

**Methamphetamine Prevention Network
Task Force Summary Report
March, 2008**

Educated Communities & Professionals Task Force

The Educated Communities & Professionals Task Force brings two items for action today:
1) An updated action plan for countywide distribution of meth prevention brochures in public places; and 2) A new proposal for a locally developed alternative to “Crystal Darkness.”

The Task Force selected two brochures published by Journeyworks of Santa Cruz to distribute countywide in English & Spanish. They are entitled, “45 Scary But True Facts About Meth” and “How Meth Affects Your Brain.” Copies are available today for Leadership Council members. Each regional community coalition is presently identifying locations where the brochures will be delivered in May 2008.

We are also pleased to present a proposal for a locally produced documentary as an alternative to Crystal Darkness. Although the Task Force found Crystal Darkness to be compelling, we would prefer to produce our own documentary featuring local people entirely and at a much reduced cost. We would also like to see the County own the rights to the documentary so that it can be shown repeatedly in different venues. We recommend making the documentary the centerpiece of a comprehensive meth prevention campaign using multiple channels to get our message across – including television, newspapers, radio, the Dontw8.info website, digital storyboards, printed brochures, Town Hall Meetings, community forums, etc. We might be able to combine our efforts with San Luis Obispo County to further reduce costs. If the Leadership Council approves this overall approach, we will prepare a more specific workplan.

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Methamphetamine-Free Individuals, Families and Children Task Force

The task force continues to have a membership of 9 persons. Currently we are without representation from the Lompoc community. Nevertheless, these first two months of the year have been productive.

There has been significant process on both short term strategies. 1) Judge Flores will present a family-focused briefing for all Superior Court Judges emphasizing evidence-based, community friendly and culturally sensitive treatment modalities for methamphetamine abusers at their next quarterly meeting. 2) Alcohol, Drug & Mental Health staff (primarily Asia Eichmiller) is developing a training module for CWS workers. A draft outline of the training was presented at our February Task Force meeting and has since been presented to CWS trainers for review. The training will emphasize an understanding of addiction, how to support and facilitate treatment and recovery and enhance collaboration with treatment providers. 3) Policy issues that support Methamphetamine prevention and treatment for families have been submitted to legislators, lobbyists and others who assist with drafting of legislation. Our Task Force Chair recently met with Representative Lois Capps and presented several issues.

In March, the Task Force will focus on our long-term strategies and chart the current treatment resources and highlight areas needing additional services. Emphasis will be placed on developing systems of care that will utilize existing services.

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Safe Neighborhoods Task Force

Dennis Pankratz assumed facilitation responsibilities on March 15. He met with Thom Allena and Ken Bambrick on the 15th to discuss transitional logistics and processes. The Task Force is currently seeking representative from the Santa Maria Police Department to join the Task Force. The Task Force met on January 8, February 5 and March 4th.

The current active action plans have to do with community education regarding Drug Endangered Children (DEC). Task Force members Ester Trejo and Megan Baldwin conducted DEC training for family resource staff of People Helping People (PHP) on February 29. The next step will be for the PHP staff to take DEC training out to their schools. The next training planned will be for Public Health staff.

The other action planning has to do with exploring drug paraphernalia ordinances in the county based on the successful San Diego experience. Preliminary research has been done in some of the communities in Santa Barbara County regarding outlets selling meth pipes in particular. Contact has also been made with the key staff in San Diego County regarding their efforts. The Task Force will continue exploring the possibility of a jurisdiction in Santa Barbara County to pilot such an ordinance.

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Outcomes and Evaluation Task Force

Since the last Leadership Council meeting, the Outcomes & Evaluation Task Force met on Jan. 23rd and Feb. 27th. We currently have representatives from People Helping People, Department of Social Services, Public Health, ADMHS, County Information Technology Services, UCSB, Probation and the Sheriff's Department.

Our task force strategies continue to remain the same:

1. Identify the data elements that are currently being collected by key agencies in the county.
2. Identify the data elements we want agencies to measure.
3. Work with other MPN task forces in developing and identifying measurable indicators/outcomes for each of their strategies/action plans.
4. Develop a data base that will allow us to track indicators/outcomes over time.

In January, we focused on the data collected by Social Services and Probation. In February, we heard from the Sheriff's department regarding their data. As we go through this process, we are "tracking" the type of data gathered by each department, particularly with regard to methamphetamine.

Our next step will be to determine the identifying data elements so that the departmental data can be shared with IT and then “merged” into the countywide database. Daniel Milei gave a demonstration to the O&E Task Force of the prototype database created for the county and shared that they had received Board approval and are moving forward with the building of the database.

Task Force members had a brief discussion in their February meeting about how rigid the evaluation should be in the action plans. It was suggested that for smaller strategies, a less stringent evaluation should be collected (such as a process evaluation) and that for the strategies that are much larger, like the “crystal darkness” campaign, a more rigorous evaluation with outcomes be developed.

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