

- Children are exposed to risks from unfamiliar or chemically impaired adults, including sexual assault.
  - "I remember going to bed one night and I woke up to somebody rubbing my butt... Through all the horrible things my step-dad has done to me, for whatever reason, I loved him too." Amanda
- Drug Endangered Children are prone to having educational issues.
  - "With Jordan, he has behavioral problems... He is hard to control sometimes... His social skills are not what a four year old should be at." Nancy
- Drug endangered children often take over the role of parent for their siblings, and may even parent their parent.
  - "Jade is definitely the mom and that was probably one of the hardest battles when I decided to try to get clean, was trying to regain that role as I am the parent." Sara
- Caring relatives of foster families can make a huge difference.
  - "Now that we've been living with my grandma, stuff's been going much better for us so we don't always have stuff to worry about anymore like we did before." Tony
- Trying to find the right resources to help an addicted family member - and protect the children - can be overwhelming.
  - "I've felt, trying to help some of my nieces and nephews, I felt like I was drowning at times. And it was really hard ... to move forward because there was so much use that ...I couldn't... I didn't know where to turn." Nancy
- Children do see and recognize the harm their parents or other family members suffer because of drugs.
  - "If my parents wouldn't have been arrested I think it would have gotten really bad. I mean it's not like I want them to be in jail, but I do. Because I know it's for the best for them. And I want it to get better for them." Alex
- Drug addiction creates huge issues of trust for the rest of the family. Even though they may hope for their loved one's success in treatment, they may remain guarded and outwardly skeptical of their loved one's potential to remain drug free.
  - "I plan on staying clean so they can rely on me and trust me. Same with my mom." Lisa

**HANDOUTS:**

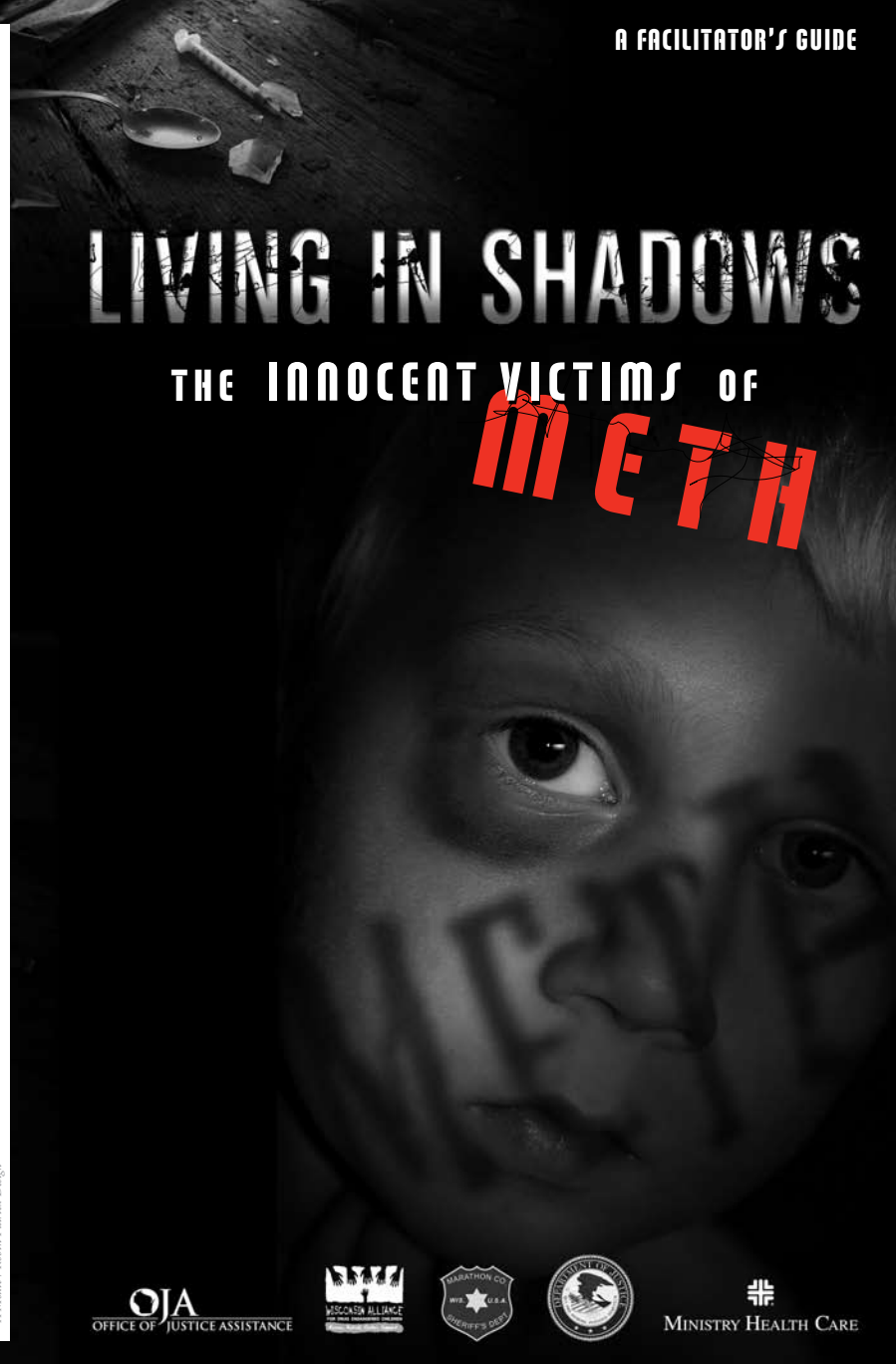
To download or print additional copies of the "Recognizing a Drug Endangered Child" handout or this Facilitator's Guide, go to [www.WisconsinDEC.org](http://www.WisconsinDEC.org).

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*A Movie / Robin Patrick Design*



# LIVING IN SHADOWS

THE INNOCENT VICTIMS OF

**M E T H**

## WHAT IS A DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN (DEC) PROGRAM?

A DEC program is commonly comprised of members from law enforcement, human services, prosecutors' offices, the medical community, health department and probation and parole. Other agencies such as schools, treatment centers, non-profit groups, concerned community members, and others may also be included.

The focus of the DEC program is to work collectively to pull together resources, identify drug endangered children, and create a plan to better meet these children's needs and ensure their safety. Drug endangered environments are caused by those who use, sell, and manufacture drugs. The DEC mission is to impact the lives of these children and to change the course and cycle of abuse created by the drug endangered environments in which they live.

In Wisconsin, individual DEC programs are developed at the community or county level. Each community/county determines their specific definition of the Drug Endangered Child based on available resources and what type of program can be supported in their area.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DEC ISSUES:

Wisconsin DEC: [www.WisconsinDEC.org](http://www.WisconsinDEC.org)

National DEC: [www.NationalDEC.org](http://www.NationalDEC.org)

Office of National Drug Control Policy: [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/methamphetamine](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/methamphetamine)

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration: [www.usdoj.gov/dea/concern/meth\\_factsheet.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/concern/meth_factsheet.html)

American Society of Addiction Medicine: <http://www.asam.org/>

University of Minnesota Child Welfare Studies: <http://ssw.cehd.umn.edu/cascw.html>

U.S. Department of Justice National Drug Intelligence Center: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Alcohol & Drug Information: <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/>

National Jewish Medical and Research Center: <http://www.njc.org/>

## DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN STATISTICS:

Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report from 2005

- Largest sources of reporting child maltreatment in Wisconsin comes from educational personnel (17%), law enforcement (16%) and social service personnel (15%).
- Of 40, 917 maltreatment report investigations conducted by Wisconsin Child Protective Services in 2005, 34,148 children were identified as being alleged victims (Some children were involved with one or more reports).
- Neglect of a child was the most common type of maltreatment allegation in 2005 and females accounted for the majority of maltreaters in neglect cases.

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

- A large portion (80 - 90%) of caretakers involved in the child welfare system for child abuse issues also have prominent issues with substance abuse.
- Substance abuse is believed to cause or exacerbate 7 out of 10 cases of child abuse and neglect.

Prevent Child Abuse America

- Child abuse costs Wisconsin taxpayers \$2.16 billion a day or \$789 million each year.
- Child abuse costs U.S. taxpayers \$258 million each day and \$94 billion a year.

## DISCUSSION POINTS:

Many concepts shown in this video warrant additional discussion. Select from this list to begin a discussion about the short and long term impacts of living in a drug endangered environment. How are the children affected? How is the rest of the family affected?

- Every victim experiences a crime differently because of their emotions and perceptions.
  - You're going to hear from several of the innocent victims of Meth and you may not agree with everything they say, but these are their memories and their perceptions.
- Angel displayed very little emotion through her voice and facial expressions as she described her childhood experiences. Why do you think that might be? (Coping mechanism, learned behavior, fear, protective response after trauma?)
- In a photo taken at Christmas of Angel and her family, her older brother is flipping off the camera. What does that say about family dynamics and respect for authority?
- Drug Endangered Children often feel helpless in their environments and try to seek control over particular situations.
  - "I remember lighting a fire... And now I relate that to how much control I was trying to have back then." Sean
- Children often feel like they have to protect their parents, even in violent situations.
  - "Sean would yell at my mom and my mom would start crying and I would get very angry at him. And sometimes I would budge in the fight." Jade
- Meth destroys even the best of intentions and makes it impossible to think and act normally.
  - "The desire to do Meth is far greater than the desire to be a good parent." Sean
- Constant neglect and/or violence can create enduring social and emotional barriers to future bonding.
  - "The way that I look at it is like if I get close to someone I'll leave them on the side so when they leave me, it won't hurt as bad as what it would be if I put them right inside my heart." Angel
  - "And I was introduced to a nation [gang], and I joined the nation because I thought it would be family. I thought they would show me what love was that I never had." Angel