed to reduce the use and abuse of methamphetamine in the state. The CMI includes a public information and education campaign, educational materials such as a tool kit and DVD, as well as funding for prevention programs. Working closely with other state organizations, the CMI was designed to complement existing anti-methamphetamine efforts in California.

Funding for the first year of the methamphetamine campaign was authorized in fiscal year 2006-07.

Both the survey results and the advertisements can be viewed in full at www.MeNotMeth.org.

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