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## **VIII. Fact Sheet: Adolescents/Young Adults/Adults**

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- Over the past several years, adult use of methamphetamine in the United States has been rising, but adolescent use appears to be declining.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the proliferation of small “mom and pop” methamphetamine labs has created or increased many problems, such as reported cases of child endangerment and demands for cleanup of hazardous wastes at such sites.<sup>2</sup>
- The Drug Enforcement Administration estimates that 12- to 14-year-olds living in smaller towns are 104 percent more likely to use meth than those in this age group who live in larger cities.<sup>3</sup>
- “The proportion of drug-test positives for amphetamines increased among workers subject to Federal testing regulations [0.35 percent for the first half of 2005 vs. 0.31 percent for 2004 and 0.29 percent in 2003], while overall drug-test positives decreased among all U.S. workers in the first half of 2005, according to the semi-annual Drug Testing Index<sup>®</sup> released today [December 1, 2005] by Quest Diagnostics Incorporated.”<sup>4</sup>
- Although the incidence of positive drug tests attributable to amphetamines among federally mandated, safety-sensitive employees in the U.S. increased by 13 percent in this group of workers during the first half of 2005, the incidence of positive drug tests related to methamphetamine in the general workforce declined by 4 percent during the same period.<sup>5</sup>
- Regarding findings of the 2005 Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey in December 2005, Lloyd Johnston, longtime principal investigator for the annual student

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<sup>1</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy. October 2004. National Synthetic Drugs Action Plan: The Federal Government Response to the Production, Trafficking, and Abuse of Synthetic Drugs and Diverted Pharmaceutical Products. [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/national\\_synth\\_drugs/](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/national_synth_drugs/)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Drug Enforcement Administration. Fact Sheet: Fast Facts About Meth. [www.dea.gov/pubs/pressrel/methfact03.html](http://www.dea.gov/pubs/pressrel/methfact03.html)

<sup>4</sup> Quest Diagnostics, Inc. December 1, 2005. Drug Testing Index: Amphetamines Drug-Test Positives Are Up Among Safety-Sensitive Workers in the First Half of 2005, According to Quest Diagnostics’ Drug Testing Index.<sup>®</sup> [www.questdiagnostics.com/employersolutions/dti\\_11\\_2005/dti\\_index.html](http://www.questdiagnostics.com/employersolutions/dti_11_2005/dti_index.html)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

survey, acknowledged that MTF findings appeared to be at odds with reports of methamphetamine's increased popularity among adolescents. "We are aware that the pattern of declining meth use among adolescents seems to be inconsistent with recent press reports of a growing meth epidemic," Johnston said. "But if use is spreading, it does not seem to be doing so in this segment of the population. Of course, it is possible that use is increasing among high school dropouts, who are not captured in the survey, and among young adults."<sup>6</sup>

- In its earliest report of 2005 MTF findings, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy noted that when figures for grades 8, 10, and 12 were combined, methamphetamine use among students had dropped by about one-third since 2001.<sup>7</sup>
- The 2005 MTF found that annual prevalence of methamphetamine use was 1.8 percent among 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 2.9 percent among 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 2.5 percent among 12<sup>th</sup> graders. In 1999, the corresponding prevalence rates had been 3.2 percent, 4.6 percent, and 4.7 percent, respectively.<sup>8</sup>
- According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) for 2004, the average age of first use among new methamphetamine users was 22.1. In 2003, the average age of first use was 20.4, and in 2002 it was age 18.9.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2004, 4.9 percent of those who were 12 or older had used methamphetamine at least once in their lives; 1.4 million persons aged 12 or older (0.6 percent of the population) had used methamphetamine in the past year; and 600,000 (0.2 percent) had used meth in the past month.<sup>10</sup>
  - In other words, in 2004, 95.1 percent of Americans 12 and older had *never* used methamphetamine; 99.4 percent of them had *not* used methamphetamine in the past year; and 99.8 percent of them had *not* done so during the past 30 days.

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<sup>6</sup> Johnston, L.D.; O'Malley, P.M.; Bachman, J.G.; Schulenberg, J.E. December 19, 2005. Teen drug use down, but progress halts among youngest teens. University of Michigan News and Information Services: Ann Arbor, MI. <http://monitoringthefuture.org/pressreleases/05drugpr.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy. December 19, 2005. Meth and Steroid Use Decline Sharply Among Youth: Overall Youth Drug Use Down Again. [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/pda/121905.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/pda/121905.html)

<sup>8</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. 2005. Table 2: Trends in Annual Prevalence of Use of Various Drugs for Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Graders. Monitoring the Future. [www.monitoringthefuture.org/data/05data/pr05t2.pdf](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/data/05data/pr05t2.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Office of Applied Studies. The NSDUH Report: Methamphetamine Use, Abuse, and Dependence: 2002, 2003, and 2004, Highlights. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/meth/meth.cfm>

<sup>10</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Office of Applied Studies. September 16, 2005. The NSDUH Report: Methamphetamine Use, Abuse, and Dependence: 2002, 2003, and 2004, In Brief. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/meth/meth.htm>

- Although the *numbers* of past-month users of methamphetamine meeting the criteria for drug abuse/dependence increased in 2004, the *prevalence* of methamphetamine use was similar in 2002, 2003, and 2004.<sup>11</sup>
- Based on 2002, 2003, and 2004 NSDUH data, past-year methamphetamine use was higher for young adults aged 18 to 25 (1.6 percent) than for youths aged 12 to 17 (0.7 percent). The rate for adults aged 26 or older was 0.4 percent. Thus, according to these data, 99.3 percent of youths aged 12 to 17 had *not* used methamphetamine in the past year.<sup>12</sup>
  - In these same NSDUH data, past-year use was higher among males (0.7 percent) than females (0.5 percent) and among whites (0.7 percent) and Hispanics (0.5 percent) than among Asians (0.2 percent) or blacks (0.1 percent). Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders reported the highest rates of past-year use (2.2 percent), followed by American Indians or Alaska Natives (1.7 percent) and persons reporting two or more races (1.9 percent).<sup>13</sup>
- In 1993, there were 21,000 treatment program admissions of persons with a primary methamphetamine use problem. Ten years later, in 2003, that number had increased to 117,000, according to the SAMHSA/Office of Applied Studies Treatment Episode Data Set.<sup>14</sup>
- In treatment, methamphetamine users have reported physical symptoms associated with the use of methamphetamine, including weight loss, tachycardia (abnormal rapidity of heart action), tachypnea (abnormal rapidity of respiration), hyperthermia (unusually high fever), insomnia, and muscular tremors.<sup>15</sup>
- Psychiatric symptoms most often reported by methamphetamine users in treatment include violent behavior, repetitive activity, memory loss, paranoia, delusions of reference, auditory hallucinations, and confusion or fright.<sup>16</sup>
- During FY 2003, 4,456 Federal offenders were sentenced for methamphetamine-related charges in U.S. courts. Most were white (59.3 percent), male (85.9 percent), and U.S. citizens (76.9 percent).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Office of Applied Studies. September 16, 2005. The NSDUH Report: Methamphetamine Use, Abuse, and Dependence: 2002, 2003, and 2004, In Brief. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/meth/meth.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Office of Applied Studies. Updated April 6, 2004. Methamphetamine Abuse in the United States. <http://oas.samhsa.gov/NHSDA/Treatan/treana13.htm>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Sentencing Commission. 2005. *Sourcebook of Federal Sentencing Statistics, 2003*. [www.ussc.gov/ANNRPT/2003/SBtoc03.htm](http://www.ussc.gov/ANNRPT/2003/SBtoc03.htm)