

Phoenix House

For Immediate Release
April 6, 2006

Contact: Justin Bernbach
(646) 505-2094

Statement by Mitchell S. Rosenthal, MD, President of Phoenix House
Re: SAMHSA Survey on Drug Use by Teenagers

While we are encouraged by the results of today's survey from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, we should not be misled. There are still very serious reasons for concern.

Our experience tells us that many of the teens seeking help have more severe substance abuse problems than in the recent past, as they turn more to drugs such as methamphetamine and prescription painkillers. Second, our clinicians report an increase in the abuse of over-the-counter substances -- such as DXM cough syrup, Dramamine and nitrous oxide -- that may not be captured by the survey results. Finally, the shortage of treatment for adolescents nationwide remains a major problem, with only one in ten teens in need receiving treatment.

While we should take heart in the progress today's survey reveals, now is the time to recommit to providing greater treatment access, so that all teens with substance abuse problems can get the help they need.

Phoenix House is the nation's largest non-profit provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services, treating nearly 6,000 teenagers and adults each day at programs in nine states.