

**Confederated Tribes of  
Warm Springs Methamphetamine  
Prevention Project**  
*Draft Student Survey Report*

**Theresa Allen Herrera, Ph.D.**

allen@npcresearch.com

**Juliette R. Mackin, Ph.D.**

mackin@npcresearch.com

**Ashley M. Snoddy**

snoddy@npcresearch.com

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*Informing policy, improving programs*



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Warm Springs Methamphetamine Project is a drug education and prevention/intervention program aimed at youth and adults in and around the Warm Springs, Oregon region. WSMPP offers alternative knowledge and hope about methamphetamine use to a community that has been over exposed to its deleterious effects. Working with regional elementary, middle and high schools, 4-H organizations, and correctional facilities, the WSMPP project coordinator directly educates students, correctional facility inmates and conference attendees as to the effects of methamphetamine use and its impact on local communities. This report includes analysis of changes in knowledge and attitude of Jefferson County Middle School youth about use of this drug.

For the 2006-09 evaluation, 96 middle school students were asked to complete a survey about a methamphetamine prevention presentation conducted in the prior academic year to determine if there had been any change in the amount of knowledge they had about the drug's use and their attitudes toward methamphetamine. The sample selection was purposeful, to ensure that most of the participants had attended the presentation.

### Student Characteristics

Approximately 43% of the students were female, 32% identified as Native American and 38% were in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The survey was administered to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders only. Eight percent of the population was 12 years old and the rest were 13 years old or older.

### Survey Outcomes

#### STUDENTS GAINED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT METHAMPHETAMINE USE

Students reported on their knowledge about methamphetamine before and after the prevention presentation. Sixty percent report knowing a little about the drug before the presentation and 24% report knowing a little about methamphetamine use after the presentation. Twenty-two percent of the students indicated they had a lot of information about methamphetamine before the presentation and 58% report they had a lot of information afterwards.

#### MORE STUDENTS USE KNOWLEDGE FOR METHAMPHETAMINE PREVENTION

Students were asked what they did with the information obtained at the presentation. Forty-three percent report that the information presented helped them decide not to use methamphetamine.

#### MOST STUDENTS UNLIKELY TO TRY METHAMPHETAMINE

Researchers were interested in knowing, given what the students knew about methamphetamine, who would be likely to try it. Eighty-eight percent reported they would not try it while 10% reported they would try it one or more times. Ninety-four percent of Native American students reported they would not try the drug.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Students who attended the Methamphetamine Prevention Assembly learned more about the drug and are less likely to use methamphetamine. Most of these students had attended the methamphetamine prevention assembly and even more had received some prevention education

through the WSMPP. This evaluation was concerned with one segment of the project; the prevention assembly.

It is recommended that the program consider how it might reach the 7% of students who feel they have no information about methamphetamine and the 10% who indicated that they might use in the future. Also, the program coordinator may want to consider how to explain to youth why it is that some people can use the drug without having devastating consequences or becoming immediately addicted. Additionally, the program may want to spend more time reaching out to even younger students. Finally, one of the goals of the project was to implement a youth council. The program should focus on this aspect so that there is a program legacy left behind that will continue with some of the objectives set out by the WSMPP.



## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Warm Springs Methamphetamine Prevention Project (WSMPP) is a 3-year program of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The goal of WSMPP is “to provide comprehensive, tribally relevant methamphetamine prevention education and promising prevention practices to 1,293 individuals or 30% of the enrolled tribal population on the Warm Springs reservation and nearby communities between September 2006 and August 2009.” Their key objectives included:

- Providing quarterly workshops and annual tribal forums to address methamphetamine concerns
- Establishing and enacting a zero tolerance for methamphetamine policy for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS)
- Coordinating a youth council for the elementary, middle and senior high schools in Warm Springs and Madras, Oregon
- Establishing a Strategic Plan on Methamphetamine Prevention and Intervention for the CTWS

In addition to these objectives, some first through third year program achievements included:

- Weekly methamphetamine prevention curriculum for Jefferson County Middle School and Warm Springs Elementary beginning January 2008
- Jefferson County Middle School Assembly featuring guest speakers talking about methamphetamine addiction in March 2008
- Health Fair - Educational Display Boards (concerning methamphetamine use) made by students in 2008
- Weekly jail visits from beginning of grant until April 2007
- Deer Ridge Corrections Facility presentations to at-risk youth
- Public Service Announcements created and broadcast to a radio audience numbering 15,000
- 4-H Culture Camp five week methamphetamine education series in July 2007
- Regional 2-day methamphetamine conference
- Construction of “zero tolerance” signs on the reservation; dedicated, blessed and posted for loved ones lost to drug abuse
- Traditional Warm Springs tribal practices – fish net making, drum making and regalia making
- Youth Gang Awareness Conference in June 2009
- Women’s Health Fair in February 2009

This report includes analysis of changes in methamphetamine knowledge and use among middle school students at Jefferson County Middle School based on the presentation in March 2008.



## EVALUATION PLAN FOR 2006-09

The WSMPP evaluation used a student survey as a performance measurement strategy to assess the extent to which the WSMPP initiative reached its desired outcomes. Performance measurement is a widely used evaluation strategy to answer the question, “Did the program achieve what it set out to achieve?” The evaluation model assesses methamphetamine use knowledge and attitude before and after prevention activities.

Specifically, the survey asks about knowledge and attitudes before and after the methamphetamine prevention presentation which took place in March 2008 at Jefferson County Middle School. The event included a presentation by a Native American who worked as a Hollywood stunt man and had overcome his addiction to methamphetamine.

The extent to which program goals are met are measured by a series of outcomes, defined as specific changes occurring for participants—changes in behavior, attitudes and knowledge.





## STUDENT SURVEY

### Methods

The 2006-09 WSMPP evaluation used a retrospective pretest to collect valid and reliable pre and post test outcome information. Administered only once, a retrospective pretest asks respondents to first report on where they are now in relation to an indicator. After making this determination, respondents are asked to reflect back and rate what they were doing or what they knew before the intervention/program, thus collecting the pretest retrospectively. The retrospective pretest method has been tested and found to be an effective strategy to reduce the underestimation of program effects when using participant self-report measures, and when it is not feasible or possible to use traditional pretests.<sup>1</sup>

The sample selection was purposeful to ensure that most youth taking the survey would have been exposed to the intervention, which was administered in the 2007-08 academic year. WSMPP creates attitudinal change through many factors beyond the assembly, including annual youth conferences, weekly methamphetamine curriculum, public service announcements and various other WSMPP events targeted to a more general population. Finally, the survey was anonymous and this aspect was explained to students, who were instructed to be as honest as possible with their feelings.

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<sup>1</sup> Lamb, T. (2005). *The retrospective pretest: An imperfect but useful tool*. The Evaluation Exchange, XI(2) [Online]. Available: <http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/evaluation-methodology/the-retrospective-pretest-an-imperfect-but-useful-tool>; Pratt, C., McGuigan, W., & Katzev, A. (2001). Measuring program outcomes: Using retrospective pretest methodology. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 21(3), 34-349.

**SAMPLE**

The survey sample included 96 middle school students at Jefferson County Middle School. They were surveyed about a methamphetamine prevention presentation conducted in the previous academic year. Table 1 lists survey participants’ demographics.

**Table 1. Demographics of Survey Sample**

Female	43%
Native American	32%
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	38%
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	63%
12 years old	8%
Age 13 or older	92%

**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

The survey, a self-report measure, included questions about the demographic characteristics of the youth as well as outcome indicators (Appendix A).

## Methamphetamine Prevention Presentation

The WSMPP project director organized a presentation for students at Jefferson County Middle School. Guest speakers were brought in to talk about their experiences with drugs and their healing. There were approximately 400 students present at this assembly, which took place in March 2008.

In addition, it is possible that the youth from Jefferson County Middle School attended any of a number of other project events. Exposure to prevention education may have taken place during weekly presentations to the middle and elementary schools by the project coordinator, the Northwest Indian Youth Conference, or the Youth Gang Awareness Conference. The students surveyed were asked to think about the assembly presentation specifically. Of those students sampled, 75% said they attended the methamphetamine prevention presentation in the previous academic year.

**Table 2. Knowledge About Methamphetamine Before Presentation**

<b>Amount of Knowledge</b>	
Nothing	12%
A little	60%
A lot	22%
<b>Source of Knowledge</b>	
Friends	9%
Family	40%
Learned on my own	24%
Other	36%

Note: Amount of knowledge is less than 100% due to missing answers. For source of knowledge, students were asked to check all that apply.

**Table 3. Presentation Helpfulness**

Not Very	10%
A little	38%
A lot	44%

The numbers in Table 3 do not add up to 100% due to missing answers. Still, 82% of the students who attended the presentation felt it was helpful. Another 82% of the students felt they had some knowledge about methamphetamine before attending the presentation (Table 2). This percentage did not change; however, many more youth felt that their knowledge base had increased after the presentation, from 22% feeling they knew a lot about methamphetamine before the presentation to 58% who felt this way afterwards, a change of 163% (Table 4).

**Table 4. Knowledge After Presentation**

Nothing	7%
A little	24%
A lot	58%

**USE OF KNOWLEDGE**

Of significant interest is what the students did since the presentation (in the past year) with the information they learned about methamphetamine use. For this question, students were asked to mark all that apply. Overwhelmingly, students reported using their newly acquired knowledge to decide not to use methamphetamine (Table 5).

**Table 5. Use of Knowledge**

Talked to friends about methamphetamine	15%
Told someone why the shouldn't use meth	19%
Talked to family about methamphetamine	24%
Haven't used the information yet, but plan to	21%
Helped me decide not to use meth	43%

About one quarter (24%) of the students talked to family members about what they had learned at the presentation and almost one-fifth (19%) report talking to their friends about not using.



## ATTITUDES ABOUT METHAMPHETAMINE USE

Regarding attitudes about the harmfulness of methamphetamine, over half (57%) of the students surveyed felt that even minimal use of methamphetamine is “very harmful.” Nine percent of the students felt there is very little or no harm in using methamphetamine once or twice. It is possible that these students have knowledge about a friend or family member having “tried” the drug without obvious, dire consequences. Given that almost half (48%) of the students reported knowing one or more persons who currently use methamphetamine, it is likely that not all the drug users they know have experienced similarly devastating outcomes.

**Table 6. Familiarity and Attitude About Methamphetamine**

<b>How much do you think people harm themselves if they use meth 1-2 times?</b>	
No harm	4%
Very little harm	5%
Some harm	30%
A lot of harm	57%
<b>How likely is it that you would try meth?</b>	
Not at all	88%
Maybe once	8%
Probably a few times	2%
Already have	0
<b>How many people do you know personally who use meth?</b>	
None	55%
One	15%
A few (2-4)	17%
More than a few (5 or more)	16%

Finally, researchers were interested in finding out how many of the students would still consider using methamphetamine given their knowledge about the drug’s impact. As can be seen in Table 6, the large majority (88%) of students reported that they would never try the drug. Another 10% thought they might try the drug once or more. Again, these students clearly have more personal knowledge about methamphetamine based on their own exposure to the drug.

## WHO MIGHT TRY METHAMPHETAMINE?

Table 7 describes the reported likelihood that students would try methamphetamine by grade, gender and whether the student identifies as Native American. Interestingly, the two groups that showed the least interest in trying the drug were Native Americans and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Also of interest is the finding that female students reported being more likely to try methamphetamine than males. Research indicates that females are more likely to try methamphetamine at an earlier age than males and that they are more likely to become dependent (Dluzen & Liu, 2008).

**Table 7. Likelihood of Using Methamphetamine**

How likely is it that you would try methamphetamine?			
	Not at all	Maybe once	Probably a few times
Native American	94%	6%	0
Male	94%	4%	2%
Female	83%	15%	2%
7 <sup>th</sup> grader	83%	11%	6%
8 <sup>th</sup> grader	93%	7%	0

It is interesting to note that the youth who have likely been in school settings longer (8<sup>th</sup> graders) and probably have had more exposure to prevention/intervention efforts, are less likely to try methamphetamine than those who have probably been in for a shorter period (7<sup>th</sup> graders).

## Student's Comments

The WSMPP Project Coordinator created and handed out evaluation surveys at most events. Students were asked what they thought of various meth prevention presentations. A sample of comments on what students liked best or what they found interesting are listed below:

### What did you find interesting?

*The number of different gangs; statistics about Native Americans and meth*

### What about [speaker's] presentations?

*I liked this presentation. It was intense and to the point.*

*I like how alive he was. He made us laugh and everything he said was loud and true.*

*I liked it and I felt that he really spoke to me.*

*Good. It helped me realize what my parents went through and why they did drugs.*

*Disturbing, uncomfortable but learned a lot.*

*He is an inspiration to change and get involved in social activities. They could change your life.*

### What, in particular, caught your attention?

*The history; I liked how he gave actual evidence and everything about Native history.*

*The way his stories connected to our daily life.*

*It made me think twice about my future and what I really should do.*

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**S**tudents who attended the Methamphetamine Prevention Assembly learned more about the drug and are less likely to use methamphetamine. Most of these students had attended the methamphetamine prevention assembly and even more had received some prevention education through the WSMPP. This evaluation was concerned with one segment of the project; the prevention assembly.

Twenty-two percent of the students surveyed reported knowing a lot about methamphetamine before attending the assembly. After the assembly presentation, 58% of the students reported knowing a lot about methamphetamine use. Forty-three percent of those surveyed report that the information they had gained from the assembly helped them decide not to use methamphetamine

The program should consider how it might reach the 7% of students who feel they have no information about methamphetamine and the 10% who indicated that they might use in the future. The program coordinator may want to consider how to explain to youth why it is that some people can use the drug without having devastating consequences or becoming immediately addicted. Additionally, the program may want to spend more time reaching out to even younger students. Finally, one of the goals of the project was to implement a youth council. The program should focus on this aspect so that there is a program legacy left behind that will continue with some of the objectives set out by the WSMPP.



## REFERENCES

Dluzen, D., & Liu, B. (2008). Gender differences in methamphetamine use and responses: A review. *Gender Medicine*. 5:1.



## **APPENDIX A: STUDENT SURVEY**





### Middle School Prevention Survey

[DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS FORM]

1. What grade are you in?  
 6th     7th     8th
2. How old are you?  
 10     11     12     13 or older
3. What is your gender?  
 Female     Male
4. Are you Native American?  
 Yes     No
5. If so, are you a tribal member?  
 Warm Springs     Wasco     Paiute     Other     No
6. Did you attend a presentation about methamphetamine (meth) last year?  
 Yes     No
7. If not, was it because:  
 you were absent from school that day     you are new to this school     Other  
 you don't remember
8. How helpful do you think the presentation was?  
 Not very     A little     A lot
9. How much did you know about meth before the presentation?  
 Nothing     A little     A lot
10. Where did you get your information about meth before the presentation?  
 Friends     Family     Learned on my own     Other
11. How much did you know about meth after the presentation?  
 Nothing     A little     A lot
12. How have you used the information that you learned from the presentation?  
(Mark all that apply)  
 Talked to friends about meth     Talked to family about meth  
 Told someone why they shouldn't use meth     Helped me decide not to use meth  
 Haven't used the information yet, but plan to  
 Don't plan to use it
13. How much do you think people harm themselves if they use meth 1-2 times?  
 No harm     Very little harm     Some harm     A lot of harm
14. How likely is it that you would try meth?  
 Not at all     Maybe once     Probably a few times     I already have
15. How many people do you know personally who use meth?  
 None     One     A few (2-4)     More than a few (5 or more)