

about meth? The most important thing you can do is become a foster parent, because we're just seeing so many kids being taken from these homes."

Officials also say methamphetamine has made it harder to reunite families once the child is taken; 59 percent of those surveyed in the national counties study agreed.

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, enacted as babies born to crack users were crowding foster care, requires states to begin terminating parental rights if a child has spent 15 out of 22 months in foster care. It was intended to keep children from languishing in foster homes. But rehabilitation for methamphetamine often takes longer than other drugs, and parents fall behind the clock.

"Termination of parental rights almost becomes the regular piece," said Jerry Foxhoven, the administrator of the Child Advocacy Board in Iowa. "We know pretty early that these families are not going to get back together."

The drug—smoked, ingested or injected—is synthetic, cheap and easy to make in home labs using pseudoephedrine, the ingredient in many cold medicines, and common fertilizers, solvents or battery acid. The materials are dangerous, and highly explosive.

"Meth adds this element of parents who think they are rocket scientists and want to cook these chemicals in the kitchen," said Yvonne Glick, a lawyer at the Department of Human Services in Oklahoma who works with the state's alliance for drug endangered children. "They're on the couch watching their stuff cook, and the kids are on the floor watching them."

The drug also produces a tremendous and long-lasting rush, with intense sexual desire. As a result of the sexual binges, some child welfare officials say, methamphetamine users are having more children. More young children are entering the foster system, often as newborns suffering from the effects of their mother's use of the drug.

Oklahoma was recently chosen to participate in a federally financed study of the effects of methamphetamine on babies born to addicted mothers. Doctors who work with them have already found that the babies are born with trouble suckling or bonding with their parents, who often abuse the children out of frustration.

But the biggest problem, doctors who work with children say, is not with those born under the effects of the drug but with the children who grow up surrounded by methamphetamine and its attendant problems. Because users are so highly sexualized, the children are often exposed to pornography or sexual abuse, or watch their mothers prostitute themselves, the welfare workers say.

The drug binges tend to last for days or weeks, and the crash is tremendous, leaving children unwashed and unfed for days as parents fall into a deep sleep.

"The oldest kid becomes the parent, and the oldest kid may be 4 or 5 years old," said Dr. Mike Stratton, a pediatrician in Muskogee, Okla., who is involved with a state program for children exposed to drugs that is run in conjunction with the Justice Department. "The parents are basically worthless, when they're not stoned they're sleeping it off, when they're not sleeping they don't eat, and it's not in their regimen to feed the kids."

Ms. Glick recalls a group of siblings found eating plaster at a home filled with methamphetamine. The oldest, age 6, was given a hamburger when they arrived at the Laura Dester Shelter; he broke it apart and handed out bits to his siblings before taking a bite himself.

Jay Wurscher, director of alcohol and drug services for the children and families divi-

sion of the Oregon Department of Human Services, said, "In every way, shape and form, this is the worst drug ever for child welfare."

Child welfare workers say they used to remove children as a last resort, first trying to help with services in the home.

But everywhere there are reminders of the dangers of leaving children in homes with methamphetamine. In one recent case here, an 18-month-old child fell onto a heating unit on the floor and died while the parents slept; a 3-year-old sibling had tried to rouse them.

The police who raid methamphetamine labs say they try to leave the children with relatives, particularly in rural areas, where there are few other options.

But it has become increasingly clear, they say, that often the relatives, too, are cooking or using methamphetamine. And because the problem has hit areas where there are so few shelters, children are often placed far from their parents. Caseworkers have to drive children long distances to where parents are living or imprisoned for visits; Leslie Beyer, a caseworker at Laura Dester, logged 3,600 miles on her car one month.

The drain of the cases is forcing foster families to leave the system, or caseworkers to quit. In some counties in Oklahoma, Ms. Rider-Salem said, half the caseworkers now leave within two years.

After the ban on over-the-counter pseudoephedrine was enacted—a law other states are trying to emulate—the number of children taken out of methamphetamine labs and into the foster care system in Oklahoma declined by about 15 percent, Ms. Glick said. But she said the number of children found not in the labs but with parents who were using the drug had more than compensated for any decline.

The state's only other children's shelter, in Oklahoma City, was so crowded recently that the fire marshal threatened to shut it down, forcing the state to send children to foster families in far-flung counties.

At Laura Dester, three new children arrived on one recent morning, the 3-year-old being treated for lice and two siblings, found playing in an abandoned house while their mother was passed out at home. The girl now wanders with a plastic bag over her hair to keep the lice salve from leaking. She hugs her little brother, then grabs a plastic toy phone out of his hand, leaving him wailing.

"Who's on the phone?" asks Kay Saunders, the assistant director at the shelter, gently trying to intervene. "My mom," the girl says, then turns to her little brother. "It's ringing!"

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ERIC P. WOODS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to salute an extraordinary native Iowan who has fallen in service to his country in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. PFC Eric P. Woods, of the 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, died on the 9th day of July, 2005, in Tal Afar, Iraq, due to injuries sustained when an explosive device detonated under his vehicle. Woods, a combat medic was killed en route to aid an injured soldier. My prayers go out to his wife Jamie, his 3-year-old son Eric Scott, his parents Charles and Janis Woods, and his many other friends and family.

Eric Woods grew up in Urbandale, IA, and was an active member in the youth

group at Westchester Evangelical Free Church. At Urbandale High School he wrestled and played football and baseball before graduating in 1997. While attending Iowa State University, he became manager of Krause Gentle Company. After a move to Omaha, Eric became a medic in the U.S. Army.

Private First Class Woods was a truly thoughtful soldier, requesting packages from home containing soccer balls, candy, and toys to give out to the children of Iraq. He will be remembered not only for his sacrifice for freedom but also the way in which he served, giving his life on the way to help an injured fellow soldier. Recently, his pastor said of Eric: "His motto was to charge, not retreat. He squeezed the most out of life." Again my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. I ask my colleagues in the Senate and all Americans to remember with gratitude and admiration this courageous Iowan, PFC Eric P. Woods.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SANITATION AGENCIES

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the achievements of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies, and to celebrate the organization's 50th anniversary.

CASA has provided the State of California with clean, safe, and reliable drinking water since its founding in 1955. Not only has CASA worked hard to ensure the well-being of Californians, but it has also championed a multitude of environmental issues related to clean water and water infrastructure that have been vital to California's long-term economic and social stability.

I want to recognize CASA's proactive leadership in promoting partnerships with a variety of organizations to create a sound public health and environmental agenda. For the past 50 years CASA has been the voice of the public wastewater agencies and served to assist and monitor a variety of water quality, and related policy issues.

CASA has fought hard on behalf of California's sanitation agencies and played an active role in numerous legislative struggles. Among CASA's legislative achievements include sponsoring legislation that gives publicly owned treatment works the authority to levy civil and administrative penalties against industrial dischargers for violations of local wastewater ordinances. Additionally, CASA has worked in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to develop and implement effective water rules for air toxics, sewer overflows, and biosolids management.

CASA has acted as a valuable resource by helping its member agencies understand and comply with varying