

NORTH ISLAND GAZETTE

Stop meth's destruction

Lee Robert Mason, Nov 16 2006

The reason crystal meth absolutely must be stopped is because it will completely destroy the lives of its users and dramatically change the fabric of your community. Crystal meth distributors are destroying the lives of their victims; the deadly chemical completely damages the body and the mind.

It also has a devastating effect on society, addicts are experiencing severe health problems, psychological problems and mental illnesses.

There is an increase in property crimes as users fall deeper into their addiction, families are watching in horror as this vile and disgusting chemical destroys their children and tears their family apart.

Most drugs don't affect a user's body the way crystal meth does.

Meth literally changes the way the brain functions by significantly damaging the brain's ability to produce dopamine. As much as fifty percent of the dopamine producing cells can be permanently damaged to the point where the person can no longer function without crystal meth.

The long-term damage is cause for great concern as well because long after someone has stopped using meth they can still be prone to wild mood swings, violent outbursts and suicidal depression. Many meth addicts end their own lives because they are so depressed and appear to be in such a hopeless situation that suicide seems to be the only way out for them.

In the crazy world of meth addicts there are no rules and there are no boundaries; there is nothing they won't do to secure their next fix. Shoplifting, break and entries, car theft, prostitution and a host of other crimes can cause serious problems for the community. Some communities that are plagued by meth addiction are reeling from the amount of criminal activity that is taking place every day.

Many young people are introduced to meth between the ages of 12 to 15 and most of the young addicts I've spoken to state they were introduced to it in grades eight

and nine. I have had many young addicts tell me they were offered it at parties where it was being passed off as ecstasy and cocaine.

In Massett an adult was offering the youth the first hit for free, knowing there was the distinct likelihood they would become seriously addicted to meth.

How do we as a society stop meth from destroying our children and our community? Keep an eye on your children and your neighborhood; learn the telltale signs that your child or someone you know is using crystal meth.

The following is a list of symptoms that parents can watch for which could indicate that their children are using crystal meth. Please remember that if you see these symptoms it does not necessarily mean that your child is using crystal meth.

It simply indicates that there is a strong possibility. Look for: increased heart rate, blood pressure and respiration, flushed or tense appearance, dilated pupils, excessive sweating, rapid speech, inability to sleep or eat, severe weight loss, rotting teeth, unsightly scabs and open sores, paranoia, hallucinations (often times auditory), repetitive behavior, memory loss, depression, psychosis, teeth grinding, restlessness, tremors, a strong chemical odor on their breath or body.

Meth cooks and dealers don't care about you or your children, they only care about money. There are no meth cooks or pushers on my street because we as a neighborhood simply will not allow it to happen.

We exercise our rights as adults in a caring society; we watch over all the kids that live here, the young ones and the older ones, we treat them all as if they were our own. We provide them with a safe and caring environment and we share our knowledge with them about crystal meth and other dangerous drugs so they can make wiser decisions for themselves.

Article by Lee Mason. Lee is an addictions recovery specialist and founder of the young warriors network. To contact Lee for crystal meth updates and additional information please visit www.youngwarriors.net

Information from last week's article on crystal meth was taken from Mr. Mason's meth workshop materials. The Gazette apologizes for neglecting to credit his work.