

The Pueblo Chieftain

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Anti-meth crusade comes to Pueblo

Group wants to 'unsell' the drug, keep kids away from trying it even once.

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THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

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The ads play out like scenes from a horror movie.

But the 30-second commercials from the Meth Project are about body counts of a different sort.

On Monday, the organization is scheduled to be in Pueblo to kick off its Colorado campaign, a mass attempt to keep teens from trying the dangerously addictive drug even once.

The event will be hosted by Colorado Attorney General John Suthers, Pueblo Police Chief Jim Billings and others who have been affected by the drug.

Meth Project Executive Director Kent MacLennan said much of the program's focus in Pueblo will be to coordinate and assist efforts of the many community organizations already involved in fighting the drug.

The event is slated to begin at 10 a.m. at the Pueblo Convention Center.

Another main part of the plan is the commercials.

There are 10 spots already produced and airing in other communities and states.

They will hit TVs in Pueblo and the rest of Colorado in three separate waves.

The spots attempt to cast unflinching light on the dangers of methamphetamine use and the collateral damage of addiction, while leaving the frying pans and eggs in the kitchen.

"This campaign is much different than that commercial," said MacLennan.

That commercial, with its famous "This is your brain on drugs" tag line doesn't play as well with teenagers today, he said.

The project used teen focus groups to draft the commercials and Mac- Lennan said the main message from those sessions is that the commercials need to be accurate and compelling.

"We're really trying to 'unsell' the drug," Mac- Lennan said. "We really want to arm teens with information about the drug and remind them there's nothing cool about experimenting with it."

But the TV spots are just part of the campaign.

The project will also advertise on radio, print and billboard and will continue to lobby political leaders nationally and locally.

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