

195,958
serious crimes a year

282 homicides

19,101 violent crimes

176,497
property crimes

Almost all crimes take place in the communities where the victims live, work or go to school.

NEWS RELEASE

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TIGHT LIPS CAN BE A SILENT ALARM OF METH USE

Without speaking a word, a youngster's mouth can be a silent alarm that something is deadly wrong. Drugs, especially Methamphetamine, cause very specific problems with teeth and gums. A tight-lipped teen-ager, who used to have a brilliant smile, may be sending a silent alarm.

Methamphetamine, or Meth, upsets the body's chemical balance, primarily in the brain, but also the mouth and digestive system. Because Meth contains lithium, ether, phosphorus, lye, sulfuric and muriatic acids, such destruction is no surprise.

Signs of Meth, because they are so obvious, are effective tools parents can use when monitoring a child's health and showing concern for how they use their time. Two groups rank high among Meth users, according to addiction specialists, but the primary user is a student of high school or college age.

That's why John Tyson, Jr., the Mobile County District Attorney and candidate for Alabama Attorney General, has focused on use of this drug and has posted Meth awareness information for parents at his Web site. Early detection and treatment is of utmost importance, according to Tyson. The secondary groups of users are white- or blue-collar workers, usually between 20 and 30. Early detection and detoxification are essential to recovery.

Prevalent in both urban and rural areas, Meth users are equally divided among males and females. Because of its prevalence, law enforcement officials say parents can be assured their children will be offered an opportunity to try Meth. Mothers Against Methamphetamine, a recently formed awareness group, warn parents that 75 percent who first try Meth will use it again within a week. Many are hooked after the first try.

Basic early-warning signs for parents include a child's: 1) unusual sense of well-being (manic behavior) 2) incessant talking 3) aggressiveness 4) irritability or nervousness 5) lack of interest in previously enjoyed activities 6) decreased appetite 7) erratic sleep patterns 8) seasonally inappropriate clothes and 9) burn marks on fingers.

Hopefully, early signs are the only signs parents will encounter. Rapid detection and treatment can avoid onset of more severe secondary signs of drug use. When physical changes begin to appear, other than burned fingers, parents are probably dealing with addiction. Ongoing signs of Meth use include: 1) tooth decay 2) mouth sores 3) dramatic

weight loss 4) paranoia 5) sores on the face 6) itchy skin 7) delusions 8) mood disturbances and 9) violent behavior.

These, and other warning signs, are listed at www.johntysonjr.com. This web site is part of Tyson's initiative to "Attack Crime Now." Tyson, a candidate for attorney general, believes we can't wait any longer to strike back at crime. He knows crime must be defeated where it happens - in communities.

Attack Crime Now is designed to save lives and property, strengthen local law enforcement, jail child molesters, expedite prosecution and help citizens help themselves. Tyson reports the facts about local crime dangers and shares successful crime fighting techniques across the state. As Attorney General, Tyson says he will make support of citizens and local authorities the first priority of the Attorney General's Office.

Tyson strongly encourages parents to get educated about Meth use. He recommends they read information provided by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and Family Dental Care on line. For more crime-fighting information, visit www.johntysonjr.com.