

KEVIN BROIN
Sheriff-Coroner



Undersheriff Gary Hudson

Captain Kurt Smallcomb
Field Services

Captain Tim Pearce
Corrections

COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF-CORONER

July 25, 2006

Honorable Cindee Mayfield, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
County of Mendocino
County Courthouse
Ukiah CA 95482

Re: **Response to Report of the 2005-2006 Grand Jury**

Dear Judge Mayfield:

The 2005-2006 Grand Jury requires my response to the following report:

1. WHAT METHAMPHETAMINE IS COSTING YOU

Penal Code section 933.05 requires me to respond to each of the Grand Jury's findings and recommendation in a specified format. I have done my best to comply with the spirit of the statute, but as I am sure you are aware, there are instances where none of the available response options are appropriate—such as when a finding or recommendation speaks to a matter that is outside the control of my office.

FINDINGS

1. Methamphetamine is one of the most powerful and pernicious drugs, potentially addictive from the first use.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

2. After methamphetamine use is stopped, severe withdrawal symptoms occur, including depression, anxiety, fatigue, paranoia, aggression, and an intense craving for the drug. Psychotic symptoms can persist for months or years after use has ceased.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

3. Methamphetamine use can result in hyperactivity, disturbed sleep patterns, irritability, paranoia, aggressive behavior, shortness of breath, involuntary muscle movements, malnutrition, and severe depression with suicidal tendencies. Chronic users may develop sores on their bodies from scratching at "crank bugs," the term that describes the common delusion that bugs are crawling under the skin. Long-term use may lead to fatal kidney and lung disease, brain damage, liver damage, stroke, lowered resistance to illnesses, tooth decay, and permanent psychological problems such as drug-induced psychosis.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

4. Methamphetamine use during pregnancy results in a higher risk of premature births, babies with low birth weight, cardiac blockages and other birth defects. The use of methamphetamine during pregnancy impacts the fetus by reducing blood flow or by a direct toxic effect on the developing brain.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

5. Children who are exposed to methamphetamine via second-hand smoke can have detectable levels of methamphetamine in their urine.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

6. Children who are legally removed from a methamphetamine environment cannot take with them their clothing and toys due to contamination.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

7. Children of methamphetamine-using parents are raised in a highly traumatic environment and often subjected to physical and emotional neglect.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

8. Many Child Protective Service and domestic violence cases in Mendocino County are directly related to the use of methamphetamine by a parent or family member.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

9. Substance abuse programs in Mendocino County are provided by:
- a. Mendocino County Alcohol and Other Drug Program (AODP)
 - b. the Ford Street Project
 - c. Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
 - d. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

10. The number of patients needing medical services rises significantly in Mendocino County emergency rooms when there is a rise in the purity of the methamphetamine available on the streets.

Sheriff's Response: Without further information, I can neither agree nor disagree with this finding.

11. Efforts to secure funding for programs to combat methamphetamine use require considerable staff time, though the yield is generally a short-term grant for a long-term need.

Sheriff's Response: Without further information, I can neither agree nor disagree with this finding.

12. Gangs are involved with methamphetamine manufacture and sales in Mendocino County; gang violence can also be attributed to methamphetamine.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

13. Biker gangs are becoming more active in the distribution of methamphetamine.

Sheriff's Response: I agree that biker gangs are active in distribution of methamphetamine, however this is not a new activity for them.

14. Many individuals and departments funded by Mendocino County taxpayers are involved in the arrest, prosecution and incarceration of methamphetamine users. These include city police, the Sheriff's Department, the Major Crimes Task Force, judges, court staff, probation officers, District Attorney staff, and Public Defender staff.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

15. Law enforcement personnel express frustration over the lack of meaningful consequences for those enrolled in the Proposition 36 program, which attempts to provide an alternative to confinement for drug abusers.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding as there are not enough consequences built in for repeat offenders/

16. Many of the items required to produce methamphetamine are readily available at local grocery and hardware stores. Because many of the chemicals used to make methamphetamine are explosive, caustic and carcinogenic, they pose serious health hazards if mixed together or stored improperly.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

17. With a cash outlay of less than one hundred dollars, a batch of methamphetamine can be manufactured (cooked) and sold on the streets for several thousand dollars.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

18. For every pound of methamphetamine manufactured there are six pounds of toxic waste materials that must be disposed of.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

19. Professionals who work to combat drug abuse in the County agree that the problem is intensified because there is in the County both a high level of tolerance for general drug use and a lack of awareness of the dangers of methamphetamine.

Sheriff's Response: I agree with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury recommends that:

1. The Board of Supervisors and City Councils from the four incorporated cities cooperate in taking the lead in the war on methamphetamine in Mendocino County. (Findings 6, 8-16)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and City Councils from the four incorporated cities.

2. The Board of Supervisors and City Councils from the four incorporated cities increase controls on the sale of ingredients used in the manufacture of methamphetamine. (Finding 5)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and City Councils from the four incorporated cities, however I wish to add that state legislators should be involved.

3. the Board of Supervisors and City Councils establish a process to rigorously evaluate both the costs to and the impact on the County and the incorporated cities of the methamphetamine epidemic. (Findings 6, 8-16)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and City Councils from the four incorporated cities.

4. the Board of Supervisors and City Councils continue to aggressively pursue grant funding to address the methamphetamine problem in Mendocino County. (Findings 11-16)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and City Councils.

5. the Board of Supervisor and City Councils allocate money from their general funds to address the methamphetamine problem. (Finding 11,14, 19)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the Board of Supervisors and City Councils. However, I agree financial cooperation to their law enforcement agencies is necessary to combat this problem. I have requested the funding to keep our staffing levels up so the deputies in the field can combat methamphetamine.

6. the District Attorney examine the consequences of current sentencing practices for drug-related crimes. (Finding 15)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation is directed to the District Attorney.

7. the Board of Supervisors and City Councils require departments and agencies to freely share information and statistics regarding methamphetamine in order to coordinate programs and maximize resources. (Findings 11-16)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation has been implemented by way of the Mendocino Major Crimes Task Force, of which the following agencies participate:

Mendocino County Sheriff's Office; Mendocino County District Attorney's Office; Mendocino County Probation Department; Ukiah Police Department; Fort Bragg Police Department; Willits Police Department; California Highway Patrol, California State Parks; and California State Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement.

8. education of the public be the primary weapon to counter the methamphetamine epidemic. The Grand Jury strongly urges that both the County and local communities use all their resources (including school programs, town hall meetings, and media) to further educate and engage the residents of Mendocino County in efforts to combat methamphetamine. (Findings 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 17, 18)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation has been implemented as my office currently sends deputies and deputies assigned to Mendocino Major Crimes Task Force to handle school presentations and other educational events.

My office is also involved in the WOLF Project in Covelo, and the Anderson Valley Community Action Coalition in Boonville. These grass roots organizations have been developed to engage and educate the residence of Mendocino County in efforts to combat methamphetamine use.

It is my hope that these organizations grow countywide, as it takes the entire community to deal with this huge problem.

9. community members assist law enforcement in uncovering methamphetamine labs by reporting suspicious odors, trash, and unusual traffic flow in their neighborhoods, through neighborhood watch programs, homeowners associations, and other local action groups. (Findings 6, 18)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation has been implemented as individuals can report these problems to our Communications Center and remain anonymous. Deputies assist neighborhoods and homeowners associations in setting up Neighborhood Watch Programs in their areas.

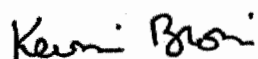
10. all government agencies and non-governmental organizations encourage and cooperate with citizens' methamphetamine suppression efforts. (Findings 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 17, 18)

Sheriff's Response: This recommendation has been implemented as members of the Sheriff's Office have been actively involved in citizens' methamphetamine suppression groups in both Anderson Valley and Round Valley. I would like to encourage other communities to start their own drug suppression groups.

This concludes my response to the Grand Jury's reports. I want to thank the members of the Grand Jury, and in particular the members of the Criminal Justice Committee, for their dedication, professionalism, spirit of cooperation and desire to learn. My staff members who had contact with the Grand Jury members during tours of our facilities all spoke highly about the way in which they went about your work. Please let them know they are welcome to return at any time.

I have made every effort to provide the Grand Jury with thorough, accurate replies to its various findings and recommendations. Should you or the Grand Jury have any questions about any of my responses, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address and telephone number listed on my letterhead.

Sincerely,



KEVIN BROIN
SHERIFF-CORONER

CC: Benj Thomas, Foreperson, Mendocino County Grand Jury
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
Al Beltrami, County Executive Officer
Jeannine Nadel, County Counsel
File 2005-2006