



## Montana Meth Project "Ben"

Brand: MONTANA METH

Agency: Venables, Bell & Partners

Release Date: January 15, 2010

One of four terrifying new TV spots for the five-year-old Montana Meth Project from Venables, Bell & Partners, San Francisco, "Ben" features staggeringly visceral and depressing visuals from director and cinematographer Wally Pfister (*The Dark Knight*, *Memento*).

The cuts are complemented by a shocking monologue, calmly recited like a children's poem. The result is a one-two punch to the gut. "This is where he went into convulsions," explains Ben's teenage female friend. "This is the emergency room where he nearly died/This is where he smoked it again right after he got out," she says. The ending: "This is what I said when he told me he was gonna try meth" (no sound, except for a match striking fire). It should be enough of a dose of reality to hammer home the tagline, "Meth. Not even once." The scared straight method works. One result: since the Montana Meth Project launched, teen meth use has declined by 63 percent and adult meth use has decreased by more than 72 percent, according to the head of the state's community service providers.

Now the campaign is moving to other states, where meth use has reached critical proportions. Kudos to all for creating advertising that actually relieves human suffering. --*Barbara Lippert*