

LOCAL NEWS

Georgia is Unselling Meth
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The Georgia Meth Project was recently launched targeting youth, ages 12-17, with the goal to "unsell" meth. The project strives to equip youth with the real facts about methamphetamine so they can make better informed consumption decisions.

Information on the Georgia Meth Project and local meth activity was recently shared at the Decatur County Family Connection meeting by Josh Paske. Decatur County Sheriff's Sgt. Chad Bennett, CHAMPS Program Director for area 5th graders.

Georgia now ranks 3rd in the nation for meth use by youth ages 12-17. Georgia is now spending approximately \$1.3 billion in law enforcement, treatment, social services and lost productivity to combat the devastating effect of methamphetamine.

Decatur County Sheriff Wiley Griffin states that it is extremely important for the community to be aware of how destructive meth is, telling us that meth is much more addictive than other drugs, cheap and easy to get. He stated that peer pressure is a large part of the problem. According to the Georgia Meth Project statistics, 35% of Georgia teens see little or no risk in trying meth.

"Drugs are destroying our society and meth is on the rise," Sheriff Griffin stated. "It's getting into parts of the community that you wouldn't think would be involved. It's a very destructive drug." He said that when someone uses meth, it not only affects the person using it, but will destroy all those around them that love them.

"It's amazing that we've had no more deaths than we have. We've had some very close calls in this county. Just recently a [mobile home burned](#) and individuals were burnt. We also had a [garage blow up](#) and that individual was burnt." Sheriff Griffin said. He also stated that while manufacturing the meth, children are sometimes around it. Sheriff Griffin stated that in those cases, additional charges of [cruelty to children](#) are always added.

Notice changes in your child's behavior, Sheriff Griffin stated. "Look for changes in their lives. They will steal from you like a stranger, they will treat you like a stranger."

Other changes that may be a sign of meth use is a drop in their grades, sleeping more and goal changes. He stated that it is important to know where your child is and who they are with.

What to do if you think your child might be using meth? Sheriff Griffin says "Do whatever it takes" and tough love may be the answer. The Decatur County Sheriff's Office can offer parents help through their Victims Advocate. He also stated that drug testing kits are available at most drug stores and the Sheriff's Office can help with more economical drug testing kits if you suspect drug use.

While parents aren't expected to be with their children 24 hours a day, there are some things that parents can do starting with talking with their children about the dangers of meth. 58% of teens surveyed in the Georgia Meth Project stated that their parents have never talked with them about the dangers of methamphetamine.

[Georgia Meth Project](#) website

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