

Taking Action in Your Community

Taking action in your community might seem perplexing. Where do I start? How do I get involved? The *Partnership for a Drug-Free America* (www.drugfree.org) understands this can be challenging, so we've broken down the steps and actions to help you keep your community drug free.

As a first step, define what "community" means to you. This is different for each of us. Remember, community can mean your family – immediate and extended – your neighborhood, places of worship, local schools, your community center, and youth-serving organizations in your area. Then decide, realistically, what works for you and determine what action you wish to take. Here are some suggestions:

Taking Action in Your Family– Educate, Talk, Monitor, E-mail

- **Educate** yourself about the dangers of methamphetamine.
 - www.drugfree.org/Meth – this Web site provides information about the dangers of meth as well as resources and tools to help you deal with the threat
 - www.methresources.gov – this Web site provides information on government meth programs
- **Talk, Talk, Talk** – to everyone you know and keep the conversation going.
 - Start at home – talk to your kids about what you learned, ask them if they have questions, ask them about the drug prevention programs in their schools. Don't forget to talk to your extended family – aunts, grandparents, nieces, cousins, etc.
 - We know the "drug talk" can be scary, but it doesn't have to be – visit www.timetotalk.org and learn more about how to talk with kids about drugs and alcohol.
 - Talk to the parents of your child's three closest friends, and tell them what you have learned.
 - Talk to colleagues and neighbors – if you're concerned, they're concerned. We all want to keep our communities safe, and protect the children in our lives.
- **Monitor** your child. Know your child's whereabouts, who his friends are, and the parents of his friends.
- Don't have time to talk? Send an **e-mail** about what you have learned and the resources you used to learn more.
 - **Dear (friend): I attended a Meth360 Prevention Presentation to learn about methamphetamine prevention in my/our community. I think you would also find the information useful. Check out these resources (Insert resources here) and let's talk about this soon.**

Taking Action in Your Community – Network, Volunteer, Speak out, Write

- Create a **network** within your community.
 - Start an e-mail **1 PLUS 2 pledge** campaign. **Send 2 people** in your life an e-mail about what you've learned, tell them about **1 action** you took in your community and ask each of them to pledge **to take 1 action** and **to e-mail 2 more people** to help prevent drug abuse in their community.
- **Volunteer** in your community.
 - Tell the principal and teachers of the local school about the Meth360 program and ask to help with drug prevention or after-school programs in your neighborhood schools.
 - Call *United Way*, the local *Boys and Girls Club*, *YMCA/YWCA*, or the *local community center*, and ask what you can do to help with their drug prevention efforts.
 - Talk to leaders and members in your faith community about what you can do as a group to make a difference with drug prevention efforts in your community.
- **Speak out** in your community.
 - Every day we have opportunities – small and large – to speak out; we just have to recognize them as opportunities! At church, at soccer practice, at PTA meetings, picking up the kids from school, at school board meetings, running into a neighbor at the grocery store – use these places to speak about keeping your community and your children drug free.
 - Find new audiences for Meth360 – think about other groups that could benefit from a Meth360 presentation.
- **Contact** important people in your community.
 - Some of us are more comfortable writing than speaking so start writing! Send letters/e-mails about your concern to leaders in your community – the mayor, the sheriff, your congressperson, your senator.