Methamphetamine continues to be prominent in the news and is a concern for many parents. Trafficking and use of this drug gradually spread from the West Coast and Southwest to the Midwest and Eastern United States. Agricultural communities and geographically isolated areas were initially targeted by the producers, or “cooks.” Now methamphetamine is affecting suburban, rural, and urban areas across the United States. A national youth survey notes the following changes between 2004 and 2005: lifetime use of methamphetamine rose .6 percent among 8th graders, fell 1.2 percent among 10th graders, and fell 1.7 percent among 12th-graders.

Price is not a barrier and neither is access. Methamphetamine can be made almost anywhere with a few easy to obtain ingredients.

At least 20 states have enacted or are considering laws restricting purchase of the readily available ingredients for making meth. Treatment centers, researchers, and criminal justice officials are hard at work developing and securing funding for effective treatment. Drug enforcement agencies have allocated increased resources to eliminate imported drugs and ingredients, to find and safely dispose of drug producing labs, and to increase penalties for violators. Communities and entire states are collaborating with federal agencies on meth initiatives. Participants can organize and combine their efforts around prevention and intervention against methamphetamine; visit www.methwatchwa.com for examples. The Methamphetamine Awareness Project in Oregon is an innovative partnership among high schools, the film industry, and prevention education. For details visit www.methawarenessproject.org.

THINK ABOUT:

- It is important to understand the risk factors, use patterns, and unique characteristics surrounding the methamphetamine problem in your community when choosing prevention and education strategies.
- Addressing methamphetamine through comprehensive prevention and education designed to prevent all forms of drug abuse will increase long-term effectiveness.
- Visit the new federally sponsored site for some of the most recent information on meth: www.methresources.gov.

ACTION STEPS:

- Actively participate in school, community, and family prevention and education programs with your child.
- Have a frank talk with your family about meth; clearly articulate a no use policy.
- Listen to concerns from your teens on a frequent basis.
- Review and practice drug refusal skills; visit http://family.samhsa.gov/teach/refusal.aspx for ideas.

For more information call: