

# ME reports drug deaths down in 2010

On May 13, Oregon State Medical Examiner Dr. Karen Gunson released 2010 drug-related death statistics reflecting a six percent drop from last year and the lowest number since 2005. The newly released statistics show a drop in three of the four categories tracked by the State Medical Examiner's office. The lone increase – 22 percent – was for methamphetamine-related deaths, matching the highest number of these deaths to date in this category.

"Any encouragement seen with the drop in drug-related death statistics was definitely brought back to reality with the 22 percent jump in methamphetamine deaths. This unexpected jump comes on the heels of last year's twenty percent drop while the State of Oregon has been a national leader in taking steps to prevent meth production," said Gunson.

Drug-related death statistics released for 2010 show 200 people died in Oregon from heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, or a combination of those drugs. A review of last year's 200 illicit drug-related deaths and their frequency of use in

the deaths reflected:

- In 2010 there were 106 methamphetamine-related deaths, including one in Columbia County. This was a 22 percent increase, matching 2008 for the highest number of deaths in this category and more than doubled the 50 deaths in 2001.

- Heroin use was the second leading cause, with 90 deaths; the third lowest number in this category since the year 2000. This was a 29 percent drop from 2009, when there were 127 deaths recorded.

- Cocaine-related deaths dropped to their lowest level, more than three times lower than in the year 2000, when there were 69 recorded deaths. In 2010 there were 20 recorded deaths in this category, a 38 percent drop from last year.

- Combination of drug use deaths were also at their lowest level after dropping 48 percent from the previous year's number. Eighteen (18) deaths were recorded in this category in 2010.

Columbia County had only one drug-related death from methamphetamine, while Lane County showed the largest decrease in total drug deaths

dropping in half from 33 (2009) to 16 (2010).

Counties reflecting increases included Douglas, Linn and Yamhill counties, with each seeing an increase of 3 deaths.

Methadone overdose again topped the list of statewide deaths from major prescription drugs, with 101 confirmed deaths in 2010, a 23 percent drop from 2008, when 131 deaths were reported.

Fifty-nine (59) deaths from Oxycodone overdose were recorded in 2010, up from 39 deaths in 2008 – a 66 percent increase. The third highest major prescription drug category, Hydrocodone, noted 30 overdose deaths in 2010 (no 2008 comparable numbers were available for this release).

"With Methadone's wider use, it has a higher abuse potential," said Gunson.

The State Medical Examiner's 2010 statistical review is also available on the agency website at <http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SME/index.shtml>.

Note that prescription drug overdose deaths statistics are statewide and are not included with the information provided on the State Medical Examiner's website.

arts, domestic violence and survivor-led groups, as well as sexual assault coalitions and child abuse prevention organizations.

OAASIS is a grassroots organization composed of survivors and family members of survivors who are committed to protecting children from sexual abuse and empowering survivors of child sexual abuse through public awareness, education, and advocacy. With the grant and support of the Ms. Foundation, OAASIS will expand their Survivors' Speakers Bureau; organize a statewide conference to bring together child sexual abuse experts and survivors; conduct a survey on survivors and serv-

ice providers to inform our policy goals, and continue to educate and engage the community in advocating for public policy that protects children.

Monique Hoeflinger, senior program officer at the Ms. Foundation for Women explains, "In awarding these funds, we are proud to support an emerging movement to end child sexual abuse that is taking root nationwide...these organizations are pursuing innovative strategies to engage families, communities and policymakers to end child sexual abuse once and for all."

To learn more, visit OAASIS' website at [www.oasisoregon.org](http://www.oasisoregon.org) or call 503-274-1179.

## OAASIS gets grant to stop child abuse

OAASIS, Oregon Abuse Advocates and Survivors in Service, announced May 10 that it has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Ms. Foundation

for Women as part of a groundbreaking effort to end child sexual abuse across the United States.

OAASIS is one of 15

grantees selected by the Ms. Foundation from among 250 submissions. Together, this new cohort of grantees was awarded a total of \$600,000 – a significant contribution to the field of child sexual abuse prevention. The awardees – local, state and national groups based in 14 states across the country – include faith-based,

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<p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Columbia County Mental Health 800-294-5211</p> <p style="text-align: center; border-top: 1px dashed black; width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"></p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Suicide Hotline 1-800- 784-2433 or 1-800-273- TALK(8255)</p>	<p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Domestic Abuse Hotline 503-397-6161</p> <p style="text-align: center; border-top: 1px dashed black; width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"></p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">or 866-397-6161</p> <p style="text-align: center; border-top: 1px dashed black; width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"></p> <p style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Military Helpline 888-HLP-4-VET (888-457-4838)</p>
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