

REVIEW
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information FOR INDIANA

unleashing data for decision making and research

JULY 2006

Information for Indiana is a collaborative project launched by Governor Mitch Daniels in July 2005. It brings together government, university, and private resources in an effort to build a solid foundation of data and analysis for informed decision-making statewide. The objective of IFI is to work with internal and external partners to assess, improve, and coordinate the collection, management, dissemination, and analysis of vital data for Indiana. For more about **Information for Indiana**, see the back page of this report and/or visit the project website at www.ibrc.indiana.edu/ifi.

IFI is a joint project led by the **Office of the Governor**, the **Center for Urban Policy and the Environment**, and the **Indiana Business Research Center** in cooperation with the Indiana Geographic Information Council, Purdue University, and Ball State University. In July 2005, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. generously provided an award of support to the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of the IFI Project. This, combined with a planning grant from the Endowment to the Indiana Business Research Center and additional support for the IFI Project provided by the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership, contributes to the collaborative efforts of IFI partners.



Drug and Crime Control Data: Tracking Methamphetamine Abuse and Control in Indiana

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What is the Issue?

According to the Indiana State Police (ISP) and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI), the production of methamphetamine (meth) costs Hoosiers nearly \$100 million a year (www.in.gov/cji/Methfreeindiana/enforce.html). To combat the effects of this dangerous drug, Governor Mitch Daniels signed Senate Enrolled Act 444 (*Meth Protection Act*) and announced the creation of the Meth Free Indiana Coalition. The Coalition is comprised of more than 20 state agencies and outside groups all with a role in increasing enforcement and treatment and reducing production and environmental damage (http://www.in.gov/cji/methfreeindiana/Meth_Free_Indiana_Accomplishments.pdf). One critical component of the initiative is to create a data repository. The intended purpose of the repository is to provide a central location where information regarding all aspects of meth activity can be accessed to improve planning and policy-making. A primary source of data for the repository is Indiana's Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Forces (MJTFs). This Issue Brief focuses on various aspects of meth data and its collection from the standpoint of Indiana's MJTFs.

Law Enforcement Facts

- Indiana is on pace to shatter the record of meth labs seized last year and rank in the **top three states** with this problem.
- From 1994 to 2004, meth lab seizures in Indiana have risen **3,500 percent**.
- Of the **1549 meth labs** seized in Indiana in 2004, **32 percent were located in southwestern Indiana**, along the southern Illinois border.
- In June 2005, **76 percent of the inmates in the Vigo County jail** were there because of meth cases.
- In some parts of the state, **nearly 40 percent of the children in the CHINS** (Children in Need of Services) system were removed from meth houses.

SOURCE: *Meth Free Indiana Coalition Website* (Retrieved July 1, 2006 from <http://www.in.gov/cji/methfreeindiana/enforce.html>)



What is the Status of Meth Data in Other States?

Few states provide meth data for analysis, but many states utilize different reporting forms and request additional data. Kansas developed the original *Meth Watch* program which has since served as a model for other states' Meth Watch programs. The Kansas Meth Prevention Project and its partner, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, track a number of different meth-related data, including the number of meth-related arrests, amount of meth and number of labs seized, the impact on drug trafficking, search warrants and investigations for meth-related activities, the amount of undercover drug purchases, and the number of informants used in enforcement activities. California and Missouri attempt to capture the impact on children by requesting the number of cases involving child protective services and the number of arrests for child endangerment. California also administers a survey of MJTF staff to ascertain what works and what could be improved. Interviews are conducted with task force commanders, steering committee members, law enforcement officials, prosecution staff, probation officers, and other task force participants to examine all aspects of task force activities and include all perspectives in proposed improvements.

What Would be the Policy Impact of Improved Data?

One way to determine the impact of meth abuse in Indiana and measure the impact of the Meth Free Coalition is to establish a *baseline* of drug activity and enforcement efforts. Currently in Indiana, this information is not tracked or tracking could be improved. The basis for these measures lies in creating a reporting system that asks for an increased number of meth-related variables from MJTFs and other sources as well as establishing a reporting system that requires information readily available to be provided. If provided, the data could assist policy-makers in addressing issues such as:

- What strategies could be implemented in anticipation of the needs of meth-affected CHINS?
- How should resources be allocated within the Department of Corrections and to what degree should resources be provided for in-prison meth treatment programs?
- What strategies could be implemented to address immediate clean-up and long-term costs of meth-contaminated properties?
- Are current law enforcement strategies effective in reducing meth activity?
- What is the true economic cost of meth activity in terms of public services?
- What additional agencies or organizations are impacted by meth abuse in Indiana?

What is the Potential Impact of Inclusion and Collaboration in Data Collection?

One-stop shopping has become a popular catch phrase for retailers, but it also has relevance for policy research and decision-making. The Meth Free Coalition highlights the fact that many agencies collect data important in determining the total impact of meth production and abuse in Indiana. By synthesizing these sources and establishing a central location where they can be accessed, the process of developing policies and procedures to combat the harmful affects of methamphetamine activity can be expedited and greatly improved.

Altering the MJTF reporting form and further investigating the potential contributions of various agencies may be an appropriate starting place. This effort is currently underway and the benefits of such a development should not be overlooked or underestimated. Immediate savings could be realized in the reduction in the amount of time required to collect meth-related information/data. More broadly, benefits could be realized through improved analysis and decision-making. This could be particularly valuable for local law enforcement agencies who lack sufficient resources and manpower, but who often act as first responders to meth-related incidents. Access to a centralized source of information may assist local officials in fully assessing meth-related activity in their areas and facilitating a better response.

What Costs are Associated with Data Collection and Improvement Efforts?

In most cases, the data required to impact policy-making is already being collected. However, the value of the data is limited by its accessibility and completeness. Some of the changes necessary to garner the largest impact include:

- Altering the MJTF reporting form to allow data to be provided and additional meth-related variables to be collected; and
- The creation of a meth-data repository.

ICJI and the Center are currently taking steps to create a meth data repository and will be working over the next several years in cooperation with the Indiana State Police and other agencies to make that a reality. Additional costs will be incurred to alter the MJTF reporting form and the data collection system currently used to maintain MJTF datasets. Modest expenditures required to create a data entry form and alter the existing database could produce large returns in terms of quality and quantity of data to be analyzed.

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This publication is one of a series of subject area issue briefs authored by project steering committee members and other contributors who have been engaged to support the IFI project work through activities such as conducting case studies and assisting in pilot project initiation and implementation. Support for these publications is generously provided by the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership.

An electronic copy of this document can be accessed via the Center website (www.urbancenter.iupui.edu), the IFI project website (www.ibrc.indiana.edu/ifi), or you may contact the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment at 317-261-3000.



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IFI Partners

IFI is a joint project led by the Office of the Governor, the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, and the Indiana Business Research Center in cooperation with the Indiana Geographic Information Council, Purdue University, and Ball State University. In July 2005, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. generously provided an award of support to the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment to facilitate the efforts of the IFI Project. This, combined with a number of other funded projects, contributes to the collaborative efforts of IFI partners. The partnership is expanding to include new members in the future.

The Office of Governor Mitch Daniels

Governor Daniels launched this initiative in July 2005 to bring together government, university, and private resources in an effort to build a solid foundation of data and analysis for improved policy-making and administrative decision-making by private and public leaders statewide. Governor Daniels briefed his cabinet on the IFI Project and specifically requested their full support for the project. The Governor's personal commitment to IFI's goals and objectives has greatly facilitated cooperation from agency directors and senior staff. Meetings with key state agencies that collect and use large amounts of data have already uncovered possibilities for working with the project team to enhance their capacity to collect and manage data that is valuable to stakeholders both within and outside of state government.

The Center for Urban Policy and the Environment

The Center for Urban Policy and the Environment is devoted to supporting economic success for Indiana and a high quality of life for all Hoosiers. An applied research organization, the Center was created by the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs in 1992. The Center works in partnership with community leaders, business and civic organizations, nonprofits, and government. Center faculty and staff combine facilitative and interdisciplinary research skills to assist communities and organizations in developing and implementing effective programs to achieve their goals. Much of the Center's work is focused on strategies to strengthen Indiana's economy and quality of life.

The Indiana Business Research Center

Based at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, the IBRC has provided essential economic and demographic data and analysis for more than 80 years. The IBRC is the state's official representative to the U.S. Census Bureau, the generator of official population projections for Indiana and its counties, and a key partner with federal and state government agencies, businesses, and economic development organizations in making economic information and insightful analysis available to public and private sector leaders and decision-makers.

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