

Broadcast on Local Drug-Use Patterns May Shed Light on Workplace Issues

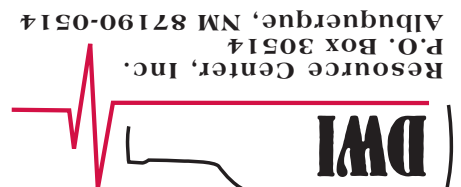
How does an employer know if methamphetamine, or any other drug, is in the community? If it is, does it impact the workplace, too? Employers may want to find out whether their community has been affected by substances since, as noted in Working Partners' Special Issue on Methamphetamine, it is quite likely that they could make their way to workplace—either directly with an employee or by means of an employee's relative or friend. Employers shouldn't just assume that meth is or is not a problem in their workplace, but at the very least should be able to get a sense of whether meth or any other drug is a problem in their community in order to extend that knowledge to their workplace.

CADCA is offering a broadcast/webcast to help communities determine if drugs really are a major problem. The broadcast/webcast, entitled "Drug Epidemics from Meth to Mothballs: How to Know What's Really Happening in Your Community," will explore statistics on drug use in different parts of the country and will offer tools that can aid in understanding the patterns of drug use in communities.

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The DWI Resource Center is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt New Mexico organization formed to reduce the social and economic impact of DWI in New Mexico through public awareness, education, prevention programs and research. The Center also provides assistance to victims and serves as a central clearinghouse for information on DWI and victims' rights.

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Understanding how meth is made and the consequences of its manufacture can help businesses determine whether it is in the community and possibly the workplace.

Methamphetamine can be easily made in homes using readily available products, and its production creates significant problems and hazards including explosions, toxic waste, and child neglect and abuse. Children living in homes with meth labs are exposed to toxic waste and are typically neglected if not abused by meth-using parents and caretakers. There is an increase in HIV/AIDS associated with meth use as the substance decreases a user's inhibitions.

The materials used to produce the drug are poisonous and often flammable, and mistakes can result in an explosion or injury—to the meth cook, family members and friends. An increase in hospital visits related to chemical burns is a sign of methamphetamine in the community. Other consequences of meth in the community include an increase in burglaries, theft (including identity theft), physical and/or domestic violence and even murder.

The broadcast aired on May 17, and was webcast live on <http://www.mctft.com/> and www.cadca.org. If you would like to view the webcast, please contact Ed Kronholm at 877-820-0305 or email dlnets@aol.com for more information.

Recently Released Data Summarizes Drug Use at State and Local Levels

Two recently released government reports can help employers and employees working to ensure their workplaces are drug free learn about specific challenges they may face based on geographical location.

The reports, one estimating drug use at the state level and the other addressing drug use in the nation's 15 largest metropolitan areas, were compiled by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) using data from its annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

With national NSDUH data consistently revealing that three-quarters of current illicit drug users are employed, it is likely that prevalence of and trends in drug use among a local workforce reflect those of its larger community. Current illicit drug use means use of an illegal drug within the last month.

When developing workplace-based drug education programs, business owners, human resource professionals, employee assistance professionals, health and safety professionals, union leaders and others may review the reports and tailor curricula to focus on specific drugs of concern in their local communities and the treatment options available for people who abuse them.

Did You Know?

- 6.6 percent of Americans employed in full-time jobs report heavy drinking, defined as drinking five or more drinks per occasion on five or more days in the past 30 days; 4.9 percent of part-timers and 10.4% of unemployed workers also report heavy drinking; the highest percentage of heavy drinkers (12.2 percent) is found among unemployed adults ages 26-34. *
- Up to 40% of industrial fatalities and 47% of industrial injuries can be linked to alcohol consumption and alcoholism. ***
- 60 percent of alcohol-related work performance problems can be attributed to employees who are not alcohol dependent, but who occasionally drink too much on a work night or drink during a weekday lunch. **
- 21 percent of workers reported being injured or put in danger, having to re-do work or to cover for a co-worker, or needing to work harder due to others' drinking. ****

* National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Main Findings 1997*, 4/99, p. 111.

** TW Mangione, et. al, "New Perspectives for Worksite Alcohol Strategies: Results from a Corporate Drinking Study," JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., Boston, MA, 12/98, p. 1.

*** M Bernstein & JJ Mahoney, "Management Perspectives on Alcoholism: The Employer's Stake in Alcoholism Treatment," *Occupational Medicine*, Vol 4, No. 2, 1989, pp. 223-232.

**** TW Mangione, et. al, "New Perspectives for Worksite Alcohol Strategies: Results from a Corporate Drinking Study," JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., Boston, MA, 12/98, p. 2.