

Campaign Highlights Horror Of Meth

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(CBS) Methamphetamine abuse may be the biggest drug problem facing U.S. law enforcement today. Not only is the drug relatively cheap and easy to make, it can be instantly addictive and desperate users often turn to violence to fuel their habit.

Now a Silicon Valley entrepreneur is trying to do something about it, as national correspondent **Hattie Kauffman** reported for *The Early Show* Wednesday.

Tom Siebel owns an 85,000 acre ranch in Montana, but he's better known as the billionaire founder of Silicon Valley's Siebel Systems. Now he's throwing himself into a very different sort of project, the Montana Meth Project, which he created in an effort to stop the spread of meth addiction.

"This is the most addictive substance known to man. And 25 percent of the young people in Montana see no risk in giving it a try," **Siebel told Kauffman (video)**.

Siebel is publicizing the risk by blanketing the state with **shockingly graphic TV spots (video)**, so alarming that Kauffman said she got goose bumps from watching them, an effect that Siebel said was exactly what he had intended.

"We attempted to be very, very realistic," he said. "I mean this is what it's like, OK? This is what it's like before, this is what it's like after."

Since its launch in September, the Montana Meth Project has become the No. 1 buyer of ads in the state. In addition to the TV and radio spots, there are billboards across the state targeting teenagers. One of them shows a disgusting, dirty bathroom and reads: No one thinks they'll lose their virginity here. Meth will change that.

Speaking to teenagers in Montana, Kauffman found that the campaign has them talking.

Miranda Murray: "It's just so effective, it's scary."

Kasi Thompson: "At first I didn't know what was going on, I was like, 'What am I watching?' Afterwards, I was like, 'Ooh, stay away from meth.' "

Jeff Stivers: "You can't just take them off the air because they're so in-your-face and so shocking, that they're kind of forcing people to come to this issue."

Allison Gossack: "You know it prompts a conversation, it prompts parents talking to their kids and explaining it to them, and that's where it needs to start."

At the high school in Great Falls, Mont., nearly every student knows someone taking methamphetamine or, sometimes, making it.

"My sixth grade art teacher was caught with a lab in his basement," said Mike Gerrity.

Montana, known for its big sky and pristine beauty might not look like a hotspot of meth use. But Kauffman says research shows that meth use there is higher than the national average and that's a devastating reality for the people of that state.

"If you become addicted, life as you know it is over," said Siebel, who has spent more than \$5 million on the Montana Meth Project. "Your friends are gone, your family is gone, your job is gone, your school is gone, your health is gone."

Kauffman met with two young women who are recovering from meth addiction. Both say they tried the drug for the first time when they were 15 and were instantly addicted.

"I had no clue what I was trying and, actually, I didn't even know it was meth," said Sarah Bright. "Somebody just said, 'Would you like to try some dope?' And I was hanging out with older kids and I didn't want to sound like a loser and say 'Oh, what's dope?' So I was just like, 'OK, I'm going to try it and be cool like them.' "

They say that the drug was addictive right from the start.

"Oh, definitely, from the first time I did it, from then on I wanted more and I had to have it," said Caitlin Moe, adding that the anti-meth ads are hitting the nail on the head. "They gave me chills. I thought they were dead on, perfect," she said, adding, "I wish I was able to have them, you know, to have them in my mind when I was confronted with meth for the first time."

And Bright said the harder hitting, the better.

"The commercials can't even get scary enough to show," she told Kauffman. "I thought 'I'm only going to try it once,' and then it's like, 'Oh, I'm only going to steal from my sister and my mom.' "

For Tom Siebel, the ads are accomplishing exactly what he had hoped for, even if their ugly message clashes with the beauty of the Montana image.

"You look at this meth problem, it's a critical problem, it's destroying lives and communities," he said. "I think there's an opportunity to make a difference and we'll do our best to make a difference."

Siebel hopes to expand the anti-meth campaign to other states. To hear more of Kauffman's interview with him and with former meth addicts Sarah Bright and Caitlin Moe, [click here](#). To watch some of the shocking anti-meth ads, Only On The Web, [click here](#).

And for more information on fighting methamphetamine addiction, check out these Web sites:

Montanameth.org

notevenonce.com