

GEORGIA METH PROJECT®

Meth Project Goes Digital

Launches MethProject.org, a Definitive Online Source for Information About Methamphetamine for Teens—Empowering Them to Learn, Connect, and Share

ATLANTA—November 8, 2011—The Georgia Meth Project today announced the launch of a new integrated campaign to reduce methamphetamine use. Central to the campaign is MethProject.org—an encyclopedic online source of information about Meth for teens—supported by new television, radio, print, online, mobile, and social media campaigns. A web-centric social network built around the theme “Ask MethProject.org,” the campaign challenges teens to consider what they know about Meth, and equips them with facts, tools, and resources to understand the risks of the drug and to influence their peers.

MethProject.org provides the immersive, multimedia experience teens have come to expect in the digital world. Organized around getting answers, speaking out, and taking action, MethProject.org addresses teens’ most frequently asked questions about the physical, mental, and social effects of Meth use. Each question is answered with a range of content—more than 350 in all—from interactive facts, videos, animations, image galleries, polls, and quizzes, to personal stories from users, their friends and family, and first-hand accounts from experts.

Designed to spark exploration and engagement, MethProject.org brings to life the breadth of research on the subject in a way that is highly interactive and accessible to young people. For instance, teens can take a normal beating heart to Meth-induced heart attack in the simulation “Heart in Overdrive,” learn how Meth rapidly changes a user’s appearance by pairing before and after photos in “Mug Shot Match-up,” dose a healthy brain with Meth to watch its effects, or experiment with the drug’s ingredients to see which ones explode or emit toxic gas. Personal stories from users are told through videos, rich animations, and drawings as teens describe their experiences with Meth in poignant detail.

The Meth Project’s large-scale prevention campaigns have been developed in consultation with top experts in research, prevention, treatment, advertising, and digital media including experts from National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Department of Justice, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, RAND Corporation, UCLA, University of Illinois, and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. Meth Project.org is the culmination of six years of campaign development and quantitative and qualitative research conducted with more than 50,000 teens and young adults, including 60 national and statewide surveys, and 112 focus groups.

MethProject.org also serves as a platform for teens to connect and share. In the “Speak Up” section of the site, teens can post their own messages about Meth through artwork, videos, stories, and photos, as well as comment on other teen submissions. “Take Action” provides ways for teens to get involved to prevent Meth use or find help, and showcases teen-led community action programs across the country.

The Meth Project is also expanding its presence on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. A new national Meth Project Facebook page will build upon its network of more than 27,000 fans across the Meth Project’s individual state pages. It will expand on the viral success of the Meth Project’s previous campaigns—which have been shared and viewed by more than 15 million people on YouTube—with the launch of a dedicated Meth Project YouTube channel.

“The Meth Project has been remarkably effective in reducing Meth use through its research-based prevention campaigns,” said Dr. Kevin Kunz, a physician and specialist in addiction medicine and President of the American Board of Addiction Medicine. “The data clearly demonstrates that if teens understand the risks of Meth use, they will make better informed decisions, and usage declines. Until now, there has not been a central place where teens could get all the facts about methamphetamine. MethProject.org fills that gap and is a definitive source of information about Meth for young people.”

Today the Meth Project is also launching new television, radio, print, online, and mobile campaigns that present Meth’s consequences in graphic detail. The ads challenge teens to question their knowledge and beliefs about the drug, asking, “What do You Know About Meth?” The television spots—directed by Academy Award nominee Darren Aronofsky, director of *Black Swan* and *The Wrestler*—show teens reflecting upon the questions they might have asked before ever trying the drug as the harsh reality of their life on Meth unfolds. The TV, radio, print, and mobile campaigns will run in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Montana, and Wyoming—reaching 90% of teens—and are available nationally via Facebook, YouTube, and at MethProject.org.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, methamphetamine is one of the greatest drug threats to the nation. The agency recently reported the drug is at its highest levels of availability, purity, and lowest cost since 2005 due to increased levels of Meth imported from Mexico, and growing rates of small-scale domestic production. RAND estimates methamphetamine costs the country between \$16.2 and \$48.3 billion per year in treatment, healthcare, and foster care services, as well as the costs of crime and lost productivity associated with the drug.

"Reducing demand is key to tackling this country's methamphetamine problem," said Montana's senior U.S. Senator Max Baucus. "For the past six years, the Meth Project has produced results with its educational campaigns which present teens with the realities of Meth use. In Montana, we've seen this powerful campaign change the perceptions of an entire generation of teenagers. It's helped dramatically reduce Meth use. Now the Meth Project will reach even greater numbers of teens—showing them in very real terms how destructive methamphetamine use is."

The Meth Project is a large-scale prevention program aimed at reducing methamphetamine use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach. Founded by businessman Thomas M. Siebel as a private-sector response to a critical public health issue, the research-based campaign has been cited by the White House as one of the most effective prevention programs and a model for the nation. Named the 3rd most effective philanthropy in the world by *Barron's* in its latest global ranking, the Meth Project has been credited with significant declines in teen Meth use in several states. Since the Project’s launch, teen Meth use has declined 65% in Arizona, 63% in Montana, and 52% in Idaho.

About the Georgia Meth Project

The Georgia Meth Project is a non-profit organization that implements large-scale, research-based campaigns and community action programs to reduce methamphetamine use in the state. Central to its integrated campaigns is MethProject.org—a definitive source for information about Meth for teens. The Georgia Meth Project is affiliated with the Meth Project, a national non-profit organization headquartered in Palo Alto, California, aimed at significantly reducing Meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach. For more information, visit www.Foundation.GeorgiaMethProject.org.

Media Contacts:

Jim Langford

Georgia Meth Project

404-285-2001

jlangford@georgiamethproject.org

Rob Entsminger

Jackson Spalding

404-214-3557

rob@jacksonspalding.com