

# Forum confronts ice scourge

By Esther Lauaki

Sunbury residents want to freeze the high-profile drug ice out of their community.

About 100 people turned out to a drug information evening late last month to learn about the drug, how to raise the subject of illegal drug use with friends and family, and what they can do to combat problems.

A spokeswoman for organisers said the information session was organised in response to increasing concerns about ice and its effects in the community.

“We probably receive one or two new inquiries every week, from parents or from a user,” she said.

In March, Sunbury police’s Sergeant John Letchford described ice as a “hideous” drug that was ruining local lives. He said its use was widespread and had a flow-on effect to assaults, burglaries and other crime.

“We’re coming across it more and more,” Sergeant Letchford said.

The information evening, dubbed Demystifying Ice, aimed to bust myths that have grown around the drug, its use and its

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users. It also highlighted the support services available.

Sunbury Community Health addiction counsellor Matt Johnson said the forum had been a success.

“We were very pleased with the turnout. There’s a lot of media attention surrounding

the drug at the moment, especially with the new ad campaign just out,” he said.

“We wanted to give people a greater understanding and clear up some of the myths.”

It was the first information session about ice use and its impacts on Sunbury.

Mr Johnson said he would like public drug education and information to be ongoing.

“We believe education is the key to making a difference.”

Contact Sunbury Community Health on 9744 4455 or [www.sunburychc.org.au](http://www.sunburychc.org.au).