

CHEYENNE-LARAMIE COUNTY METHAMPHETAMINE ASSESSMENT PROJECT

February 8, 2007

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The Cheyenne-Laramie County Methamphetamine Assessment Report represents the work of many. The authors wish to thank the Steering Committee for its assistance and support. Steering committee members included Cheyenne City Council Woman Georgia Broyles, D. Reed Eckhardt, Chief Robert Fecht, Sheriff Danny Glick, Commissioner Jack Knudson, Mayor Jack Spiker, and Captain Jeffery Schulz. We also wish to thank the many business, agency, organization, and government officials for giving their time in our interviewing process. Many staff in these settings also gave their time and assistance with data requests, and we thank them as well. Our on-line and paper surveys of community residents were a bigger success than we imagined when we designed them. For that, we thank all of the citizens in Laramie County who took the time to complete the survey forms. Finally, we had several citizens who took the time to write and call our office to encourage and commend us for this effort and to tell us directly about an experience either they or someone they knew had with methamphetamine. We thank them for their honesty and for taking the time to alert us to their concerns.

We also extend our gratitude to Datacorp staff and SJ Miller Associates for their technical advice, support, feedback, and superior production capabilities. Datacorp staff included Nicoletta Lomuto, M.A., Lynn Welker, and Melissa Boucher.

P. Allison Minugh, Ph.D., served as the Datacorp project director and Susan Janke, M.S., served as the Datacorp project manager. Stephen J. Miller, M.P.A. served as Chief Public Safety Consultant.

ERRATA SHEET

Updated April 17, 2007

This errata sheet logs content errors that have been identified since the release of the *Cheyenne-Laramie County Methamphetamine Assessment Project* report. The original document was released February 8, 2007. Corrections are as follows:

Page ES-3:

Under the heading "Treatment" the first bullet reads, "192% increase in substance abuse treatment admissions . . ." It should read, "92% increase in substance abuse treatment admissions . . ."

Page ES-5

Under the heading "Human and Social Services" the first bullet reads, ". . .173% increase in shelter use . . ." It should read, ". . . 73% increase in shelter use . . ."

Page 4

Under the heading "How bad is the problem in Laramie County." The last bullet reads, "192% increase in treatment admissions for meth since 2003." It should read, "92% increase in treatment admissions for meth since 2003."

Page 25

Under the heading "Findings" the first bullet reads, "Peak Wellness Center reported . . . a 192% increase in three years." It should read, "Peak Wellness Center reported . . . a 92% increase in three years."

Page 35

Under the heading "Findings" the first bullet reads, "Safe House . . . provided services to 1, 331 clients . . . representing a 173% increase in shelter use . . ." It should read, , "Safe House . . . provided services to 1, 331 clients . . . representing a 73% increase in shelter use . . .".

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In the spring of 2006, the Cheyenne Meth Initiative began an effort to determine the impact methamphetamine has in Laramie County, Wyoming. The City of Cheyenne, Laramie County, and the State of Wyoming, Substance Abuse Division provided funding to hire DATACORP and SJ Miller Associates to complete this study.

This comprehensive methamphetamine assessment builds on a similar study conducted by Miller and Galloway (2005) in Casper and Natrona County. The purpose of the community methamphetamine assessment is to:

- ⊕ Determine the extent of the meth problem;
- ⊕ Determine the impact of meth on the community;
- ⊕ Determine the community needs to combat meth;
- ⊕ Identify existing community resources; and
- ⊕ Recommend strategies for community mobilization.

The Cheyenne-Laramie County Methamphetamine Assessment Project (MAP) employed a multi-method approach to answer the following questions:

- ⊕ Is there a meth problem in the community?
- ⊕ How do we know there is a problem?
- ⊕ Is there data to describe it?
- ⊕ What should be done about the problem?
- ⊕ What should go into a community strategy?
- ⊕ What are the obstacles to addressing the meth problem?

The data sources for the MAP study included existing data, individual interviews, focus groups, and an Internet survey of concerned citizens.

The research team conducted many interviews with local individuals from a variety of businesses and organizations. The table that follows lists the community sectors and number of interviews conducted.

Table 1. Interviews

Sector	Number of Interviews
Public Safety	8
Court	2
Corrections	3
Treatment	9
Health	12
Neighborhood	3
Work Force	15
Government	7
Education	3
Social Services	6

Extent of the Drug Problem

In January 2005, Datacorp completed a social indicator and gap analysis study (Minugh, Lomuto, & Breeden, 2005). The study found that Laramie County had demonstrable treatment need, especially for drug abuse. Several crime and health indicators were used to create an overall Drug Problem Severity Index (D-PSI) of treatment need. Specifically, this included direct drug-related arrests, indirect drug-related arrests, drug-related hospital discharges, Hepatitis B and C, and STD's. Laramie County ranked second to Fremont County in Wyoming on this overall drug problem index.

How bad is it?

2002-2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health meth results:

- ⊕ Wyoming had the 2nd highest overall use rate
- ⊕ Wyoming had the 3rd highest use rate for youth ages 12 – 17
- ⊕ Wyoming had the highest use rate for young adults ages 18-25

Table 2. Laramie County Meth Use

Age Group	Population	%	# Using
12-17	7,123	1.6	114
18-25	9,839	4.58	451
26+	54,979	0.9	495
Total	71,941	1.47	1,058

How bad is the problem in Laramie County?

Public Safety

- ⊕ 52% of all state felons have substance abuse problems and 28% of the substance-abusing felons used methamphetamine
- ⊕ 144% increase in the jail population since 2003
- ⊕ 46% of burglaries, 54% of embezzlement and fraud cases, and 70% of auto burglaries are meth-related

Courts

- ⊕ The court system drives the substance abuse treatment system
- ⊕ The Public Defenders Office noted that its caseload has almost doubled in the past two years and it believes 70% of its cases are meth-related
- ⊕ The district attorney estimated that 80% of all criminal cases filed in Circuit and District Court involved drug-related crimes

Corrections

- ⊕ In 2005, 3,339 men and 856 women were incarcerated in the Laramie County jail
- ⊕ 52% of all state felons had substance abuse problems, and 28% of the substance using felons used methamphetamine
- ⊕ 21 people were charged in a methamphetamine distribution ring in Laramie County in 2006

Treatment

- ⊕ 192% increase in substance abuse treatment admissions for meth since 2003
- ⊕ Interviewees stated there was poor communication and information sharing between the drug court and the community treatment system
- ⊕ Treatment needs in Laramie County outstrip capacity and available space

Prevention

- ⊕ The Cheyenne Meth Initiative has provided educational programming at local events, conducted community-wide trainings, and encouraged local businesses to participate in drug testing programs
- ⊕ Current state prevention funding in Laramie County targets alcohol
- ⊕ Meth use prevention is key to turning the corner on this problem

Health

- ⊕ 8 babies were born to meth-addicted mothers in July 2006
- ⊕ 4-5 people per day go the Emergency Department at the local hospital seeking help with dental problems believed to be meth-related
- ⊕ There are 116 Hepatitis C cases and 390 sexually transmitted disease cases in Laramie County in 2005

Community and Neighborhood

- ⊕ City code enforcement complaints increased from 1,247 in 2005 to 2,074 during 2006
- ⊕ A virtual city tour revealed significant graffiti problems in all 3 city wards
- ⊕ Geo-mapping of crime and child abuse and neglect complaints reveal the widespread nature of these problems

Work Force

- ⊕ Employment agencies estimate that 1/3 of applicants use illegal drugs
- ⊕ Employers are concerned about the shortage of employees in general, and the shortage of drug-free employees in particular
- ⊕ Employers need assistance developing protocols for drug testing and for giving former drug users a "second chance"

Education

- ⊕ Laramie County School District #1, the Department of Family Services, and Peak Wellness Center are reviewing and updating school district substance abuse policies
- ⊕ The community and Laramie County School District #1 personnel have differing perceptions about the extent of youth methamphetamine use
- ⊕ The Mayor's Survey indicated most students denied using meth but the majority indicated they knew someone who used meth

Human and Social Services

- ⊕ Safe House, a domestic violence shelter, provided services to 1,331 clients in FY 2002 and 2,297 clients in FY 2006, representing a 173% increase in shelter use since 2002
- ⊕ The Court Appointed Special Advocates indicated 69% of their cases are methamphetamine-related, all are alcohol related, and 90% of the children are less than 12 years old
- ⊕ Comea Shelter reported over 95% of its clients have alcohol or drug problems

Families and Youth

- ⊕ 78 out of 150 Laramie County children placed in foster care from January through October 2006 came from meth-impacted families
- ⊕ 22 out of 27 children adopted in Laramie County in 2006 came from meth-impacted households
- ⊕ There are approximately 1,500 grandparents raising grandchildren due to meth-abusing parents

Public Opinion Survey Results

- ⊕ 463 county residents completed the Internet-based survey and 84 residents completed a paper version of the survey
- ⊕ Internet respondents indicated they believe 25% of county residents use meth, and paper respondents indicated they believe 39% of county residents use meth

- ⊕ All respondents believed the number one reason why people use meth is because it is readily available

Data and Communication

- ⊕ There is a lack of meth-specific data in the community
- ⊕ Data is not easily accessible and often involves manual case reviews
- ⊕ Data gathering is not coordinated

Conclusions

- ⊕ Resources are tapped out
- ⊕ Community perception is polarized
- ⊕ Data infrastructure is lacking
- ⊕ Problem behaviors related to drug abuse develop at early ages

Recommendations

The following recommendations represent a small percentage of those identified throughout the study:

- ⊕ Implement community policing
- ⊕ Maximize use of geo-mapping to understand crime patterns
- ⊕ Expand drug court program capacity
- ⊕ Implement intervention programs at the county jail
- ⊕ Expand local treatment options and use of evidence-based practices
- ⊕ Expand pre-school prevention programs and programs that address early childhood problem behaviors
- ⊕ Establish environmental clean-up standards and protocols
- ⊕ Train the medical community about substance abuse issues and how to use brief interventions
- ⊕ Provide community education on code, nuisance, and graffiti violations

- ⊕ Hold community clean-up days
- ⊕ Provide more low-cost or no-cost activities for youth that positively engage them in their neighborhood and community
- ⊕ Increase the business community's presence in substance abuse prevention, drug testing, and community mobilization efforts
- ⊕ Family-based interventions and treatment should be the norm
- ⊕ Display relevant community benchmarks on a billboard, the Internet, and print media
- ⊕ Build basic infrastructure and capacity for data collection and reporting

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2006, the Cheyenne Meth Initiative began an effort to determine the impact methamphetamine has in Laramie County, Wyoming. The City of Cheyenne, Laramie County, and the State of Wyoming, Substance Abuse Division provided funding to hire DATACORP and SJ Miller Associates to complete this study.

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The Cheyenne-Laramie County Methamphetamine Assessment Project (MAP) employed a multi-method approach to answer the following questions:

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- ⊕ How do we know there is a problem?
- ⊕ Is there data to describe it?
- ⊕ What should be done about the problem?
- ⊕ What should go into a community strategy?
- ⊕ What are the obstacles to addressing the meth problem?

The data sources for the MAP study included the following sources:

- ⊕ Existing data
- ⊕ Individual interviews
- ⊕ Focus groups
- ⊕ Internet survey of concerned citizens

Our assessment approach focused on the importance of the community in understanding and subsequently addressing the methamphetamine problem. We contacted law enforcement and public safety officials, the business community, education, local government, corrections, social service organizations, health professionals, substance abuse treatment and prevention providers, and other agencies and community organizations throughout the county. This approach provided a rich picture of the methamphetamine issue in Laramie County. The results of this study will provide the foundation for a strategic framework for community mobilization that Laramie County citizens can use as a springboard for action.

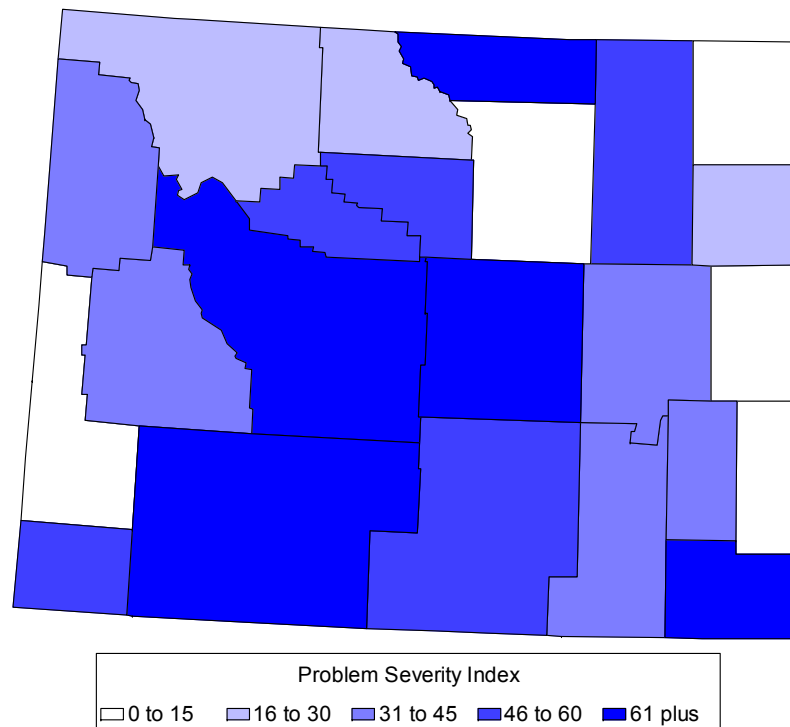
Overview of the problem in the county

Cheyenne and Laramie County has an estimated population of 85,163, based on the 2005 U.S. Census population estimates. Cheyenne is the largest community in the county, which includes the towns of Albin, Burns, Carpenter, Hillsdale and Pinebluffs. Cheyenne is the state capitol of Wyoming.

Extent of the drug problem

In January 2005, Datacorp completed a social indicator and gap analysis study (Minugh, Lomuto, & Breeden, 2005). The study found that Laramie County had demonstrable treatment need, especially for drug abuse. Several crime and health indicators were used to create an overall Drug Problem Severity Index (D-PSI) of treatment need. Specifically, this included direct drug-related arrests, indirect drug-related arrests, drug-related hospital discharges, Hepatitis B and C, and STD's.

Figure 1. Adult Drug Problem Severity Index
Adult Drug Problem Severity Index



The lighter the color, the lower the rate.

Laramie County ranked second only to Fremont County on this overall drug problem index.

How bad is it?

2002-2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health Meth Results:

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26+	54,979	0.9	495
12+	71,941	1.47	1,058

How bad is the problem in Laramie County?

- ⊕ 97% of our survey respondents said meth was a problem
- ⊕ 93% of our interviewees said meth was a problem
- ⊕ Participants in all focus groups agreed meth was a problem
- ⊕ 8 babies were born to meth-addicted mothers in July 2006
- ⊕ 78 children from meth-impacted families were placed in foster care
- ⊕ 144% increase in the jail population since 2003
- ⊕ 192% increase in treatment admissions for meth since 2003

ORGANIZATION AND BUSINESS INTERVIEWS

Interview Methods

The research team conducted many interviews with local individuals from a variety of businesses and organizations. The table that follows lists the community sectors we interviewed and the number of interviews conducted in each sector.

Table 2. Interviews

Sector	Number of Interviews
Public Safety	8
Court	2
Corrections	3
Treatment	9
Health	12
Neighborhood	3
Work Force	15
Government	7
Education	3
Social Services	6

The interview format was semi-structured. We asked all interviewees the same set of questions, but each had the opportunity to respond in an open-ended format. The questions we asked were the following:

1. Do you think there is a meth problem in this community?
2. Do you have any data that describes the meth problem?
3. What do you think should be done about the meth problem?
4. What would you like to see included in a community strategy to address the meth problem?
5. What are the assets or resources this community has for dealing with the meth problem?
6. Is there conflict in the community and how can it be resolved?

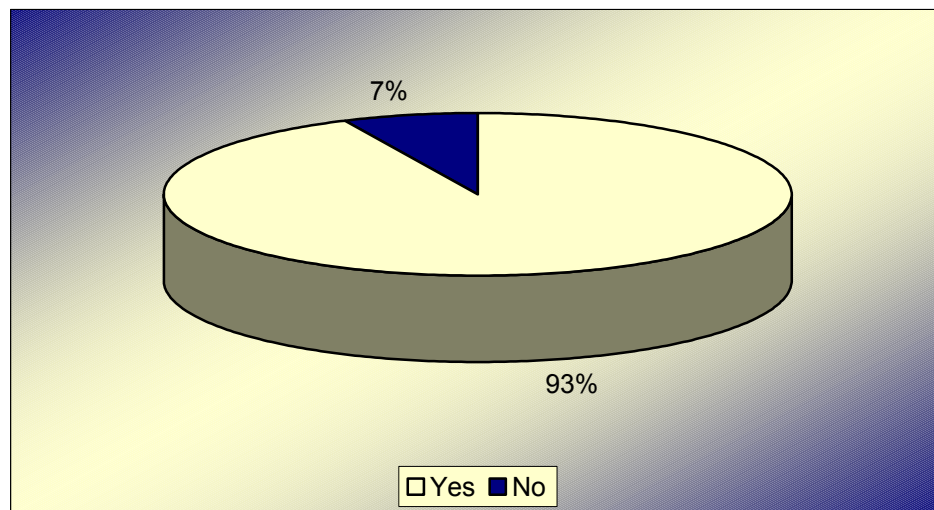
The interviews were later coded by a research assistant using a set of codes the research team created. The codes were a list of impacts meth can have and actions that can be taken to address the problem by a community. The codes included terms such as children, families, education, treatment, crime, law enforcement, health, etc. The coding was done using QSR NVivo Version 7. The data were analyzed to answer the interview questions by noting the most frequently given responses to our interview questions.

Interview Results

Do you think there is a meth problem in this community?

Interviewees overwhelmingly reported they believed there is meth problem in Cheyenne and throughout Laramie County.

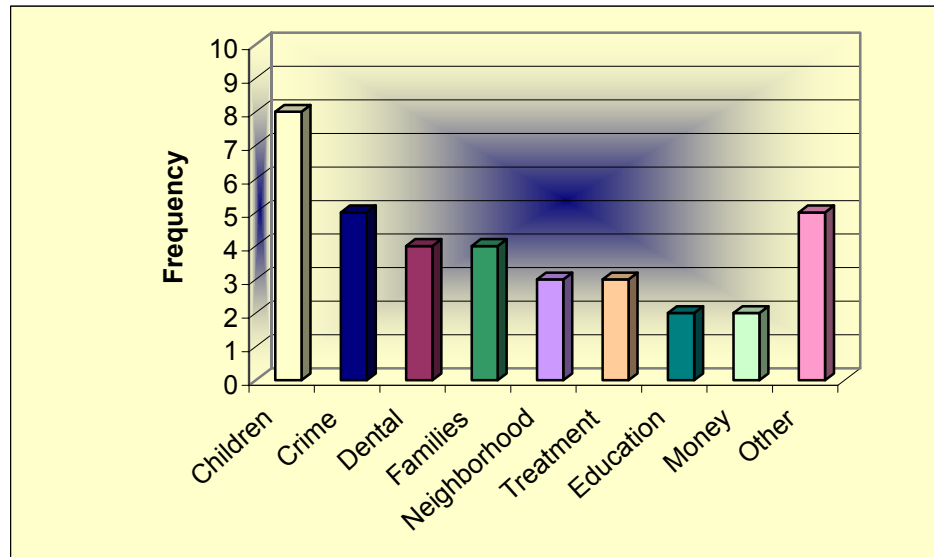
Figure 2. Percent of interviewees reporting they perceive a meth problem in Laramie County.



If yes, how is it visible to you?

Participants who answered yes to this question then described how it is that they believe they know there is meth problem in this community. The following chart lists the most frequently cited responses in descending order.

Figure 3. Perceived Visibility of Methamphetamine in Laramie County



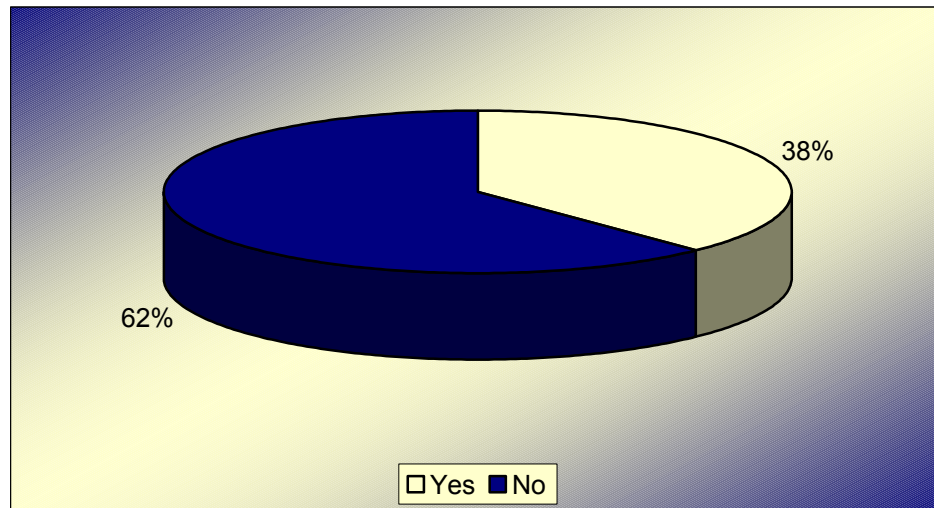
This chart shows our interviewees thought the greatest impact from meth is on children. This result is followed by crime and dental problems.

Other impacts include contamination, health, coalition, and media.

Do you have any data that describes the meth problem?

We asked our interviewees if they had data that described the meth problem within their agency. Most agencies reported they could feel the “pressure of the meth problem.” While many agencies had data, it was difficult to retrieve in most cases, and very few had “meth-specific” data.

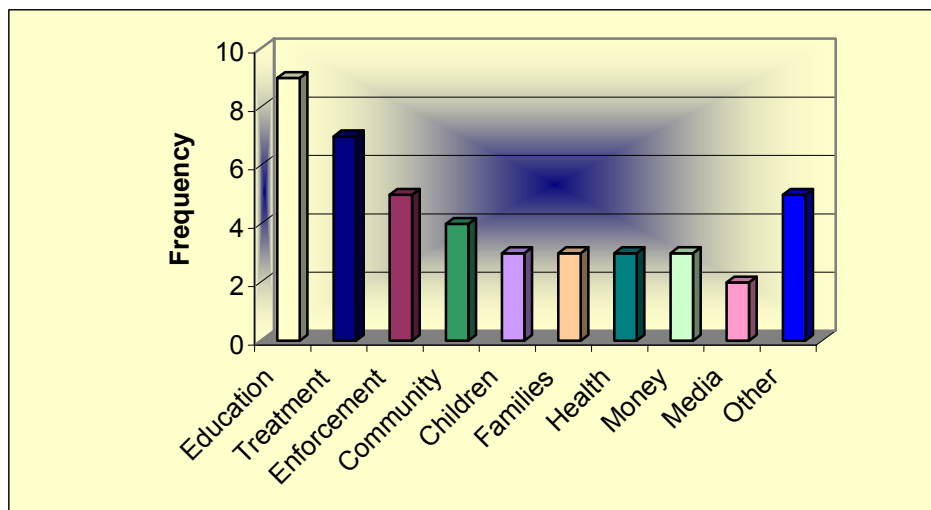
Figure 4. Percent of Interviewees with Data to Describe the Impact of Methamphetamine on their Organization



What do you think should be done about the meth problem?

We asked all of our interviewees what they thought should be done about the meth problem in their community. We got a variety of responses. The most frequently reported responses appear in the bar chart. Responses in the “other” category appear below the chart.

Figure 5. Interviewee Responses about How to Address the Meth Problem



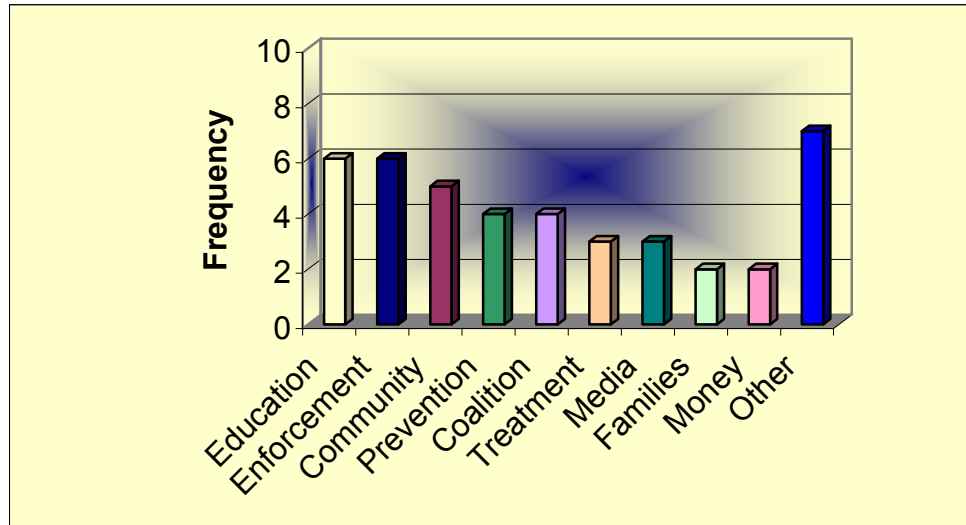
Our respondents cited educating the community about methamphetamine as the most important action that can be taken to address the problem. This was followed by providing more treatment and law enforcement efforts. These suggestions mirror three-pronged strategies that have been successfully employed in other communities (National Crime Prevention Council, 2002).

Responses in the other category included prevention, workplace, environmental clean up, coalition work, and culture change.

What would you like to see included in a community strategy to address the meth problem?

In addition to how respondents thought the meth problem should be addressed, we also asked what they would like to see included in a community strategy.

Figure 6. What Respondents Would Like to See in a Community Strategy



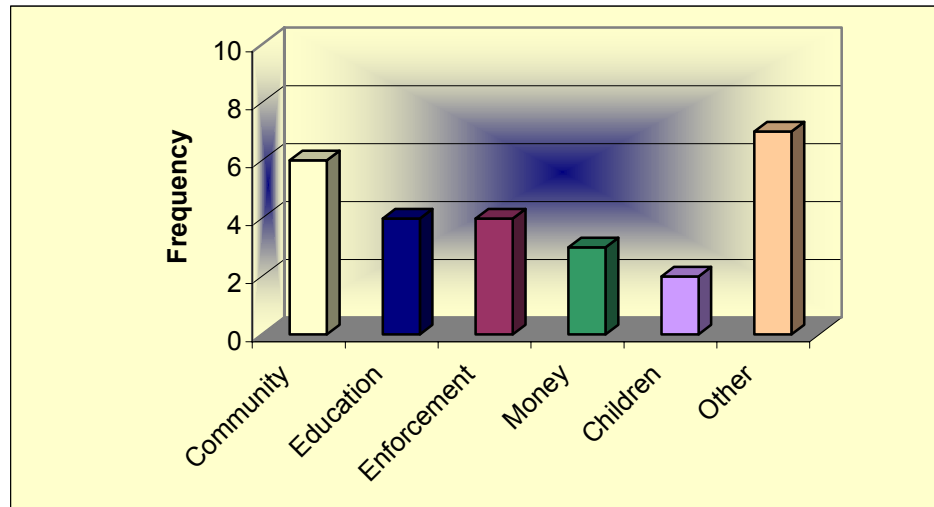
Respondents indicated they would like to see more law enforcement efforts, community action, and community education in a community strategy to combat methamphetamine abuse.

Responses in the other category included children, legislation, workforce, alternative activities for youth, strategies to increase problem recognition, culture change, and health-related strategies.

What are the assets or resources this community has for dealing with the meth problem?

We asked everyone we interviewed what existing resources they thought this community has for dealing with the methamphetamine problem. The goal is to identify resources that may already be available that can help with the problem but may not be widely known.

Figure 7. Existing Community Assets for Dealing with the Meth Problem



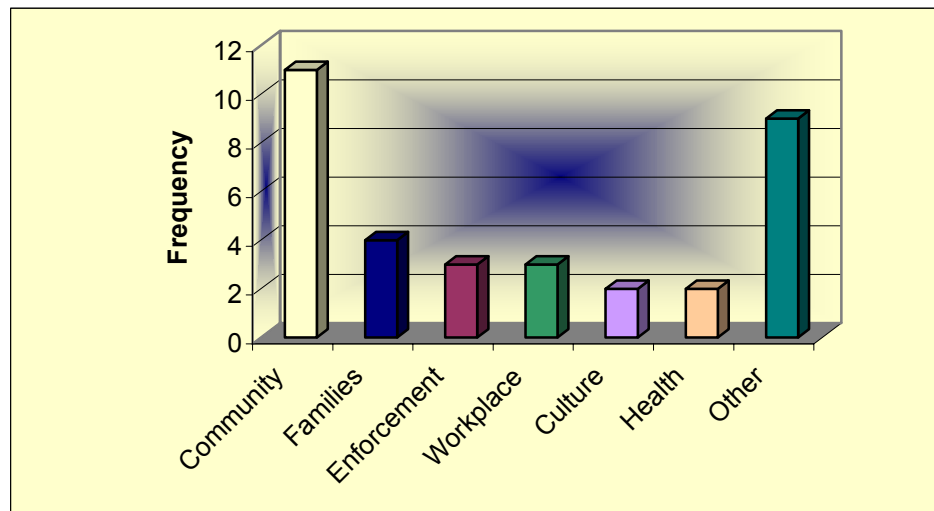
This chart shows that our respondents believe the community is the greatest asset. This was followed by the importance of drug education and law enforcement.

Responses in the other category included the legislature, health providers, prevention efforts, families, and treatment services.

Is there conflict in the community and how can it be resolved?

Finally, we asked all of our respondents to identify any sources of conflict they perceived in the community that might affect the capacity to address the meth problem. In addition, we asked them for suggestions on how they thought these barriers could also be resolved. The bar chart shows the sources of conflict our respondents identified. Answers to the question of how the meth problem could be resolved follow the chart.

Figure 8. Perceived Community Conflict

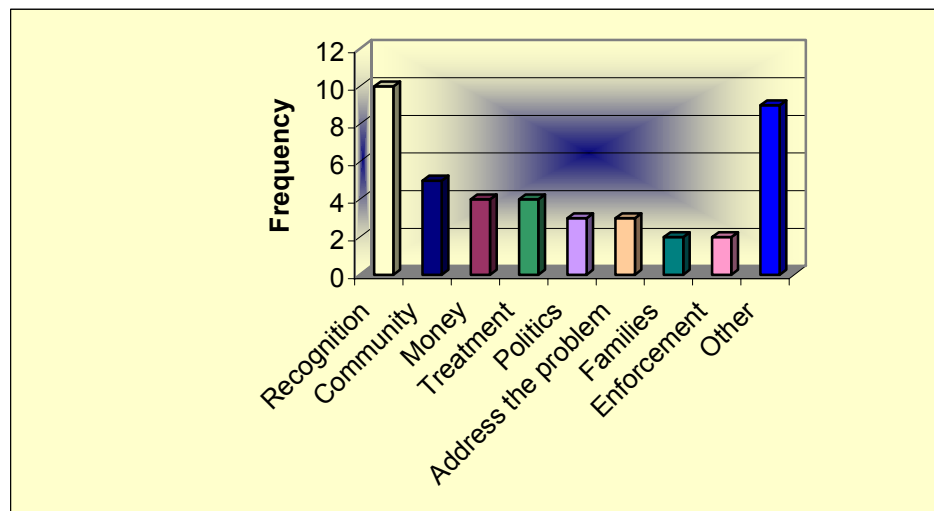


Repeatedly the interviewees cited the community as a way to address the problem and as the primary source of conflict. The community was cited as both the greatest asset and the greatest barrier.

Other responses given included the media's role in the problem, politics, willingness to be part of the solution, multiple coalitions, and providing money for the solution.

Sometimes the first things people say are important, even though they did not say them the most. We tracked this information and reported it in the figure below.

Figure 9. First Response Given by Participants Regarding Community Conflict



Other responses included workforce, health, prevention, education, children, and legislation.

Interviewee Solutions for Dealing with Community Conflict on the Meth Issue

In the words of our interviewees, the following solutions were put forth.

- ⊕ Don't make the meth issue a political battleground. We need serious people to address the issue.
- ⊕ We need guidelines for dealing with the problem because there are liability concerns at every level, especially when it concerns environmental health.
- ⊕ The problem must be brought to people "live" so they recognize that it exists.
- ⊕ We need to show "hope". We need some success stories.
- ⊕ We need people who can be "levers" to get to the tipping point.
- ⊕ Emphasize communication.
- ⊕ Get the business community involved.
- ⊕ Get more of the health provider community involved.
- ⊕ Provide training for the medical profession by having a doctor do the presentation-they won't come otherwise.
- ⊕ People are "afraid" to make the tough decisions.

FOCUS GROUPS

Methods

We conducted five focus groups. They included the following:

- ⊕ Laramie County Fire Districts
- ⊕ Peak Wellness Center – Residential Treatment Clients
- ⊕ Department of Family Service Case Workers
- ⊕ Cheyenne Meth Initiative
- ⊕ Court Appointed Special Advocate Volunteers

Each focus group had approximately seven participants. Focus group participants discussed the same questions as our participants did in the individual interviews. We skipped the second question about data in our focus group meeting with the treatment clients.

The purpose of the focus groups was to engage participants in what typically became dynamic conversations about the impact of methamphetamine on individual lives, community services, and the staff that provide social services.

Do you think there is a meth problem in this community?

Everyone participating in our focus groups agreed there is a meth problem in Cheyenne and Laramie County.

If yes, how is it visible to you?

Local service agencies tended to focus on the impact of meth on their ability to provide services to the large number of individuals seeking services. Treatment clients focused on how meth had impacted their lives and how easy it was to get.

Local agencies cited an increased demand for services in past three years.

Treatment clients discussed the availability of the drug on the streets. They said that even if there is a drug dealer arrest, several others ready to take his or her place. It was their opinion that 1) people usually need to sell meth to support their habit, and 2) people are willing to do “worse and worse things” to get meth.

Social service agencies and volunteer agencies reported:

- ⊕ Meth affects every segment of the population
- ⊕ Demand for services has increased
- ⊕ Elder abuse has increased
- ⊕ An increased number of grandparents are raising their grandchildren
- ⊕ Substantial number of cases are from meth-addicted families

What do you think should be done about the meth problem?

Like our interview respondents, our focus group participants reported the following:

Agency Respondents:

- ⊕ Raise community awareness about the meth problem.
- ⊕ Provide the right level of treatment
- ⊕ Provide more targeted training to agencies that deal with meth users and their families
- ⊕ Provide more family-based treatment with more structure and accountability
- ⊕ Provide more residential treatment for meth clients
- ⊕ Hold landlords accountable for the safety of their property
- ⊕ Provide transportation so clients can get to treatment
- ⊕ Focus extra effort on kids already “in the system”

Treatment Clients Responses:

- ⊕ Keep kids in school
- ⊕ Find better ways to educate them about drugs
- ⊕ Provide more help for kids with problems like ADHD or depression

What would you like to see included in a community strategy to address the meth problem?

When asked what our focus groups participants would like to see go into a community strategy, we received a variety of thoughtful responses. Across all of the focus groups, there was a special emphasis on substance abuse treatment. Our agency respondents noted that treatment assessments are expensive and the results should be available more quickly.

There was consensus among agency participants and treatment clients on the following:

- ⊕ We need more treatment, especially residential
- ⊕ Treatment should have a special focus on job skills and daily living skills
- ⊕ We need better continuing care options following treatment
- ⊕ People liked the billboards and think that they should be brought back.
- ⊕ A data dashboard to educate the community
- ⊕ See more pre-employment drug testing and they believe there should be drug-testing requirements for individuals who care for elders.

Treatment clients also said:

- ⊕ There is a need for better parenting skills
- ⊕ Parents should not try to be their child's "friend".

What are the assets or resources this community has for dealing with the meth problem?

- ⊕ Several participants across all groups said law enforcement is one of our greatest assets.
- ⊕ The community has a good service network
- ⊕ People who are aware of the issue genuinely care about it.
- ⊕ There *is* money to deal with the meth problem.

Is there conflict in the community and how can it be resolved?

- ⊕ There is a lack of enthusiasm to take action

- ⊕ People may “not know what to do about it.”
- ⊕ Lack of working relationships and “turf” issues between organizations
- ⊕ Confidentiality is sometimes used as a way to stop collaboration
- ⊕ Denial of the problem is a substantial barrier to addressing it
- ⊕ People do not realize there is a problem until it hits close to home
- ⊕ It’s difficult to access services without court involvement
- ⊕ There is conflict about who should pay for services when more than one agency is involved

PUBLIC SAFETY

The impacts from methamphetamine abuse in Cheyenne and Laramie County on public safety are evident in drug arrests, violent and property crimes, emergency medical and fire service calls, and drug overdoses.

Findings

Law Enforcement

- ⊕ Municipal, county, and federal law enforcement officials in Laramie County indicated high levels of methamphetamine abuse.
- ⊕ Methamphetamine lab seizures in Laramie County have decreased the past 4 years.
- ⊕ Although the number of clandestine labs seizures has decreased, emergency service responses remain expensive due to costs associated with equipment, decontamination needs, fire danger, explosions, or hazardous materials.
- ⊕ The Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) includes counties in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. Laramie County is one of six Wyoming counties identified as a HIDTA, and methamphetamine is considered the number one threat.
- ⊕ Local law enforcement officials reported Weld and Larimer Counties in Colorado supply most of the methamphetamine to Laramie County.

Figure 9. Laramie County Adult Drug Abuse Violations

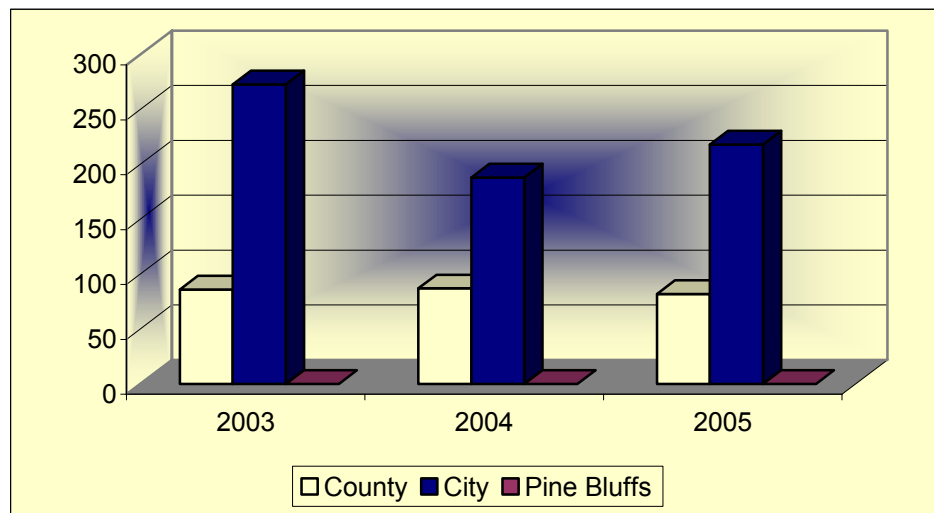


Figure 10. Laramie County Juvenile Drug Abuse Violations

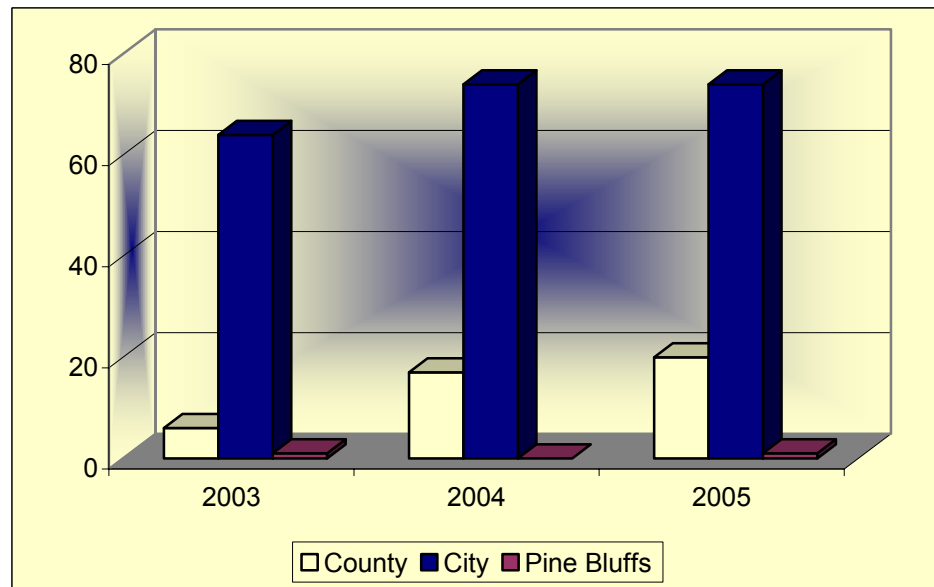


Figure 11. Laramie County Sheriffs Stolen and Recovered Property

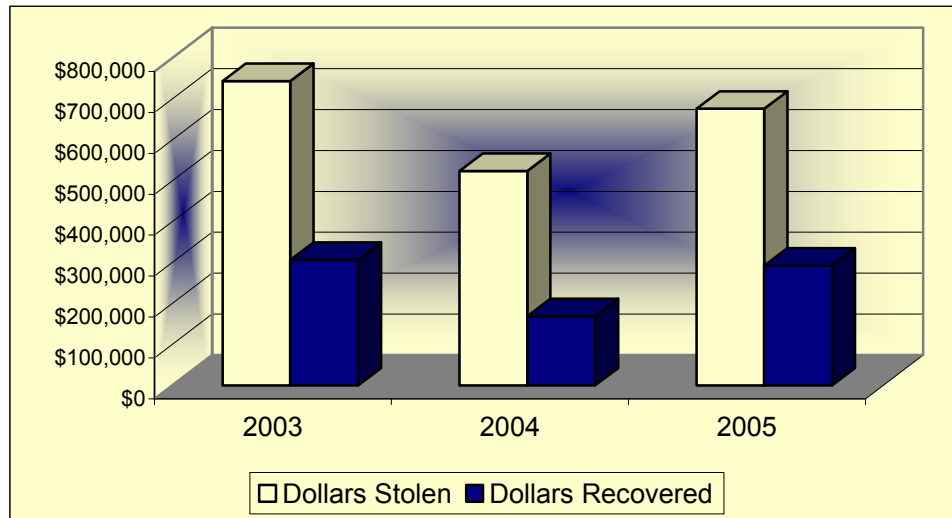


Figure 12. Cheyenne Police Stolen and Recovered Property

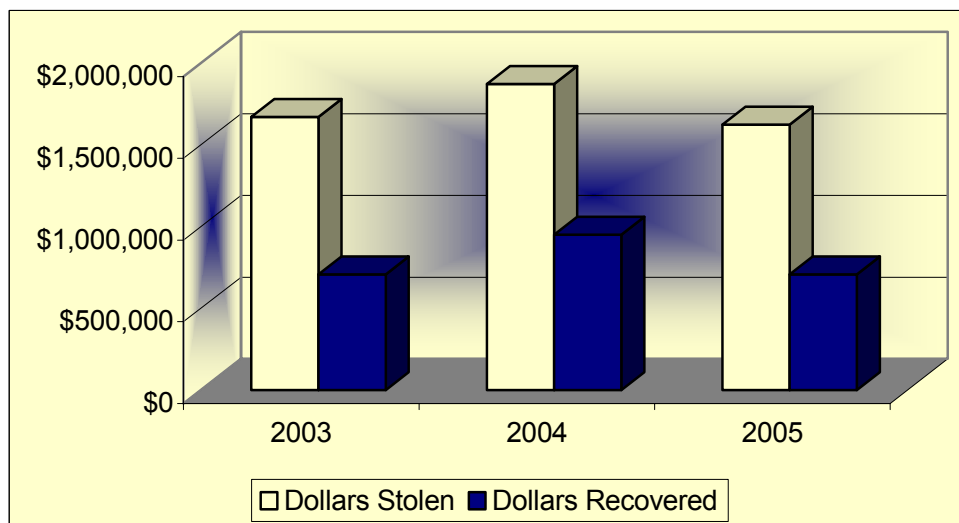


Figure 13. Pine Bluffs Stolen and Recovered Property

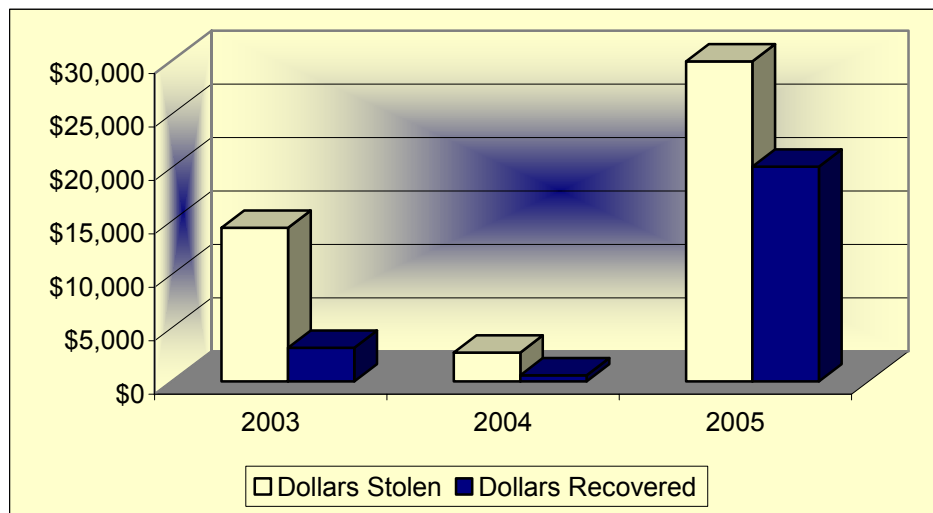


Figure 14. Total Laramie County Stolen and Recovered Property

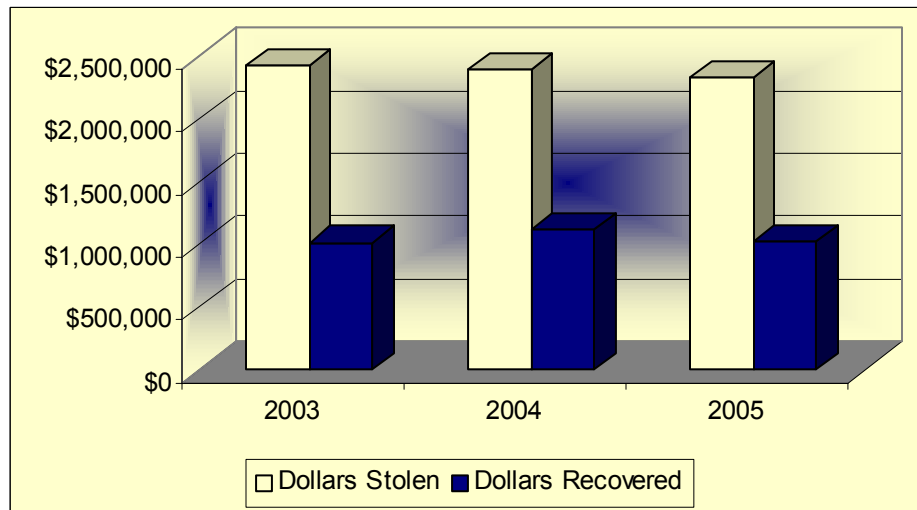
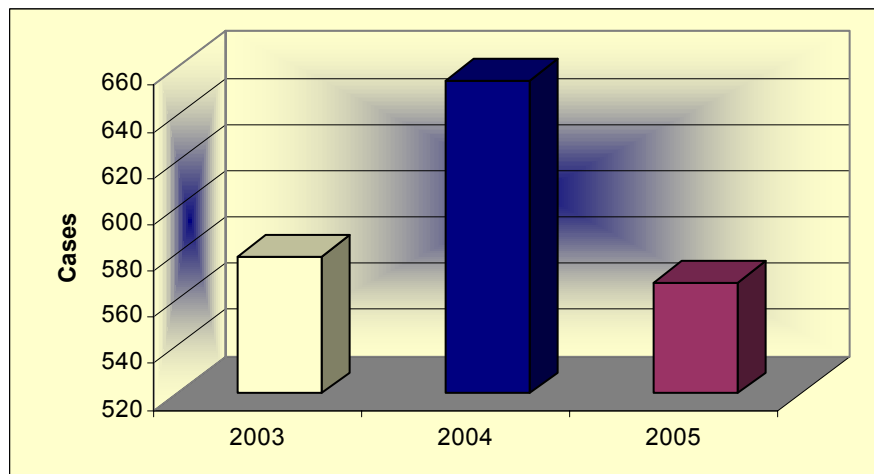


Figure 15. Laramie County Domestic Violence Cases



- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department and the Laramie County Sheriff's Office are implementing improved substance abuse-related crime tracking. Casper Police Department's tracking reveals that:
 - 46% of residential and commercial burglaries are meth-related
 - 54% of embezzlement and fraud are meth-related
 - 70% of auto burglaries are meth-related
- ⊕ The Casper Police Department found that 44% of domestic and family violence cases and 46% of assaults are meth-related
- ⊕ Cheyenne-Laramie County GIS Cooperative generated service call crime maps using data from the Cheyenne Police Department and the Laramie County Sheriff's Office. See Appendix A.

Emergency Medical Services and Fire Service

- ⊕ Approximately 8-9% of emergency calls from 2005-2006 were alcohol or drug-related accidents, overdoses, and other incidents.
- ⊕ The cost for emergency service calls for an overdose averaged \$791 in 2006.
- ⊕ Rural Fire Districts in Laramie County indicated they need updated methamphetamine response training for volunteers.

COURTS

Methamphetamine affects the Laramie County court system through increased drug arrests, and increased methamphetamine-related violent and property crimes. Increases in delinquency, children in need of supervision, and abuse and neglect cases related to methamphetamine have also affected the Juvenile Justice system.

Findings

- ⊕ The District Attorney estimated that 80% of all criminal cases filed in Circuit and District Court involving drug offenses, property and violent crimes involve an underlying drug use issue. He stated, "substance abuse affects the crime rate", and "methamphetamine is at the top of the chart".
- ⊕ The District Attorney stated that the top three substances abused by suspects include methamphetamine, marijuana, and alcohol, and multiple drug use by suspects is common.
- ⊕ The District Attorneys Office does not track cases by type of drug abused.
- ⊕ The Public Defenders Office noted that their caseload has almost doubled in the past two years and they believe 70% of their cases are meth-related.
- ⊕ The Public Defenders Office described meth-using clients as a challenging population to work with due to their high levels of paranoia and distrust of the state.
- ⊕ In 2005, there were 211 Juvenile cases filed in the District Court involving Children in Need of Supervision, neglect, and delinquency.
- ⊕ In 2005, there were 454 felony criminal cases filed in the District Court involving all crime categories.
- ⊕ The District Court does not track cases by the type of drug abused.
- ⊕ Addiction Severity Index (ASI) data from the Wyoming Department of Corrections reveals that 52% of all state felons had substance abuse problems.
- ⊕ 28% of the drug-using felons used methamphetamine.
- ⊕ The United States Attorneys Office for the District of Wyoming identified 21 persons charged in a methamphetamine distribution ring in Laramie County.

CORRECTIONS

The Laramie County Detention Center, Laramie County Adult Community Corrections, and the Wyoming Department of Corrections are all impacted by methamphetamine use in Laramie County.

The Laramie County Jail had over 4,195 prisoners in 2005. The County Jail has a large population of prisoners charged and convicted of misdemeanors, and they can serve up to 12 months in jail. In an average month, the County Jail sees 300 new inmates entering the system for both felony and misdemeanor charges.

The Laramie County Sheriffs Office estimates that most prisoners have substance abuse problems, and approximately 50% are involved with methamphetamine. Prisoners with substance abuse histories often have greater health problems such as infectious diseases and dental care issues, making health care costs a source of concern. Capacity in the Laramie County Drug Court and Adult Community Corrections programs are limited to less than 100 persons per year.

Findings

- ⊕ In 2003 Laramie County completed a new jail with a capacity of 325 adult inmates. Average capacity is 260 inmates.
- ⊕ In 2005 3,339 men and 856 women were incarcerated in the Laramie County Jail.
- ⊕ The Laramie County Jail receives prisoners from the Cheyenne, Burns, and Pine Bluffs Police Departments, the Wyoming Highway Patrol, the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation, and the United States Marshal Service.
- ⊕ The Wyoming Children's Society provides counseling groups to pregnant women and women with children who are inmates at the Laramie County Jail.
- ⊕ The Adult Community Corrections Center provides incarceration for approximately 70 inmates who are on probation or parole. These inmates hold jobs, and receive drug testing and counseling.
- ⊕ The Jeffrey C. Wardle Academy is a privately owned secure detention facility for court-ordered Wyoming juveniles. Com[pass Point Wellness Center provides counseling services at this facility.
- ⊕ The Wyoming Department of Corrections administers the Addicted Offender Accountability Act. This act mandates substance abuse assessments for inmates entering the state corrections system.

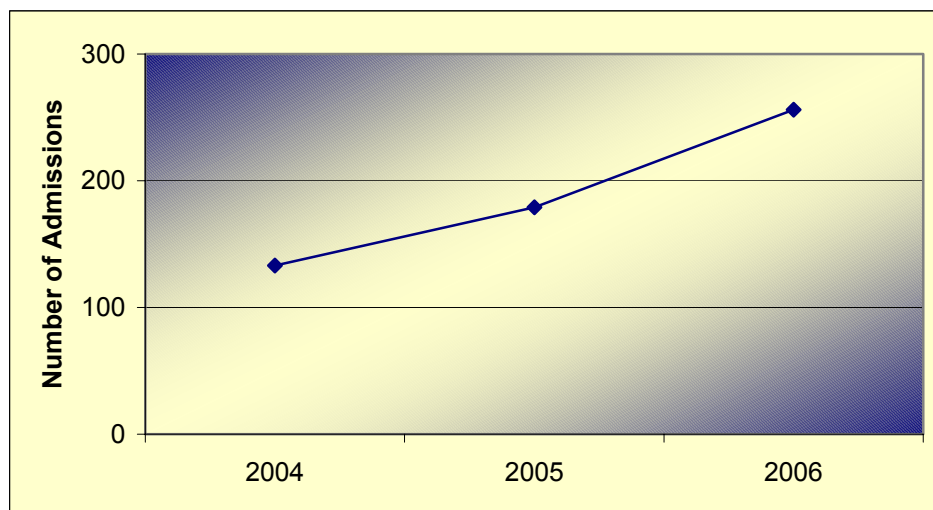
TREATMENT

Lack of accessible, affordable, and local drug treatment for methamphetamine abusers in Laramie County is a serious problem. Access to and availability of residential treatment and intensive outpatient treatment is limited and at capacity.

Findings

- ⊕ Peak Wellness Center reported methamphetamine treatment admissions increased from 133 in 2004 to 256 in 2006 – a 192% increase in three years.

Figure 16. Methamphetamine Treatment Admissions



- ⊕ Methamphetamine clients accounted for 13% of total admissions at Peak Wellness Center in 2005.
- ⊕ Pathfinder reported there has been a steady increase in persons needing methamphetamine treatment over the past three years. During FY 2006 Pathfinder served 83 clients with a primary methamphetamine diagnosis and 22 clients with a secondary methamphetamine diagnosis.
- ⊕ Compass Point Wellness Center provides counseling services to drug court clients and indicated methamphetamine was the drug of choice.
- ⊕ A private Cheyenne psychologist reported 62% of her patients identified methamphetamine as an issue within their family.
- ⊕ The court system drives meth treatment in Laramie County.
- ⊕ Interviewees stated there is disconnect between drug court and treatment.

- ⊕ Peak Wellness Center's list of people waiting to enter treatment averages 30 to 40 persons.
- ⊕ Laramie County has one women's residential treatment center with 8 adult beds and a capacity for housing 4-5 children. The Chrysalis House, run by Peak Wellness Center, is located in Pine Bluffs. At the time we wrote this report, Chrysalis House currently had 12 women on their waiting list. The approximate wait to enter treatment is 1-2 months.
- ⊕ Compass Point reported that they are seeing past methamphetamine use in youth they counsel through the Jeffrey C. Wardell Academy.
- ⊕ Attention Home, Inc. reported the majority of youth receiving services have personal or family substance abuse issues, including methamphetamine.
- ⊕ Treatment demand in Laramie County outstrips capacity and space. Financial resources and new facilities are required to expand the system any further.
- ⊕ Meth is a big problem, but alcohol is bigger.

PREVENTION

Prevention programs can include school-based programs like DARE, and after-school programs run through the Boys and Girls Club. Prevention efforts can involve both adults and juveniles. Programs geared to adults tend to focus on social marketing campaigns and include billboard displays, radio and television ads, brochures, and educational seminars.

Findings

- ⊕ The Substance Abuse Division released the 2006 Laramie County Prevention Needs Assessment in November. The link to the report follows: <http://www.uwyo.edu/wysac/HealthEducation/PNA/docs/2006%20PNA%20Laramie.pdf>.
- ⊕ Laramie County received \$169,920 for prevention activities from the State of Wyoming, Substance Abuse Division.
- ⊕ The Big Brothers-Big Sisters organization plans to expand into Laramie County in 2007 with an estimated capacity for 50 adolescents from age 13 to 18.
- ⊕ Big Brothers-Big Sisters and the Department of Family Services, Division of Juvenile Services are collaborating on "Project Youth" to provide positive adult role models to youth on probation.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Methamphetamine Initiative (CMI) created and distributed Methamphetamine Lab Awareness brochures for motel operators and property owners. In addition, the CMI provided educational programming at local events, conducted community wide trainings, and encouraged local businesses to participate in a drug-testing program sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.
- ⊕ The Methamphetamine Initiative has sponsored public meetings in Cheyenne to discuss methamphetamine problems in the community.

HEALTH

Public health issues impacted by methamphetamine include the spread of infectious diseases such as Hepatitis, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, infants and children exposed to methamphetamine, pregnant women using methamphetamine, chemical exposure from drug labs, and dental and other related health problems.

Findings

Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- ⊕ Intravenous drug use, blood transfusions prior to 1992, and sexual contact with someone who has Hepatitis C are factors that can contribute to the spread of Hepatitis C. Similarly, high rates of STDs are found among drug users.
- ⊕ City-County Health reported there are 116 Hepatitis C cases and 390 STD cases in Laramie County.
- ⊕ The Internal Medicine Group, Cheyenne Health and Wellness, City-County Health and Peak Wellness Center began a monthly Hepatitis C Support Group in September 2006.

Pregnant Women's Health

- ⊕ Multiple agencies expressed concern over the increase in methamphetamine use among mothers and pregnant women.
- ⊕ The Wyoming Department of Family Services reported eight infants born in Laramie County during July 2006 tested positive for methamphetamine.

Dental Health

- ⊕ The American Dental Association states chronic methamphetamine use creates a dry-mouth condition that is aggravated by poor nutrition and dental care, and consumption of high-sugar soft drinks resulting in broken and decayed teeth known as "Meth mouth".
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Regional Medical Center-Emergency Room Department stated that they see approximately 4 to 5 emergency dental cases per day in young adults that they believe are methamphetamine-related.
- ⊕ Cheyenne Health and Wellness Clinic had a \$25,000 emergency dental budget when the clinic opened in 2005. The clinic referred more than 94

patients for emergency tooth extraction, infections, and other problems. The majority of patients were young adults between 18 and 24 years old.

- ⊕ Based on the waiting list for dental services, the emergency dental program needs \$50,000 annually to continue.
- ⊕ A dentist sees 15-20 inmates monthly at the Laramie County Detention Center for serious methamphetamine-related dental issues requiring extraction and expensive reconstruction work.
- ⊕ Local dentists do not receive meth awareness training.

Other Health Findings

- ⊕ Increased need and demand for psychotropic medications for meth-using inmates has negatively affected the jail medication budget.
- ⊕ Inmates in the corrections center are requiring greater medical care due to the impact of meth on their health, i.e., brittle bones, mental health issues, and again dental problems and infectious diseases

COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Substance abuse can lead to neighborhood deterioration through criminal activity. Substance abuse indicators in the neighborhood include high rental and occupancy turnover, abandoned buildings and vehicles, weeds, trash, and deteriorating residences. The “broken windows” theory advocates that eliminating graffiti, trash, abandoned vehicles, weeds, and substandard housing can be an important factor in enhancing quality of life and reducing crime. Code and nuisance enforcement calls in specific neighborhoods can indicate crime-related issues including substance abuse. Neighborhood connectivity is a significant protective factor for lowering the risk for future substance abuse in children.

Findings

- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department has one nuisance enforcement officer to respond to complaints.
- ⊕ Citizens can file nuisance complaints by telephone calls and letters. However, the Officer has flexibility to initiate nuisance enforcement without a citizen complaint.
- ⊕ There were 1247 code enforcement complaints during 2005, and 2,074 complaints during 2006. Code enforcement complaints address weeds, trash and abandoned vehicle concerns.
- ⊕ Existing city nuisance ordinances do not deal effectively with non-owner occupied housing violations, particularly out of state property owners.
- ⊕ The City of Cheyenne is considering changes to its nuisance ordinances to strengthen nuisance complaint enforcement.
- ⊕ Graffiti is a concern for Cheyenne Police Citizens Advisory Board members.
- ⊕ The City of Cheyenne Streets Department has a graffiti removal program, however, there is no graffiti or nuisance hotline or Internet based nuisance complaint system in place.
- ⊕ A community virtual tour highlighted the graffiti problems in all three Cheyenne city council wards.
- ⊕ Cheyenne Police identified a Colorado street gang that established itself in the Cole Square Neighborhood in early 2006. The gang sold illegal drugs, and “tagged” the neighborhood with graffiti to establish its presence until it was disrupted. Graffiti remains today.

- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department and Urban Planning have initiated crime prevention through an environmental design (CPTED) concept when reviewing new residential and commercial developments. A key goal is to avoid cluster developments that can result in increased calls for police and other public services and create negative impacts in existing neighborhoods.
- ⊕ Review of Cheyenne Police service calls indicated an increase in calls from areas where there are clustered high-density housing units such as the Sun Valley area.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department underwent a Community Oriented Police review in 2004 through the Washington State University, Western Regional Institute for Community Oriented Policing. The department is in the process of implementing recommendations from the review.
- ⊕ Community Oriented Policing encourages police to participate in neighborhood problem solving on crime issues, neighborhood vitality and stability, nuisance control, and related areas.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Housing Authority stated that approximately 90% of its tenants are single mothers with children. Approximately 1,500 families reside in CHA units.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Housing Authority rental wait list is 3-9 months depending on family size.
- ⊕ Approximately 1,100 families in Housing Authority program receive Section 8 vouchers for housing through private property owners.
- ⊕ Cheyenne Housing Authority rules prohibit tenant drug use. In the past year there were four drug related incidents resulting in tenant eviction.
- ⊕ The Housing Authority would like additional resources to conduct background checks on prospective tenants.
- ⊕ One property owner advertised that he drug tests potential tenants. He reported that drug testing has resulted in better quality renters, reduced property damage, and related incidents. Two more property owners have requested information on implementing a drug-screening program for potential renters.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Methamphetamine Initiative has sponsored clandestine lab recognition trainings for local realtors and property management companies.
- ⊕ Department of Family Services Child Protective Services workers expressed concern over substandard rental housing conditions for families with children.

WORK FORCE

The workplace impact from methamphetamine is insidious. Along with other substance abuse, it can lead to absenteeism, high turnover, productivity loss, and theft. National estimates of lost productivity due to substance abuse total \$128.6 billion annually (Lewin Group, 2004).

There are few studies regarding methamphetamines impact on businesses. A recent study stated that 1.7% of the workforce in a rural state used methamphetamine, with an estimated cost of \$20 million per year in lost productivity and related costs including turnover, theft, absenteeism, and workers compensation costs.¹

The cost to employers in terms of lost productivity, workers compensation costs and turnover is a "hidden cost" associated with substance abuse. Efforts to diversify and improve the Laramie County economy through new business development and business expansion requires an educated, well trained, and diverse workforce. Methamphetamine and other substance abuse cripple our ability to attract and expand business opportunities because of their negative impact on the workforce.

Private businesses are key players in the effort to prevent and reduce substance abuse in the community. It is critical that we outreach to and work with these businesses to identify key strategies they can implement to reduce drug use while continuing to grow their business.

Findings

- ⊕ Local employment agencies indicated that methamphetamine abuse is an issue in the light industrial workforce.
- ⊕ Based on pre-employment drug screening, employment agencies estimate that 1/3 of applicants use illegal drugs.
- ⊕ Employment agencies stated that methamphetamine was a significant problem in the community and for job applicants.
- ⊕ One drug screening company stated that 30% of pre-employment drug screens test positive for illegal drugs, primarily methamphetamine, marijuana, and cocaine (in order of severity).
- ⊕ One employer who conducts pre-employment and random drug testing indicated 16% of the random tests were positive for illegal drugs.

¹ The Economic Impact of Methamphetamine in Benton County Arkansas, University of Arkansas, December 2004.

- ⊕ F.E. Warren Air Force base active duty personnel participate in a rigid, random drug-testing program and unit drug sweeps covering 65% of total base population.
- ⊕ The Air Force never had a positive drug test result on the 94 civilians who work on the base.
- ⊕ On July 1, 2006, the Wyoming Department of Employment initiated a program offering employers a 5% discount on workers compensation rates if they implement a state approved drug-testing program.
- ⊕ Larger area employers expressed concern about the shortage of employees in general, and the shortage of drug-free employees in particular.
- ⊕ Some small business owners expressed concern about drug testing costs and suggested that job applicants not wanting to be drug screened would target small and medium size businesses.
- ⊕ Small business owners would like training on how to recognize drug use in employees.
- ⊕ Small business employers spoke about theft and embezzlement by employees who were using methamphetamine.
- ⊕ Other small and medium size business owners felt that even if they had an employee with a drug problem, there was a lack of affordable treatment and employee assistance programs locally.
- ⊕ In October 2006, the Greater Cheyenne Area Chamber of Commerce released a survey showing 46% of those surveyed identified employment issues, including worker shortage, lack of qualified staff, and healthcare costs, as the biggest challenge facing their small business.
- ⊕ Our Families Our Future, which assists single mothers with job training, placement, and career development, indicated methamphetamine use in prior relationships is a significant factor to overcome in career and job placement.
- ⊕ A former chronic Laramie County methamphetamine user reported he always worked over the past 20 years while using methamphetamine, but changed jobs often and was using both on and off the job.

*p.20. Economic Analysis Report-Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division.

EDUCATION

The public education system has a critical role when it comes to prevention as well as treatment of youth substance abuse. Indicators of youth substance abuse can include youth survey results, juvenile caseload, youth on probation, school nurse and teacher observations, youth truancy and dropout rates.

Findings

- ⊕ A survey of Laramie County School District 1 nurses indicated they see drug and alcohol use among students and their parents.
- ⊕ The Mayor's Office survey of students in Laramie County School District 1 indicated many youth "knew someone" who was using methamphetamine but deny using methamphetamine themselves.
- ⊕ Approximately 65% of the DFS Juvenile Services caseload in Laramie County involves students attending East High School and Johnson Junior High School.
- ⊕ The Department of Family Services and Johnson Junior High School are offering the All Stars Program to the entire 7th grade class of over 360 students in the 2006-2007 school year.
- ⊕ A committee from Laramie County School District 1, Department of Family Services, and Peak Wellness Center are reviewing and updating the existing school district substance abuse policy.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department has seven School Resource Officers located in Central High School, East High School, Triumph High School, Carey Junior High School, Johnson Junior High School, and McCormick Junior High School.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department and the Laramie County Sheriffs Office provide Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) to sixth graders in Laramie School District 1 and School District 2.
- ⊕ The community and School District 1 personnel have differing perceptions about the extent of the youth methamphetamine problem.
- ⊕ The Boys and Girls Club would like to expand their before and after school program into the schools to reduce transportation costs, increase program efficiency, and strengthen program impact.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Laramie County has a multitude of human and social service providers who have all felt the impact from methamphetamine use. In general, the numbers of persons requesting services has steadily increased in the past three years, and more clients reported meth-related problems.

Findings

- ⊕ Safe House, a domestic violence shelter, provided services to 1,331 clients in FY 2002 and 2,297 clients in FY 2006 representing a 173% increase in shelter use since 2002.
- ⊕ The Comea Shelter reported 95% of their clients have alcohol or drug problems.
- ⊕ The Court Appointed Special Advocates indicated 69% of their cases are methamphetamine related, all are alcohol related, and 90% of the children are less than 12 years old.

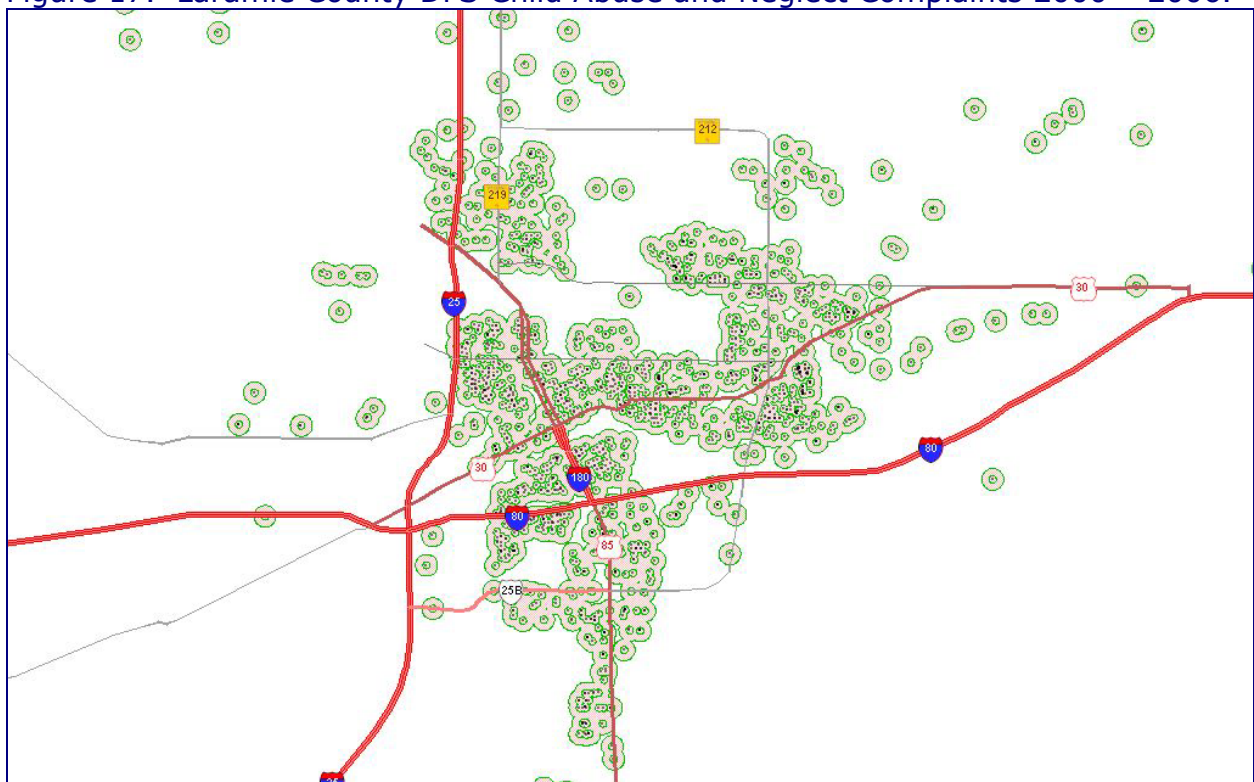
FAMILIES AND YOUTH

Methamphetamine abuse has a devastating impact on families in Cheyenne and Laramie County. Increasing numbers of children are born addicted to methamphetamine, removed from their families due to abuse and neglect, and raised by their grandparents.

Findings

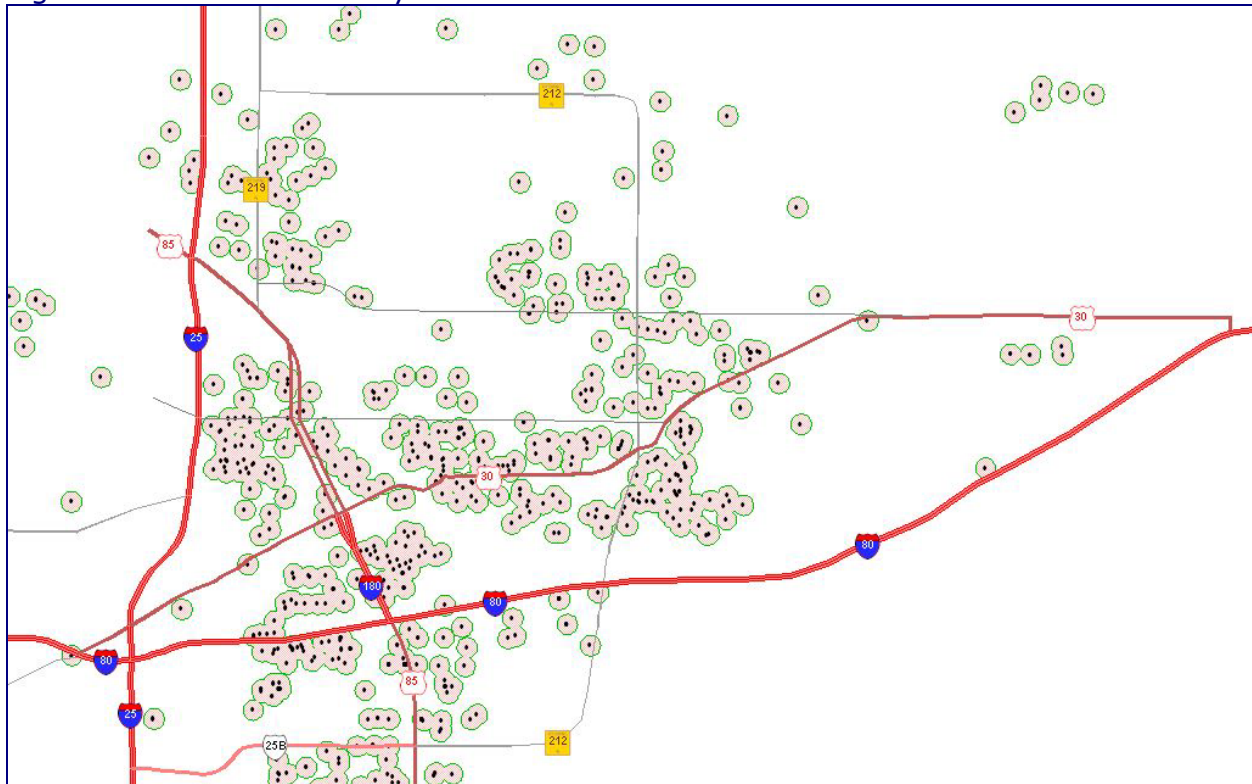
- ✦ The Department of Family Services reported eight infants were born testing positive for methamphetamine during July 2006 in Laramie County.
- ✦ DFS placed 150 children from Laramie County in foster care between January and October 2006, and 84% were from drug and alcohol affected families.
- ✦ Sixty-one percent (78) of the children placed in foster care came from methamphetamine-affected families.
- ✦ DFS reported 81% (22 of 27) of children adopted in Laramie County in 2006 came from methamphetamine-impacted families.

Figure 17. Laramie County DFS Child Abuse and Neglect Complaints 2000 – 2006.



- ⊕ There are approximately 1,500 Wyoming grandparents raising grandchildren due to meth-abusing parents.
- ⊕ According to the Department of Family Services, substance abuse is a serious factor with approximately 65% to 70% of the juveniles on probation in Laramie County.
- ⊕ Drugs of abuse seen in youth on probation include methamphetamine, marijuana and alcohol.
- ⊕ Review of 69 drug test results from intensive probation supervision of youth offenders in Laramie County revealed 14 positive drug tests with 11 of the tests positive for methamphetamine, 2 for marijuana and 1 for alcohol.
- ⊕ In contrast, 29 drug screens from regular probation youth offenders in Laramie County for the same month revealed four positive tests for marijuana.
- ⊕ The majority of the juvenile probation cases in Laramie County are located throughout the Cheyenne area and unincorporated Laramie County near Cheyenne. However, there are clusters of youth on probation cases in the east and central areas of the city.
- ⊕ Juveniles on probation in placement consisting of Boys School, Girls School, Detention, Foster Care, Jail, etc averaged between 138 and 158 per month between 04-01-2006 through 09-30-2006.

Figure 18. Laramie County DFS Juvenile Probation Cases 2000-2006



- ⊕ Community Action of Laramie County-Headstart Program has 320 children enrolled for the current school year.
- ⊕ Stride provides services from infancy to age five in Laramie County with a current caseload of 400 children.
- ⊕ Big Brothers-Big Sisters will expand operations with a Laramie County office in 2007 with a capacity for 50 youth. It will be coordinated with the D.A.R.E. program.
- ⊕ Our Families Our Future reported that single mothers with children face affordable housing, day care, and support issues when entering the workforce from job training efforts in Laramie County.

PUBLIC OPINION

Table 3. Participant Characteristics

	Internet	Paper
Number	463	84
Male	108	46
Female	355	38
Average Age	38	36

Figure 19. Where do you live – Internet?

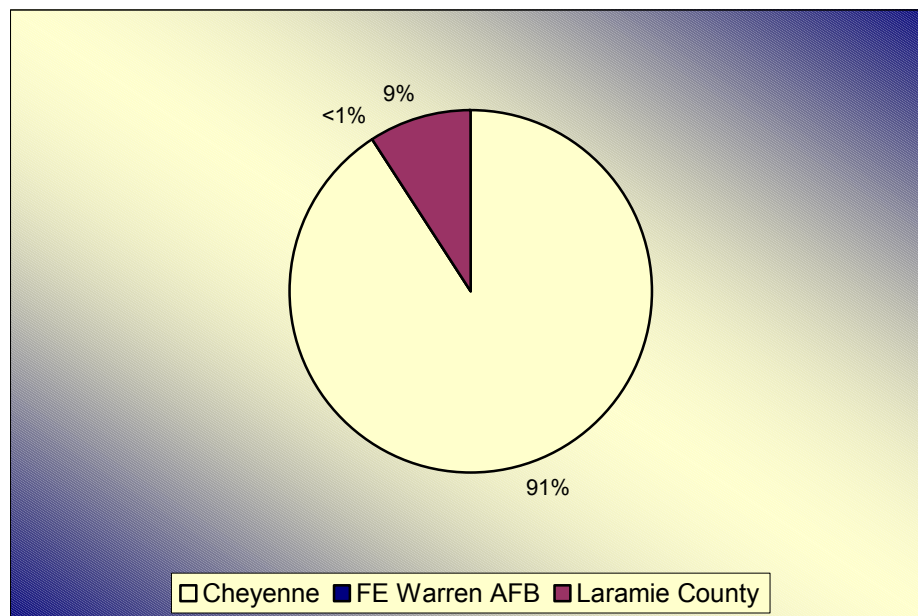


Figure 20. Where do you live – Paper?

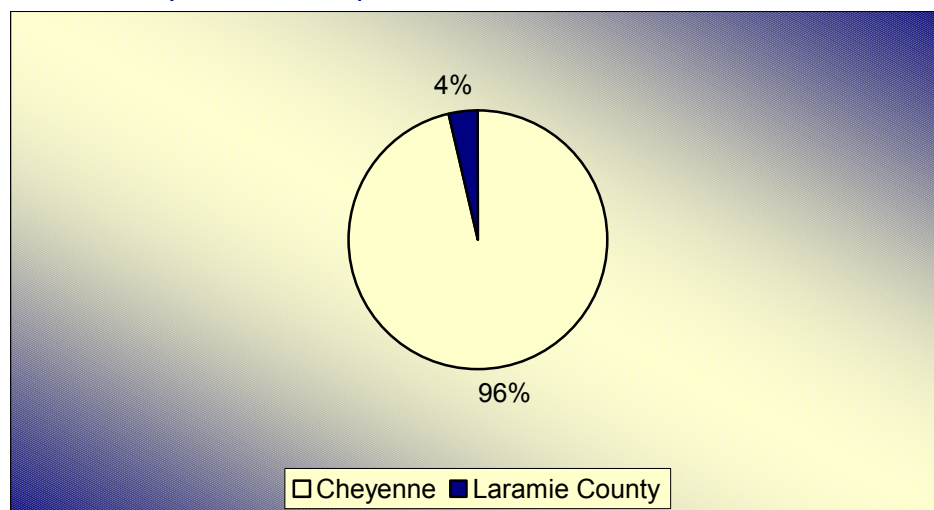


Figure 21. Ever known a meth user – Internet?

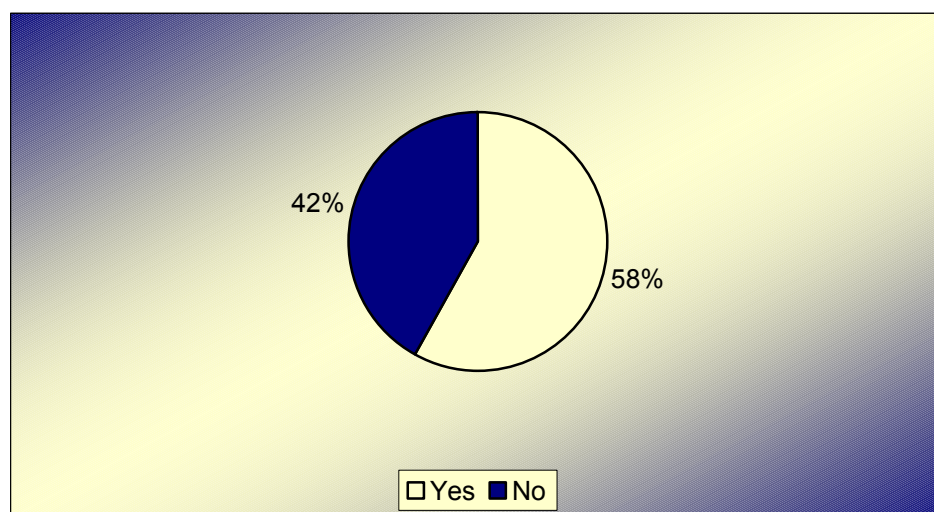


Figure 22. Ever known a meth user – Paper?

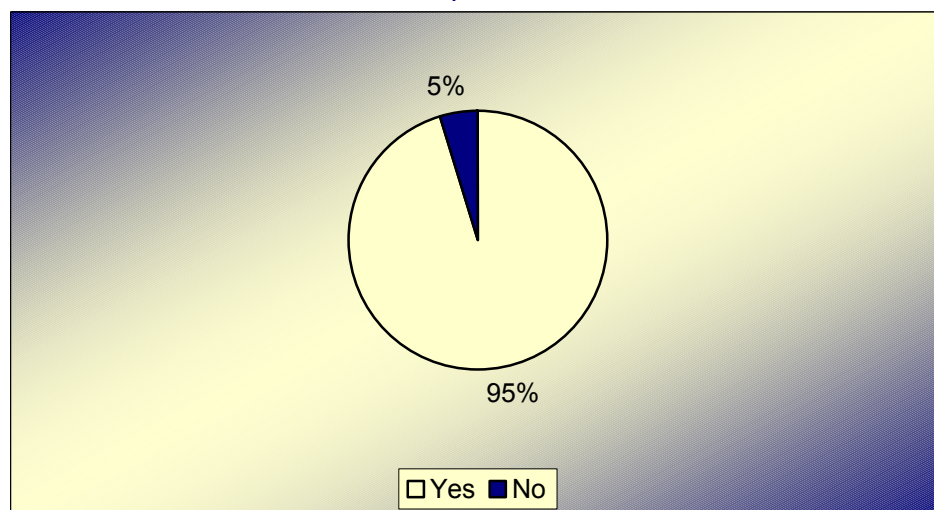


Table 4. How many use?

	Internet	Paper
Average %	25	39
SD	19	26

Figure 23. Who is using – Internet?

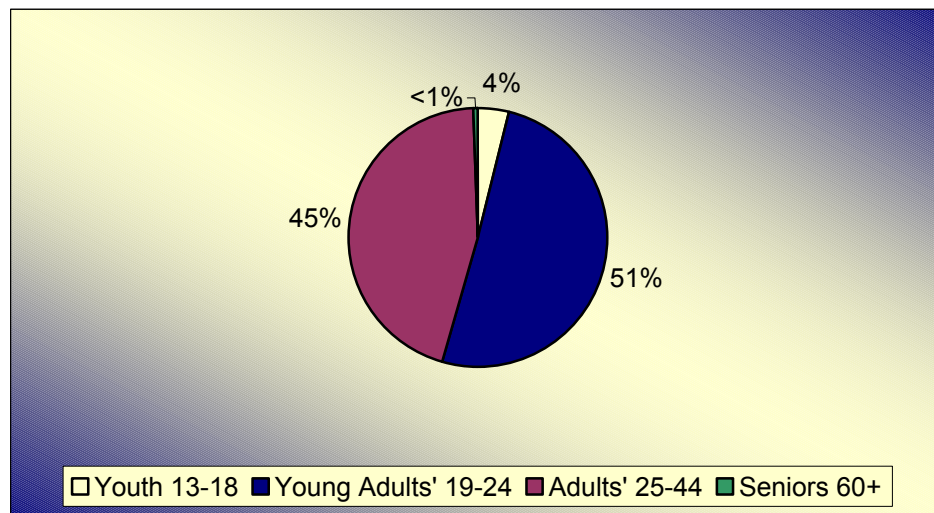


Figure 24. Who is using – Paper?

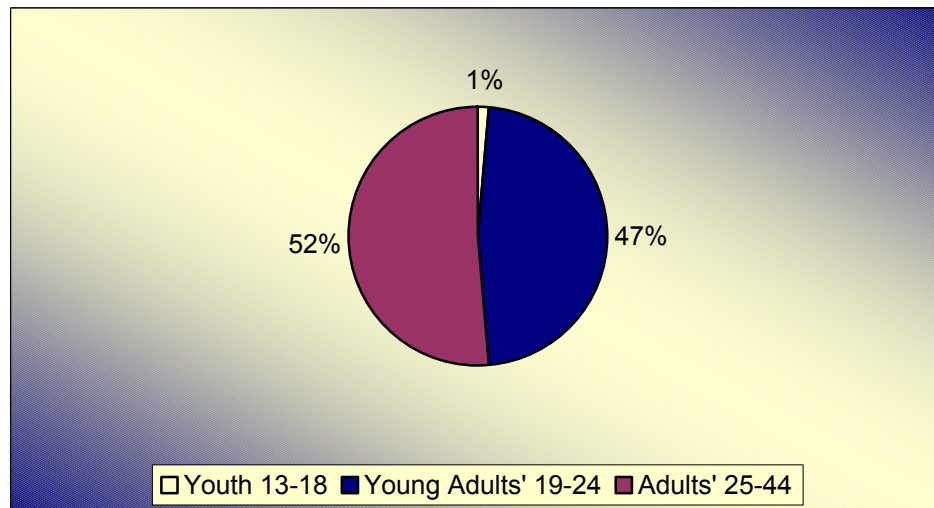


Table 5. Why do people use?

Top Internet Responses	Top Paper Responses
Easy access	Easy access
Low cost	Boredom
Presence of meth labs	Desire for increased stamina
Peer pressure	Peer pressure
Boredom	Lack of recreation and opportunities

Table 6. How do people harm themselves?

Top Internet Responses	Top Paper Responses
Physical health	Family relationships
Home life or marriage	Home life or marriage
Family relationships	Physical health
Mental/Emotional health	Financial situation
	Mental/Emotional health

Figure 25. How much does meth impact the following?

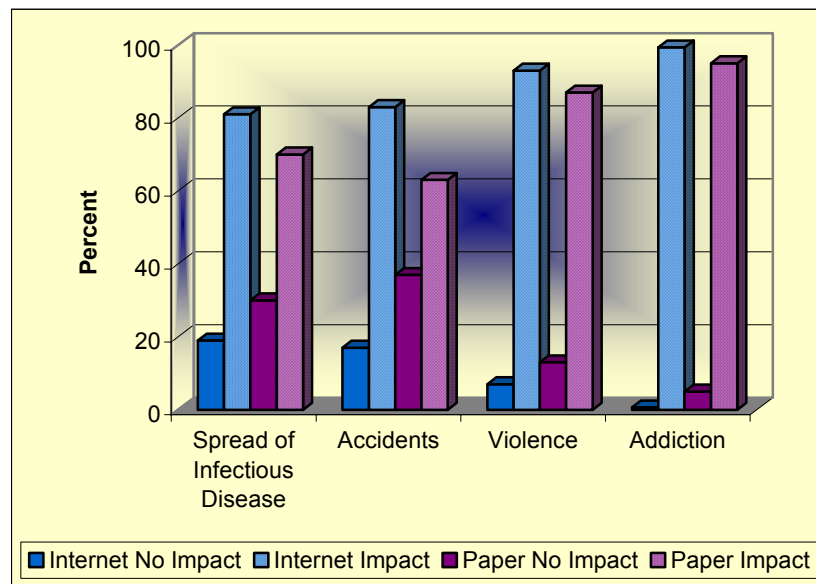


Figure 26. How should resources be allocated – Internet?

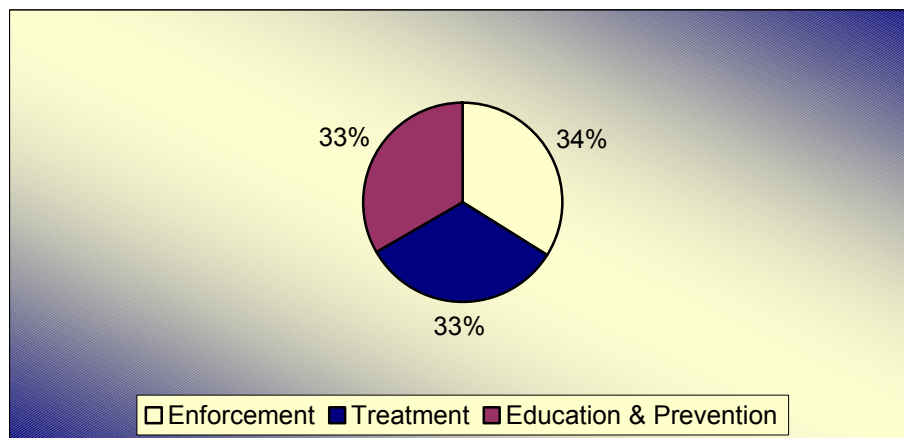


Figure 27. How should resources be allocated – Paper?

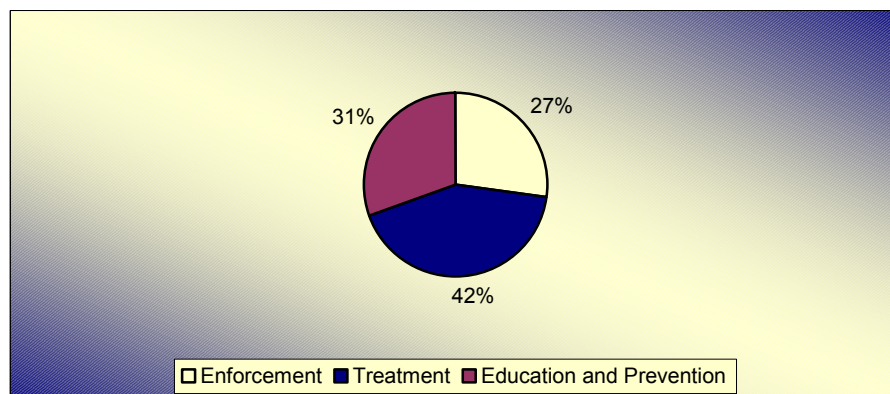


Table 7. What can be done?

Top Internet Responses	Top Paper Responses
Youth activities	More local drug treatment
Family activities	Family activities
Family support activities	Community prevention programs
School-based activities	Youth activities
Social support activities	Awareness campaigns
	Career-training programs
	Alternative sentencing

DATA AND COMMUNICATION

Accurate and accessible data is critical for measuring the extent of community issues such as methamphetamine abuse. It provides the foundation for identifying baseline levels, and gauging progress on initiatives designed to impact those levels.

Findings

- ⊕ There is a lack of data regarding methamphetamine abuse in the community.
- ⊕ Data is not easily accessible and often involves manual case reviews.
- ⊕ Methamphetamine data gathering is not coordinated.
- ⊕ The Cheyenne Police Department and Laramie County Sheriffs Office are improving substance related crime tracking.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY

A community strategy provides a comprehensive focus in which the community decides where to go and how to get there. It provides the various government agencies, non-profit organizations and the businesses with a game plan that is coordinated, takes into account local needs, funding, and political will. There are ongoing strategy efforts in the community that could be integrated with a community strategy for methamphetamine.

Findings

- ⊕ United Way for Laramie County is in the process of completing a broad-based community assessment model.
- ⊕ The Laramie County Community Project (LCCP) has been an effort by the United Way and other community organizations to develop a long-term community strategy.
- ⊕ While not methamphetamine specific, both of these efforts have identified substance abuse as a significant community issue.
- ⊕ The Wyoming Children's Action Alliance, Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming, and the Department of Family Services created the Wyoming Children's Agenda 2007 to address the need for legislative action regarding methamphetamine, domestic violence, school programs, Internet safety, methamphetamine child endangerment, daycare, and other related areas.
- ⊕ Policy Recommendations from the Wyoming Children's Agenda 2007 support methamphetamine awareness and education programs for all ages, child abuse prevention programs, increased drug treatment, increased funding for environmental quality inspections and safety awareness issues concerning methamphetamine lab sites and methamphetamine-exposed homes.
- ⊕ The City of Cheyenne and Laramie County adopted Plan Cheyenne blueprint for community development, including neighborhood stabilization, in 2006.

CONCLUSIONS

The system is gridlocked

Resources are tapped out

- ⊕ Treatment is operating at capacity
- ⊕ Workforce is negatively impacted by methamphetamine
- ⊕ Courts and corrections are flooded with meth cases
- ⊕ Social service programs report dramatic case increases due to meth

Community Perception is Polarized

- ⊕ Meth affects many areas of the community, and even though everyone is trying their best, the effort has not been coordinated. This is evidenced by the fact that multiple groups are currently addressing this issue in isolation.
- ⊕ The interviews showed that respondents thought the community was the greatest resource, a solution to the problem, and the greatest source of conflict.

"There are system disconnects and barriers to sharing information about the same clients among the various agencies."

"There seems to be a level of community denial in Laramie County about the drug issues."

"Hard to get people involved and interested in dealing with problems in the city."

"There is also denial that the problems go throughout the community, not just one part of town or social-economic group in Laramie County."

"Believe the community is responsive once they are educated about what the problem is. Have to make people "want" to help - not tell them what to do or that they have to do something."

Data Infrastructure is Lacking

- ⊕ There is no shortage of data. It is not easily accessed and most of it is not meth specific.

- ⊕ Agencies at all levels were unable to provide data. And many that did provide data had to manually tabulate basic descriptive information such as the number of persons served.

The Problem Shows Up Early

- ⊕ There are a substantial number of youth with problems that are well-established predictors of future substance use. This includes, but is not limited, to individual factors such as reading deficiencies, behavior dysregulation, ADHD, and depression. Other predictors include parental substance abuse, neighborhood stability, and community attitudes.

RECOMENDATIONS

Public Safety

Public safety agencies, law enforcement fire and emergency medical services encounter substance abuse related crime, and emergencies. Often these same agencies are viewed as a resource for the community in resolving problems.

Improved public safety data, mapping of data and increased coordination of efforts and greater involvement in neighborhoods is important in any community anti-drug effort.

The federal Weed and Seed program has implemented over 300 Weed and Seed Programs throughout the United States. The critical components of a Weed and Seed strategy involves: law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in "weeding out" violent criminals and drug abusers, public agencies and community-based private organizations collaborate to "seed" much-needed human services, including prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration programs. A community-oriented policing component bridges the weeding and seeding elements²

Casper, Wyoming is in the process of implementing a Weed and Seed program after a community assessment in 2005, creation of a community strategy in 2006 and the creation of community police teams. Among the elements being implemented are: neighborhood cleanup, increased code and nuisance enforcement, landlord accountability, increased use of crime data mapping to identify crime hot spots, improved coordination among city agencies, business involvement and neighborhood prevention and treatment initiatives.

- ⊕ Implement community policing citywide in Cheyenne.
- ⊕ Maximize use of geo-mapping to understand crime patterns.
- ⊕ Improve data tracking of substance abuse related crimes.

Courts

- ⊕ Expand the drug court program.
- ⊕ Improve data tracking of substance abuse cases at the District Attorneys Office and Public Defenders Office.

² United States Department of Justice, Community Capacity Development Office, Weed and Seed Data Center, www.weedandseedinfo.org

- ⊕ Improve data tracking of substance abuse in cases at the Municipal, Circuit, and District Courts.

Corrections

Funding early intervention, treatment and outreach programs that are jail based may provide a means of reducing the impact on the community of substance abuse related activity. Providing programs in this setting is an opportunity to “break the cycle” and intervene with this population in a controlled environment.

- ⊕ Implement an early intervention program at the Laramie County Detention Center with a focus on substance abuse and mental health issues.
- ⊕ Correctional facilities provide a captive audience for providing services. This provides an opportunity to treat the substantial number of inmates who have substance abuse problems.

Treatment

- ⊕ Expand local treatment options including intensive outpatient, residential services for men, women, and women with children, and insist on family-based treatment.
- ⊕ Evidence-based practices such as contingency management are widely successful with methamphetamine users and should be combined with the MATRIX intensive outpatient program.
- ⊕ Standardize treatment outcome monitoring and make it a priority
- ⊕ Addressing the treatment gap involves building physical capacity.

Prevention

- ⊕ Expand pre-school prevention programs.
- ⊕ Create an enhanced partnership between the Boys and Girls Club and Laramie County School Districts to expand before and after school programs.
- ⊕ Evaluate the Department of Family Service and School District 1 after school efforts at Johnson Junior High School that will begin in 2007.
- ⊕ Implement programs that will address early problem behavior and other disorders that predict future substance use.

Health

- ⊕ Improve substance abuse data tracking.
- ⊕ Improve communication and service delivery across all health sectors.
- ⊕ Establish environmental clean up standards and protocols.
- ⊕ Provide alternatives to the costly use of the emergency department.
- ⊕ Train the medical community about meth and other substance abuse issues.
- ⊕ These settings are opportune for implementing brief intervention.

Community and Neighborhood

Substance abuse prevention begins at home and in the neighborhood. One of the risk factors for youth using illegal drugs is a lack of neighborhood connectivity and stability. Neighborhoods in distress as evidenced by crime, graffiti, deteriorating property and related factors become a magnet for a host of social ills including drug abuse. The long-term health of neighborhoods is critical to any effort to reduce drug abuse.

The federal Weed and Seed program has implemented over 300 Weed and Seed Programs throughout the United States. The critical components of a Weed and Seed strategy involve law enforcement agencies and prosecutors "weeding out" violent criminals and drug abusers, while public agencies and community-based private organizations collaborate to "seed" much-needed human services, including prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration programs. A community-oriented policing component bridges the weeding and seeding elements³.

- ⊕ Review city nuisance abatement ordinances for effectiveness.
- ⊕ Conduct ongoing analysis of code, nuisance and graffiti violations along with crime incidents and other data.
- ⊕ Provide community education on code, nuisance, and graffiti violations.
- ⊕ Hold neighborhood "cleanup days".
- ⊕ Provide opportunities for youth involvement in neighborhood and community activities.

³ United States Department of Justice, Community Capacity Development Office, Weed and Seed Data Center, www.weedandseedinfo.org

- ⊕ Provide low-cost, no-cost activities for youth.

Workforce

The majority of people with substance abuse problems, including many of those who use methamphetamine, are working. Therefore, it is critical that the private sector be involved in any efforts to reduce methamphetamine and other substance abuse in the community.

It is important to note that some of the largest employers in the community, municipal, county and state government, need to “raise the bar” and set an example with pre-employment and random drug testing. Currently, drug testing is limited to positions within public safety or those required under U.S. Department of Transportation regulations.

- ⊕ Create an outreach-training program for small- to medium-sized businesses on how to address drug use, and how to create model drug policies.
- ⊕ Create an EAP and drug-testing consortium for small- and medium-sized businesses.
- ⊕ Encourage businesses to participate in the State of Wyoming workers compensation discount program for voluntary drug testing.
- ⊕ Increase the business community’s participation in substance abuse prevention and community mobilization efforts.
- ⊕ Encourage municipal, county, and state government to expand drug testing.

Education

- ⊕ Early identification and intervention—know the red flags and what to do about them.
- ⊕ Expand before and after school programs.
- ⊕ Adopt effective truancy and dropout interventions.

Social Services

- ⊕ Improve interagency coordination.
- ⊕ Develop service systems where “the dollar follows the client.”

Families and Youth

- ⊕ Family based intervention and treatment should be standard operating procedures.
- ⊕ Support adoption of an evidence-based batterer intervention protocol.
- ⊕ Expand evidence-based parenting skill programs.
- ⊕ Families need more accessible resources to help them solve their problems.
- ⊕ Provide support to grandparents who are parenting their grandchildren.

Data and Communications

Community Data Dash Board

- ⊕ Display relevant community benchmarks on billboard, Internet, and print media.

Data Collection and Analysis

- ⊕ Provide templates to agencies for basic data collection.
- ⊕ Provide in-service training to agencies on how to make the most of their data.
- ⊕ Establish criteria for recording alcohol\substance abuse related cases.
- ⊕ Conduct regular analysis of alcohol\drug indicators data.
- ⊕ Encourage widespread use of geo-mapping to identify neighborhood "clusters" or "hot spots".

Figure 29. Laramie County Sheriff's Office Calls For Service

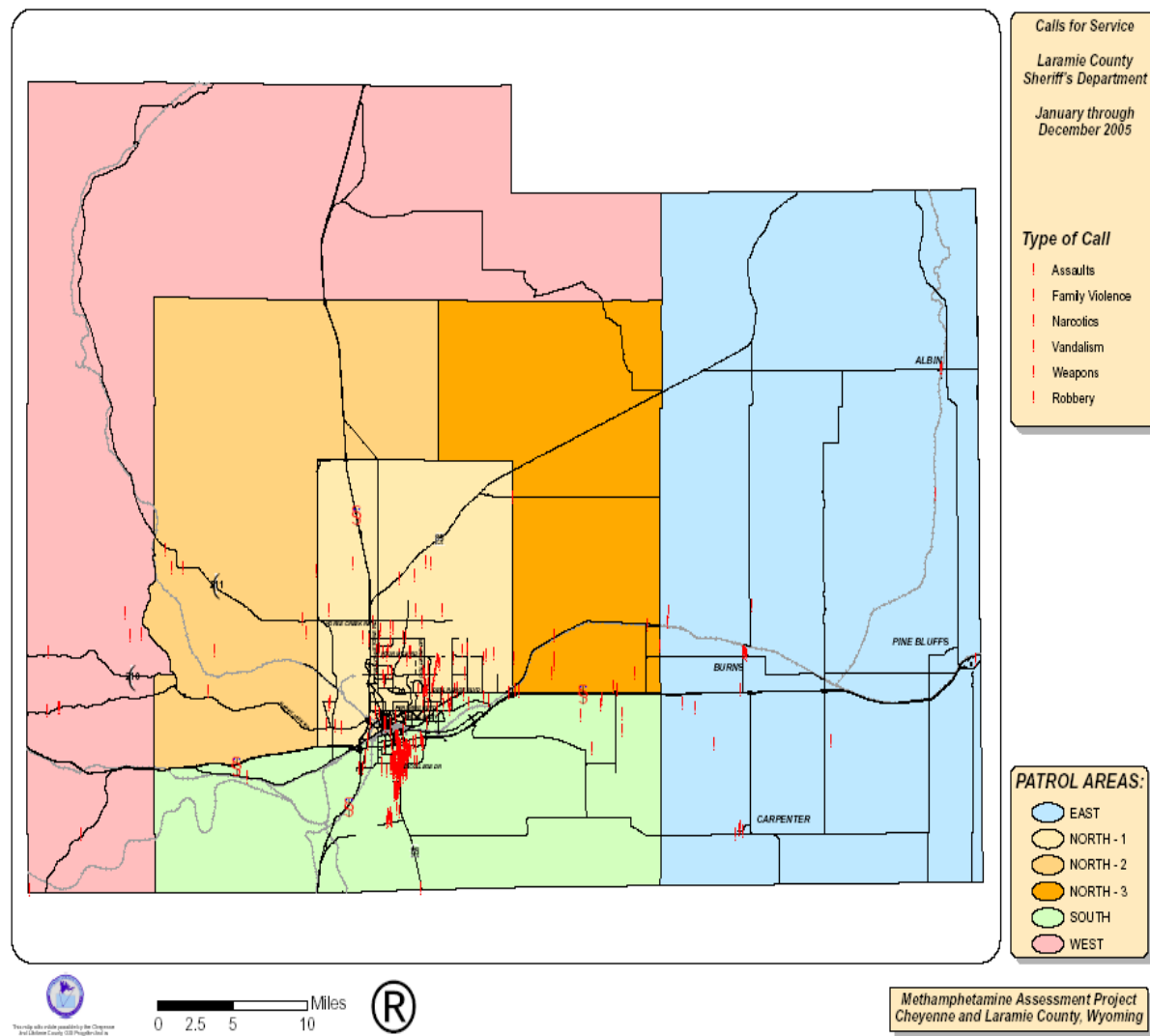


Figure 30. Laramie County Sheriff's Office Family Violence Calls

