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Survey finds many Georgia teens not concerned by meth use

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ALBANY, GA (WALB) –You've likely seen the ads and billboards warning of the dangers of meth. It's a pretty aggressive and, at times, shocking campaign to stop the use of the drug.



But sadly, a survey shows teens and young adults still just don't get it and don't think the drug is dangerous.

One recovering meth addict who begs to differ. The Georgia Meth Project conducted the survey in March, and found that the majority of young adults and parents believe there is great risk in trying meth. But a large percentage of teens think regular meth use is no problem. One recovering meth addict warns them not to fall into the highly addictive drug's trap like he did.

"We wake up at 5:45 Monday through Friday." 28 year old Chris Norton is in drug rehab for the 11th time. Norton said "I started when I was 13 years old."

Norton says meth is so addictive it ruined his young life. "It costs me losing 11 straight years of Christmases being away from my family, being in institutions and jails and rehabs trying to get away from it," said Norton.

But many Georgians don't see meth as a danger.

A survey found 35 percent of Georgia teens see little or no risk regularly using meth.

Eight percent of Georgia teens say they or close friends use meth regularly.

28 percent of 12 to 24 year olds say it's easy to get meth.

Dougherty County drug agents say meth is a much bigger problem in North Georgia, but know it is a growing problem in South Georgia as well.

Albany Dougherty Drug Unit Commander Major Bill Berry said "People need to understand this is not a toy. This is not a candy. This is not a game. This is a very serious drug and has some deep consequences by using it."

"We got a few onion plants, we got butter beans, snap beans," said Norton.

Norton tends the garden at the Anchorage, and credits becoming a Christian with giving him hope.

Norton said "Number one because I'm ready. I'm tired of it. I fought it with everything I had."

The survey found that 58 percent of Georgia teens say they never discussed drugs with their parents. Norton says he hopes his story will help warn Georgians that meth is highly addictive, and something they should never try.

Drug agents say one part of the meth survey startled them. 41 percent of the parents surveyed believe there are benefits to trying meth. The drug agents said judging by the people The Director of the Anchorage drug rehabilitation center says six years ago they had no meth addicts, now they see an increasing number of meth addicts coming to them for help.

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