

Not even once:

Graphic ads are latest front in meth battle

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Local police have worked hard to stop the production of methamphetamine in Crawford County, but it still exists - and the Illinois Meth Project has unveiled new advertisements to prevent first-time methamphetamine use among teens.

Four television, seven radio, and three billboard ads will launch immediately and will reach a minimum of 70 percent of teens four times per week.

The Illinois Meth Project announced the expansion of its program into nine southeastern Illinois counties heavily affected by the meth epidemic including Clark, Crawford, Edwards, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne and White counties. U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) secured \$200,000 in federal funding in fiscal year 2008 to give the Illinois Sheriffs' Association additional resources to support this expansion into southeastern Illinois. The Illinois Meth Project secured additional private funding. Previously, Durbin secured \$180,000 in fiscal year 2006 to help kick off a meth prevention campaign in central and southern Illinois.

The Illinois Meth Project is a large-scale prevention program aimed at significantly reducing first-time meth use through public service messaging, public policy and community outreach. At the heart of the campaign are advertisements that show teens the devastating impact that meth can have on the friends and family of users, and encourage them to never try Meth-"Not Even Once." The campaign launched in Illinois on February 11, 2008, and is based on the Montana Meth Project, which has contributed to a 45 percent reduction in teen meth use and a 72 percent decrease in adult meth use in that state.

Crawford County Sheriff Todd Liston said he supports the project and is looking into getting more materials to be used locally for drug education through the program.

"Thanks to the combined efforts of federal, state and local officials, as well as community and private sector organizations like the Illinois Meth Project, we've made significant progress in the fight against methamphetamine in downstate Illinois," said Durbin. "By bringing the Meth Project's prevention campaign to a wider audience, we can continue to raise awareness about the dangers of meth use and, ultimately, save lives."

"We thank Senator Durbin for his dedication to addressing Illinois' Meth problem," said Greg Sullivan, Director of the Illinois Sheriffs' Association. "This federal funding will make it possible for the Illinois Meth Project to significantly expand its fight against this dangerous drug."

"The expansion of the Meth Project is great news for Illinois," said Attorney General Lisa Madigan. "The powerful message this ad campaign sends to teens truly strengthens our work to combat the manufacture and use of methamphetamine in Illinois. I commend Senator Durbin and the Illinois Sheriffs' Association for their leadership in obtaining funding, and I urge other civic and business leaders to join us in this ongoing effort."

The Illinois Meth Project is a non-profit organization that implements a range of advertising and community action programs to reduce methamphetamine use. Launched in February 2008, the Illinois Meth Project leverages a proven model that combines extensive research with a hard-hitting, integrated media campaign. The Illinois Meth Project is established by the Meth Project, a national non-profit organization headquartered in Palo Alto, California, aimed at significantly reducing first-time meth use

through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach. The Meth Project is supported by the Siebel Foundation.

For more information, visit www.illinoismethproject.org.