

"Secrets of the Streets:



**Things Our Youth are Doing
That You Need to Know About"**

Objectives

- ▶ Define inhalant abuse
- ▶ List three consequences of inhalant abuse
- ▶ Identify the 4 categories of inhalants
- ▶ Describe the symptoms and observable signs to look for when treating inhalant abuse

What are our youth are doing?

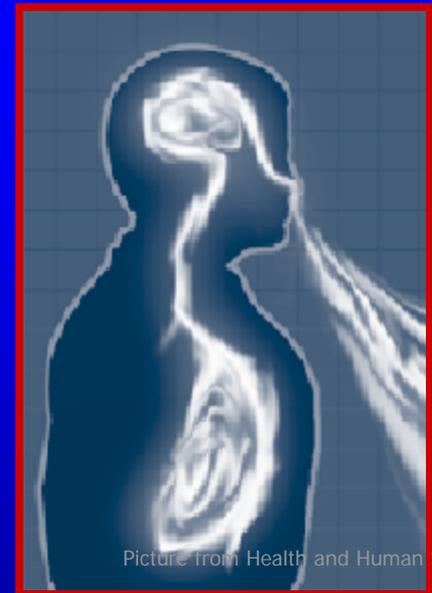
- ▶ The chemicals (poisons) used in this deadly form of Substance Abuse aren't only found on the street
- ▶ They're right under our noses; with over 1400 household, school, and office products that kids are misusing to get high



Picture from the National Institute of Drug Abuse

What is inhalant abuse?

Inhalant abuse refers to the deliberate inhalation or sniffing of common products found in homes and communities with the purpose of getting high



Picture from Health and Human Services

What Users Feel?

- ▶ Like alcohol, inhalants act as central nervous system depressants. They give users a quick euphoric rush followed by a bit of wooziness
- ▶ The effects fade quickly, which makes inhalant use difficult to detect and gives children the misconception that inhalants are not dangerous
- ▶ Inhalants are addictive

Pathways of Drugs/Alcohol Versus Inhalants

▶ Drugs/Alcohol

- Go to stomach
- Diluted, broken down
- Sent to small intestine
- Enters bloodstream
- Goes to liver, some toxins removed
- Circulates throughout body

▶ Inhalants

- Vapors enter lungs/air sacs
- Enters bloodstream
- Immediately sent to brain
- Circulates to heart
- Goes to livers, some toxins removed
- Circulated throughout body

Who is inhaling?

- ▶ Over 1/4 million young people use inhalants in the US every month
- ▶ Elementary, middle and high school age children
- ▶ Most common in the 10-12 year age group and is considered a gateway drug



Who is inhaling?

- ▶ Boys and Girls
- ▶ Most are normal kids
- ▶ All socio-economic groups



Microsoft clipart

Who is inhaling?

1 in 5 children
have tried inhaling
by grade 8



Experts estimate that there are
several hundred deaths each
year from inhalant abuse,
although under-reporting is still
a problem



Who is inhaling?

- ▶ Inhalants are Gateway Drugs and the overwhelming majority of abusers of volatile solvents and aerosols are children and youth
- ▶ They are used in isolation or as a peer group activity. Adult abusers may be more frequent users of anesthetic gases

Downward Trends

- ▶ Overall, teen drug use is trending downward in the U.S.
- ▶ Lifetime use of any illegal drug is down by 10% over the last five years
- ▶ The one exception to this positive trend is the increase in inhalant abuse among pre-teens

Gateway Drug Use

- ▶ According to SAMHSA, more than 2.1 million children in America experiment with some form of inhalant each year
- ▶ Age of initiation to inhalants is younger than for all other substances, even as young as age 6
- ▶ It may be first drug use by children because easily accessible and inexpensive

Lack of Parental Knowledge

- ▶ According to Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 18% of 8th graders have used inhalants, but 9 out of 10 parents are unaware or deny that their children may have abused inhalants
- ▶ Only 47% of parents talked to their children about inhalants. The reason cited was they didn't know enough about this issue and the mistaken belief that their child knows the risk and thus won't try them

Categories of Toxic Substances

VOLATILE SOLVENTS

(Evaporate easily)

- Paint
- Glue
- Paint thinner
- Toxic markers
- Gasoline/kerosene
- Lighter fluid
- Nail polish remover
- Carburetor cleaner
- Grease/spot remover
- Toluene
- Correction fluid



Categories of Toxic Substances

AEROSOLS

(contain propellants and solvents):

- Spray paint
- Hair spray
- Deodorant
- Insecticides
- Glass chillers
- Furniture protector
- Room freshener
- Cooking spray (suffocates by coating inside of the lungs)
- Whipped cream dispensers



Categories of Toxic Substances

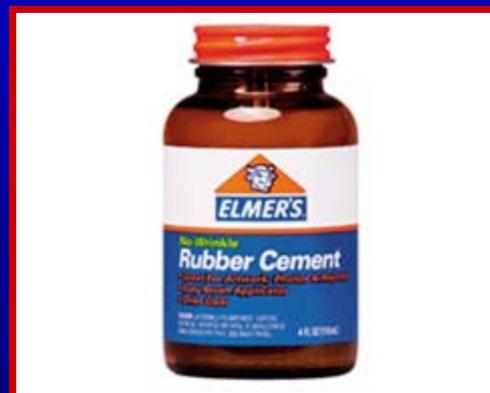
NITRITES

- Amyl and Butyl (called poppers)
- Sold at head shops in small brown bottles labeled Locker Room or Rush
- The user just opens the bottle and breathes in the fumes

Common products

Office Products

- Correction Fluid
- Rubber Cement
- Glue
- Permanent Marking Pen
- Computer Cleaner



Common products

▶ Household products *(more than 1000)*

- Gasoline
- Propane
- Hair Spray
- Air Freshener
- Spray Paint
- Cleaning Products
- Nitrous Oxide



Why abuse these products?

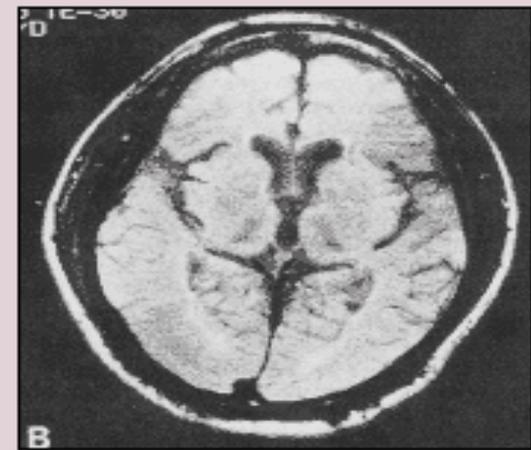
- ▶ Available at home, school, grocery, auto, and convenience stores
- ▶ No “dealers” or “paraphernalia” needed to purchase or use products
- ▶ Young people think they are safe

Why abuse these products?

- ▶ Easy to hide
- ▶ Can use anywhere
- ▶ Parents are unaware of use
- ▶ Education programs are not always available in schools or communities

Consequences/Damage

- ▶ **Permanent** brain damage
- ▶ Organ damage (**heart, kidney and liver**)
- ▶ Memory loss
- ▶ Nerve and bone marrow damage
- ▶ Senses
- ▶ **Death**



Courtesy of Neil Rosenberg, M.D.

Brain images show marked atrophy (shrinkage) of brain tissue in a toluene abuser (B) compared to a nonabusing individual (A). Note the smaller size and the larger empty (dark) space within the toluene abuser's brain. (The white outer circle in each image is the skull.)



**SNIFFING MARKERS
DESTROYS YOUR BRAIN.**

Sniffing stuff like spray paint or markers can
cause brain damage, lung damage, even death.

Picture from: <http://www.inhalants.org/>

Consequences/Damage

- ▶ **Sudden Death** can occur on first try
- ▶ Sniffing disrupts heart rhythm causing **heart failure**
- ▶ **Suffocation** occurs if chemical displaces oxygen
- ▶ Fumes can cause vomiting and individuals can choke on vomit



**SNIFFING SPRAY PAINT
DESTROYS YOUR LUNGS.**

Sniffing stuff like spray paint or markers can kill you.
The first time, the second time, even the hundredth time.

Picture from: <http://www.inhanna.org/>

Consequences/Damage

- ▶ All risks linked to chasing a high that often lasts just a matter of minutes
- ▶ The most serious acute consequence is death. 50% of inhalant-related deaths are caused by sudden sniffing death syndrome

Consequences/Damage

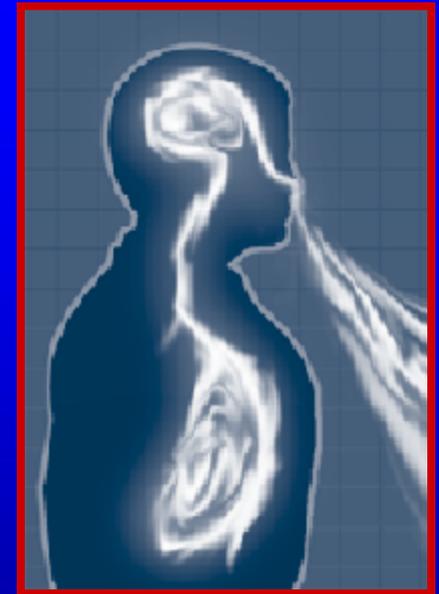
- ▶ Damage to lungs, heart, and brain; liver and kidney problems; bone marrow suppression; muscle involvement and limb spasms; vision problems and hearing loss
- ▶ These can occur immediately or over time and be reversible or permanent

How Kids Inhale

- ▶ Common modes of administration
 - Inhalation by nose or mouth
 - *Sniffing, bagging or huffing*
 - Sniffing/inhaling directly from containers
 - Sniffing/inhaling paper bags over the users head
 - Sniffing/inhaling from cloth or clothing saturated with the substance or painted on nails

How Kids Inhale

- ▶ Aerosol inhalation
 - *Directly spraying into the mouth or nose*
- ▶ Inhaling from alternative containers
 - *e.g. balloon filled with nitrous oxide or coke cans used to hide the product while sucking the vapors out*
- ▶ Inhalation of vapors emitted by heating volatile substances



Other Possible Effects

- ▶ Bizarre thoughts; distorted perceptions of time, space, or distance; altered shapes and colors; grandiosity; paranoia or hallucinations
- ▶ Intense headaches or unconsciousness
- ▶ Abdominal pain or diarrhea
- ▶ Ataxic gait
- ▶ Wheezing, sneezing, coughing, and excess salivation

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

Less than half of parent surveyed have talked to their kids about inhalants



There is a disconnect between parents thinking their kids would not risk misusing these products and the reality of kids using: so they aren't talking to their kids about the dangers of inhalant abuse

Tips for Parents

Early and consistent parental intervention and guidance are the keys to preventing children from experimenting with inhalants in the first place



Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** talk to kids about the dangers of using inhalants
- ▶ **Do** discuss the purpose of common household products
- ▶ **Do** teach that fumes and gases can harm the body and act as poison when not used properly

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** discuss poisons and their effects on the body
- ▶ **Do** play a game with small children, “Is this safe to smell, eat, or touch?”
- ▶ **Do** read and discuss labels and directions with children

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** discuss the importance of proper ventilation
- ▶ **Do** teach by example



Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ Be aware of the power of peers to help prevent substance abuse
- ▶ Keep in mind that unsupervised teens are more likely to engage in risky behaviors

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** talk tough with teens
- ▶ **Do** ask teens if they know about inhalants
- ▶ **Do** ask if they know the damage that can occur from huffing or sniffing
- ▶ **Do** explain that huffing or sniffing is deadly

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** talk about how making choices to huff or sniff can be deadly
- ▶ **Do** provide educational materials and resources
- ▶ **Do** monitor activities, know their friends, set limits, and be a good listener
- ▶ **Do** teach and reinforce appropriate skills

Inhalant Abuse Prevention

- ▶ **Do** take safety precautions, read labels, recognize poisons, follow directions, and teach kids ways to respond to peer pressure
- ▶ **Do** keep poisons locked up and out of reach

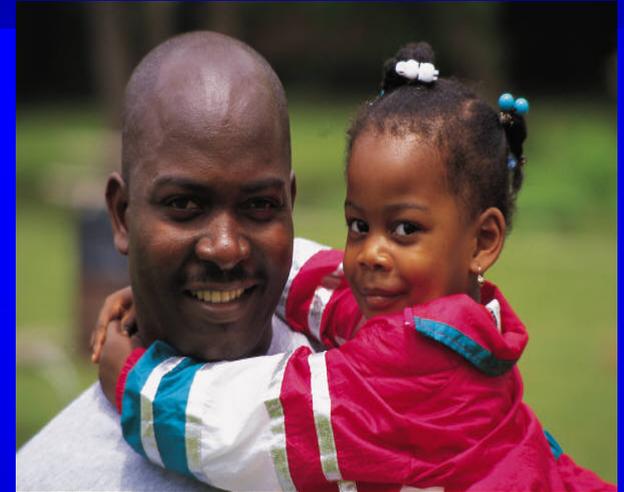


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Emergency Information

- ▶ Call the Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222** for emergency treatment advice. If possible, have the product close at hand
- ▶ If the person is unconscious or not breathing call **911** right away
- ▶ Keep person calm to decrease cardiac arrest

Partnership For A Drug-free America



Pre-school

- Discuss the joys of healthy living
- Celebrate your child's decision-making skills
- Help children separate make-believe from real life
- Turn frustration into a learning opportunity
- Tell your child how proud you are of them

Partnership For A Drug-free America



Grades K-3

- Keep talks on drugs and alcohol factual and present
- focused
- Set clear rules and role model good behavior
- Help kids explore new ways to express their feelings
- Focus on ways kids can problem solve
- Get to know your child's friends and their parents
- Enroll kids in programs with healthy, positive messages

Partnership For A Drug-free America

Grades 4-6

- Set rules and enforce the consequences
- Role play scenes with child where people offer drugs
- Tell your child what makes him so special
- Give them power to make good decisions
- Base drug and alcohol messages on facts, not fear
- Know your child's friends and their parents
- Help children separate from fantasy



Partnership For A Drug-free America



► Grades 7-9

- Set rules and enforce consequences
- Tell them all the wonderful things you find about them
- Show interest and discuss their ups and downs
- Discuss negative effects of drugs and alcohol on appearance
- Don't just leave anti-drug education up to school

Partnership For A Drug-free America



► Grades 10-12

- Be aware of challenges facing teens
- Know your teen's friends and hangouts
- Help your teen reject peer pressure
- Schedule time to discuss no drug use policy
- Enforce rules and consequences
- Eat meals together as often as possible
- Involve your teen in supervised activities
- Check in with your teen after school

Partnership For A Drug-free America



► Grades 10-12

- Watch for decline in teen's school performance
- Know the warning signs of drug use
- BE A BETTER LISTENER
- Give honest answers
- Use TV reports, anti-drug ads for discussions
- Talk about the risks of drug, tobacco and alcohol use, and don't use fear tactics to scare them
- Don't react in a way that will cut off further discussion
- Role play refusal skills
- Stay involved in your teen's life

Final Words...

- ▶ **Don't** use scare tactics
- ▶ **Don't** tell too much too soon
- ▶ **Don't** give details on how to use
- ▶ **Don't** think abuse starts in high school