Parents are important role models for children

- First know the facts. Inhalants are deadly chemicals that can lead to the abuse of other drugs.
- Ask them what they know about inhalants.
- Set a good example for them, don’t just talk about it.
- Be available to talk to your child.
- Know your school’s policy on inhalant abuse.

When surveyed by The American Academy of Pediatrics fourth graders indicated that 74% wanted to hear about drugs from their parents. By eighth grade, the number decreases to 19%.

- If you think your child is abusing inhalants, talk to your child.
- If your child is abusing inhalants, a physician should assess the damage.

Resources

National Inhalant Prevention Coalition
1-800-269-4237
www.inhalants.org

National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Referral Service
1-800-662-4357 (1-800-662-HELP)

The Upstate New York Poison Center
1-800-222-1222 • TTY 1-315-464-5424
www.upstatepoison.org

Prevention Network
(315)471-1359
www.preventionnetwork.com

The following resources are for you to learn more about inhalant abuse

Websites

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information - www.health.org
National Institute on Drug Abuse
www.nida.nih.gov
Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (in NY state) www.oasas.ny.state.us
Office of National Drug Control Policy
www.whitehousedrug.com
Partnership for a Drug-Free America
www.drugfreeamerica.org
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
www.samhsa.gov

Information for Parents

F81840 SUNY Upstate Medical University Rev. 1/2008

Inhalant Abuse Awareness Program for Parents

A collaborative project of:
The Upstate NY Poison Center
The Prevention Network
The NYS Association of School Nurses

Developed by: The Upstate New York Poison Center
1-800-222-1222

SUNY Upstate Medical University
Rev. 1/2008
What is Inhalant Abuse?
Inhalant abuse is a rising problem among pre-teens and teenagers. Abusers are inhaling the fumes of common household products on purpose.

Why? The chemicals change the way the brain works, giving an immediate head-rush or high, as it slows or stops the oxygen flow to the brain and body’s organs. Some chemicals can also cause poisoning. Repeated use can cause permanent damage.

First Time Use Can Cause Death

Facts:
- The US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that usage is highest among 8th graders.
- Abuse may go unnoticed because parents and school personnel don’t realize the problem.
- The American Association of Poison Control Centers documents that of the deaths involving 12-17 year olds, 30% were caused by inhalant abuse.

Why Does Inhalant Abuse Occur?
- Products are inexpensive
- Easy to conceal
- Convenient and easy to use
- Immediate effects
- Few legal consequences
- Lack of awareness of the dangers

Products
- Adhesives: glues and cements
- Gas: butane, nitrous oxide, helium, propane
- Solvents: gasoline, kerosene, correction fluid, paint thinner, spot remover, shoe polish, permanent markers
- Food products: spray whipped cream, cooking spray
- Aerosols: spray air fresheners, fabric protectors, hair sprays, deodorant, asthma sprays
- Nitrites: amyl or butyl nitrite sold as VCR head cleaner and room odorizers

There is Potential for Sudden Death, Even the First Time

Short Term Effects
Users experience a tingling sensation or “high” feeling as a result of decreased oxygen to the brain and body organs. Although the high lasts 5 seconds to a minute or two, the effects can last 15 to 45 minutes including:
- Irregular heartbeat
- Disorientation
- Memory loss
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Loss of coordination

Long Term Effects
- Permanent brain damage
- Slurred speech
- Lack of muscle coordination and balance
- Damage to heart, liver or other major organs
- Optic nerve impairment
- Hearing loss

Terms You Should Know
- “Huffing” - fumes enter through the mouth
- “Sniffing” - fumes enter through the nose
- “Bagging” - holding a bag over the mouth and nose
- “Spraying” a substance into the mouth

Signs of Inhalant Abuse Include:
- Paint regularly found on body or clothes
- Red or runny eyes or nose
- Chemical odor on breath
- Drunk or dazed look
- Loss of appetite
- Irritability, excitability
- Odd products in your child’s room or backpack

What to Do If You Find Someone Abusing Inhalants
- Do not panic the abuser. Any stimulation may cause the heart to stop pumping or may cause the abuser to become violent.
- If the abuser is conscious, get fresh air into the room. Seek medical help.
- If unconscious, check for pulse. If not breathing, begin CPR until help arrives.
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  www.whitehouse.gov
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America  
  www.drugfreeamerica.org
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)  
  www.samhsa.gov

**PARENTS ARE IMPORTANT ROLE MODELS FOR CHILDREN**

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Inhalant Abuse

**INHALANT ABUSE**

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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