What is included in this Community Toolkit

As a local stakeholder you may wish to use one or all of the supplied templates and strategies. You are in the best position to determine which activities work best for you and we are happy to offer assistance and support as requested. Templates and strategies include:

- Posters which can be used in community centres or events.
- Key media messages which can be used through various media channels.
- Frequently asked questions which can be used in local newspapers, local radio interviews or talk-back radio.
- Did you know facts which provides useful information that can be submitted to local media, community groups or put on your organisation’s website or social media pages.
Background

About this toolkit
This toolkit has been developed as a resource for communities who have identified methamphetamines as an issue in their community.

The toolkit supports the key messages of the WA Methamphetamine Campaign which is a collaborative initiative of the Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention Services Directorate of the Mental Health Commission and Curtin University and provides professionals and community groups with ideas about addressing methamphetamine-related harm locally.

Methamphetamine use is a highly emotive topic in many communities. Extensive media coverage of the topic at a state or national level may lead to communities developing a perception of increasing methamphetamine use at a local level.

Care should be taken to ensure that, prior to undertaking any activity, the extent of the issue in the local community is fully understood and activities are designed to reflect this understanding. A sensitive and targeted response is best to avoid any increase in the perception of use and harm in the community, which can normalise use amongst young people.

About the Campaign
The overall aim of the WA Methamphetamine Campaign is to prevent and delay the uptake of methamphetamine use, stop use and to increase access to treatment and support services.

Campaign objectives
• Increase awareness and knowledge of the health, social and legal consequences of methamphetamine use.
• Increase the salience of the potential risks associated with methamphetamine use.
• Increase access to support services at an early stage.
Meth Can Take Control Campaign

**Target group**
17 to 25 year olds are at risk of methamphetamine use or trialling use.

**Strategies**
The state-wide campaign utilises a range of targeted media channels including:
- Online videos
- Radio and online radio
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Other targeted digital.
What can communities do?
Implement campaign materials

- Campaign posters
- Campaign videos
- Factsheet
A3 Posters

**Purpose**

To raise awareness of the health, social and legal consequences associated with meth use.

**Where can you use these Posters?**

- Disseminate at relevant youth and community events
- Place in waiting areas at your local GP or other health providers
- Provide to GPs to disseminate to clients as appropriate.
Factsheet + Wallet card

Purpose
To educate young people on the signs of methamphetamine use and to learn more about how to talk to a friend or family member who is using meth.

Where can you use these Factsheets?
- Disseminate at relevant youth and community events
- Place in waiting areas at your local GP or other health providers
- Provide to GPs to disseminate to clients as appropriate.

Meth - mental health effects

Meth - the law

Meth - health effects

Does meth affect your life?

Meth help tool wallet card

Methamphetamine and the law

Meth use can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia and psychosis in those people who have a vulnerability to methamphetamine psychosis. Meth use can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia and psychosis in those people who have a vulnerability to methamphetamine psychosis.

Imagining things are changing shape or moving when they aren't.

Feeling self conscious as though people are watching or judgmental about my behaviour.

Hearing someone calling their name when nobody is around.

Other symptoms of methamphetamine psychosis:

Feeling like ordinary everyday things have special meaning or importance.

Feeling uncomfortable interupted or disturbed.

Having unusual thoughts (e.g. the user may feel that other people are reading their mind).

Feeling suspicious (e.g. the user may feel as though people are watching or judgmental about my behaviour).

Hallucinations (hearing or seeing things that aren't there).

Olfactory hallucinations (e.g. smelling things that aren't there).

Muddled thoughts, incoherent speech and going off on a tangent.

Common symptoms of methamphetamine psychosis:

Meth use can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia and psychosis in those people who have a vulnerability to methamphetamine psychosis.

Methamphetamine and mental health

Depression is most often felt when the person using meth makes their depression worse in the long term. Meth can increase the risk of depression in those who are predisposed to developing depression. Depression is most often felt when the person using meth makes their depression worse in the long term. Meth can increase the risk of depression in those who are predisposed to developing depression.

Methamphetamine and health

Physical health effects of methamphetamine

Meth use can also increase the risk of haemorrhagic strokes because it can weaken blood vessels in the brain and this can result in blood flow being cut off. Long term use of meth can lead to an increased risk of heart failure and stroke. Meth use can also increase the risk of haemorrhagic strokes because it can weaken blood vessels in the brain and this can result in blood flow being cut off. Long term use of meth can lead to an increased risk of heart failure and stroke.

Meth use can affect your work

Meth use can have significant consequences for a person's ability to work, and may be related to underlying mental health conditions. Meth use can affect your work.

Meth use can affect your life

I want to get my life back. Meth stole a part of my life.

I was getting really anxious. I thought my friends everyone was against me and that freaked me out. It felt like I was losing control of my life.

I was so scared! The ambos told me my blood when I got to hospital, I found out I'd had a stroke. The doctors don't know the full extent of the brain scarring & dental problems (teeth grinding)

Meth can increase

Meth can increase

Meth use can have significant consequences for a person's ability to work, and may be related to underlying mental health conditions.

Meth use can affect your life and give you information on how to make some changes. You can reduce your use, seek help, or find out more about what is available.

Meth - the law

Penalties vary depending on the offence:

In Western Australia, it is against the law to supply methamphetamine, which carries penalties including imprisonment.

A person convicted of a drug offence can receive a criminal record, which can lead to difficulties in getting a job, health insurance, credit or visas for overseas travel.

Breaking the law carries penalties including imprisonment.

Offences under this Act carry heavy fines and/or prison sentences.

In most cases, the confirmatory saliva test confirm the presence of the prescribed drug.

Where a positive result is obtained, the driver is required to undertake a second saliva test or provide a blood sample to confirm the presence of the prescribed drug.

The Meth Help Tool will help you reflect on the impact of methamphetamine use and give you information on how to make some changes. You can reduce your use, seek help, or find out more about what is available.

You can learn how to reduce your use, seek help, or find out more about what is available.

The Meth Help Tool will help you reflect on the impact of methamphetamine use and give you information on how to make some changes. You can reduce your use, seek help, or find out more about what is available.

On a big weekend my head really started to hurt, hearing someone calling their name when nobody is around.

I want to get my life back. Meth stole a part of my life.

I was so scared! The ambos told me my blood when I got to hospital, I found out I'd had a stroke. The doctors don't know the full extent of the brain scarring & dental problems (teeth grinding)

Meth can increase

Meth can increase

Meth use can have significant consequences for a person's ability to work, and may be related to underlying mental health conditions.
Campaign videos

Purpose
To raise awareness of the health, social and legal consequences associated with meth use.

Where can you use these Videos
There are 90 second and 30 second videos available which can be used to:
- Promote on social media
- Display on the TV in waiting rooms and health centres.
Campaign videos - experts

**Purpose**
Provide information on help services and methamphetamine-related health, social and legal consequences.

**Where can you use these Videos?**
- Promote on social media
- Display on the TV in waiting rooms and health centres.

**Meth use and the body and brain**

**Meth use and support for parents and family**

**Meth use and treatment options**

**Meth use and where to get help**
Implement non-campaign materials

Key media messages
Facebook posts
Did you know
Purpose
The following key media messages have been designed to be adapted for your local community.

Key media messages

**Key message 1**
Calls to the Alcohol and Drug Support Line are confidential and anonymous. When you call you will be given the option to speak to a professionally qualified and experienced drug counsellor or a parent volunteer with a lived experience of a child with drug use issues.

**Key message 2**
It is often hard to recognise that someone is using methamphetamine and experiencing problems. Common signs of use or changes in behaviour include sleep disturbance, changes to eating patterns, mood swings and explosive outbursts, a sudden change of friends and unexplained need for money. Speaking to a counsellor at the Parent and Family Drug Support Line can help you plan how to address the problem with someone you care about.

**Key message 3**
Most people don’t use amphetamine-type stimulants. Currently, in WA of those that use they are choosing to use a more potent form called methamphetamine, and they are using it more frequently.

**Key message 4**
If you have someone close to you that you think may be using methamphetamine, there is help and treatment available. The Alcohol and Drug Support Line is a 24/7, WA state-wide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own, or another person’s drug use. You can contact them on (08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers).

**Call to action**
Call the Alcohol and Drug Support Line on (08) 9442 500 or 1800 198 0254 (country callers) for free professional, confidential counselling and advice.
Purpose
To promote the WA Methamphetamine campaign message on your Facebook page. Click here to access the images.

Post 1
Meth use can lead to social and emotional problems and can affect relationships with family and friends. Find out how:


Post 2
Meth is a stimulant drug which can impact on your health in the short and long-term and can lead to acute and chronic heart problems and stroke. See how Meth Can Take Control.


Post 3
In Western Australia, it is illegal to possess, use, manufacture, cultivate or supply an illicit drug. Penalties can range from a $2,000 fine and/or a two-year prison term, to a $100,000 fine and/or imprisonment for 25 years. Watch how:


Post 4
The Alcohol and Drug Support Line is a 24/7, WA state-wide telephone counseling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own, or another person’s drug use. You can contact the Alcohol and Drug Support Line on (08) 9442 500 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)


Post 5
The Alcohol and Drug Support Line offers free professional drug counselling and advice, you can contact them via phone, email or live chat.


Post 6
The counselling and support the Parent and Family Support Line provides is free and non-judgemental. The helpline offers help and support for parents, family and friends who are concerned about a loved one’s drug use.

Facebook posts

Post 7

If you or someone else would like to make some changes or find out about help or support services. Head to the Meth Help Tool:


Post 8

Are you wanting to help someone close to you with their meth use? Head to the link below to help understand the signs that someone is using and how to talk about it. There are also tools available to help you, as drug use can affect the people around the user as well as the user themself.


Post 9

Meth use can affect your life in many ways. It can lead to financial, relationship, and legal problems. Check out these videos to see how meth can take control.


Post 10

Watch Patty discuss how the Parent and Family Drug Support Line can provide support to family and friends of methamphetamine users.

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vL1euUBia1g

Post 11

Professor Fatovich discussed the types of meth presentations seen in emergency departments, how meth affects the cardiovascular system and more. Watch here:

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mo4xBX9H3Is

Post 12

“Meth use doesn’t discriminate against people” watch Carol Daws discuss meth use and treatment options.

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5s3b6LFzEs
Did you know?

Emerging evidence indicates that amphetamine use including meth use, can cause brain injury.

Early sign of use can be similar to normal teenage behaviour.

It is often hard to recognise that someone is using methamphetamine and experiencing harms, so it is important to know the common signs and changes to look for:

- Relationship problems
- Changes to eating patterns leading to poor nutrition
- Sleep disturbances
- Mood swings
- Explosive outbursts
- Trouble with the police
- Reduced interaction with family
- Sudden change of friends
- Unexplained need for money
- Declining school/work performance

However it is important not to jump to conclusions. Clarify and listen before reacting. Drug use problems can be very complex and often vary from person to person.

There is emerging evidence that amphetamine-use can cause brain injury. A pilot study conducted at Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) found that 1 in 5 people who agreed to have an MRI after presenting to the Emergency Department for an amphetamine-related reason had a brain lesion. This is a scar on the brain that is usually found in older people.

Although the study recruited cases based on amphetamine-related presentations, all those involved in the study had also used a variety of other drugs therefore this study cannot conclude the lesions were amphetamine-related. However, there are other studies that have found similar outcomes and there is evidence emerging to suggest that stimulant drugs cause problems for the brain, especially with memory, judgment, thinking and mood being affected. The findings from this study support the possibility of amphetamine use being a risk for cognitive decline.
When parents and families are informed and supported, and families are involved in treatment, evidence suggest that there are better outcomes for the drug user entering and staying in treatment.

Methamphetamine use can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia and psychosis in those people who have a vulnerability to mental health problems.

People who already experience depression may find that using methamphetamines makes their depression worse in the long term, as it depletes serotonin, the feel good chemical in the brain. Depression is most often felt when the person is not using the drug, which makes them want to go back for more.
Frequently asked questions

Has there been a dramatic increase in the number of people using methamphetamines?

In Western Australia most people don’t use amphetamines. In 2016, 2.7% of Western Australians, aged 14 years and over had recently used amphetamines. This research did show however, that Western Australia has higher rates of use compared to the rest of Australia.

Western Australia has generally followed national trends, with some positives, such as overall use declining since 1998 from 6% to the current rate of 2.7%.

More recently there has been an increase in people seeking treatment where the primary drug of concern is amphetamines and the rate of hospitalisations for amphetamine-related problems has also increased.

So what has changed? There has been a significant increase in users reporting they are now using more frequently and have switched to the more potent form, methamphetamine. More frequent use of a more potent form of amphetamine has led to users experiencing increased problems and harm.

For anyone concerned about their own or another person’s methamphetamine use call the Alcohol and Drug Support Line on (08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers).

How do you talk to and support a family member or a friend you think might have a problem with methamphetamine use?

Get the facts

- Call the Parent and Family Drug Support Line on (08)9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers).
- They will help you to clarify exactly what your concerns are and assist in planning the steps needed to address the problem.

Maintain honest and open communication

- Choose an appropriate time to talk, free of distractions and when they are not intoxicated.
- Try to remain calm and stick to the point you wish to get across. Listen carefully without being judgemental.
- Be clear and honest about your feelings, let them know how their drug use is affecting you.
- Use “I” statements instead of “you” statements. For example, try “I’m really worried about” instead of “you should…”

Negotiate and shift guidelines

- Talk through with your partner/others involved and make decisions about what you are and aren’t prepared to accept.
- Allow your friend/family member to experience the consequences of their behaviour.
- Don’t make ultimatums that you aren’t prepared to enforce.

Support and encourage positive behaviour

- Encourage the person to develop supportive networks.
- Congratulate them when they achieve their goals.

Look after yourself

- Family and friends can experience a range of emotions as a result of someone else’s drug use and can be in more crisis than the user themselves. It’s important to find ways of coping with stress and to access information and support from services who understand.
What are the signs that someone could be using Methamphetamine?

- Relationship problems
- Changes to eating patterns leading to poor nutrition
- Sleep disturbance
- Mood swings
- Explosive outbursts
- Reduced interaction with family
- Trouble with the police
- Sudden change of friends
- Unexplained need for money
- Declining school/work performance.

However it is important not to jump to conclusions. Clarify and listen before reacting. Drug use problems can be very complex and often vary from person to person.

What kind of information or support can a counsellor from the Alcohol and Drug Support Line provide?

Each individual caller is different so the counsellor will find out what has been going on for people, what sort of issues they’ve been dealing with/what their concerns are first of all. They then provide some information and education for example, what are the common signs and symptoms of meth use, what types of treatment are available. Treatment matching and referral to local services in their area for ongoing face to face support.
Frequently Asked Questions

What are the health effects and risks of methamphetamine use?

All drugs including amphetamines will affect each person differently depending on the person's characteristics (such as physical size, gender, mood, diet, fitness, age, expectations and health), the drug itself (such as the amount used and its purity), and how it is taken and the environment a person is in when using the drug.

Short term effects at higher doses include:
- Pale skin, sweating, headaches
- Feelings of being powerful or superior
- Repetitive movement, shaking, dizziness
- Irregular breathing
- Very rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Jaw clamping/teeth grinding
- Panic attacks
- Hostility.

Long term effects in addition to the short term effects include:
- Malnutrition and weight loss
- Reduced resistance to infection
- Violent behaviour
- Emotional disturbances
- Periods of psychosis
- Delusional thoughts and behaviour
- Mood swings
- Brain scarring and memory loss
- Seizures, stroke and heart attack
- Paranoia.

The effects of methamphetamine include anxiety, depression, paranoia, aggression and psychotic symptoms. Methamphetamine also increases the risk of mental health problems, especially in people with an existing mental health condition or vulnerability to mental health problems.

What is the law regarding methamphetamine use?

In Western Australia, under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1981, it is illegal to use, possess, manufacture or supply methamphetamines. Offences under this Act carry heavy fines and/or prison sentences. Penalties range from a $2,000 fine and/or two years in prison to a $100,000 fine and/or imprisonment for 25 years. A person convicted of a drug offence can receive a criminal record, which can lead to difficulties in getting a job, health insurance, credit and/or visas for overseas travel.

Can you overdose from using methamphetamines?

Yes overdose from methamphetamine use can occur, usually from the drug's stimulating effects. It can cause strokes, heart failure, seizures and death. It is normally referred to as amphetamine toxicity.

Signs that someone may be experiencing a stimulant toxicity include:
- Hyperactivity/sweating
- Chest pain/pounding chest
- Severe headache
- Difficulty passing urine
- Raised temperature
- Convulsions
- Shaking/trembling/spasms
- Disorientation
- Rapid breathing/feeling that you can't breathe
- Paranoid, delusion, irritable, anxious or psychotic.

If you think someone is having an overdose call an ambulance (000) immediately. Remember police will not attend overdoses unless there is a death or ambulance staff are threatened.
Useful contacts
Drug Aware
To view the Campaign Materials visit the Drug Aware 'Meth Can Take Control' Campaign page:

ALCOHOL OTHER DRUGS AND PREVENTION SERVICES
If you would like to use or adjust any campaign materials contact your Community Support and Development Programs team member via email: at:
MHCCommunitySupportAndDevelopment@mhc.wa.gov.au