



Prevent This

SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS COUNSELING CENTERS, INC. AND
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Inhalants

They're all over your house. They're in your child's school. In fact, you probably picked some up the last time you went to the grocery store.

Most parents are in the dark regarding the popularity and dangers of inhalant use. But children are quickly discovering that common household products are inexpensive to obtain, easy to hide and the easiest way to get high. According to national surveys, inhaling dangerous products is becoming one of the most widespread problems in the country. It is as popular as marijuana with young people. More 8th graders (15.6%) have tried inhalants in their lifetime than any other illicit drug, including marijuana.

(Monitoring the Future survey 2007)

Data from the National Survey on Drug Use & Health show that the primary abusers of most inhalants are adolescents ages 12-17.

Inhalants are common products that can be found in virtually every room in your home. Because they are inexpensive, accessible, and unmonitored by parents, inhalants are among the most popular and deadly substances kids abuse. Teens use inhalants by sniffing or snorting the fumes from containers to produce a "high". This high can be attained by spraying aerosols directly into the mouth or nose; bagging, by inhaling a substance inside a paper or plastic bag; huffing from an inhalant-soaked rag; or inhaling from balloons filled with nitrous oxide.

Inhalants in Your Home

Hundreds of household products qualify as inhalants. Some of these may be in your kitchen, bathroom, garage or bedroom.

- **Kitchen**—ammonia, bleach, butane, cooking spray, insecticides, lye & drain cleaners, furniture polish & wax, lighter fluid, disinfectants, oven cleaners.
- **Bedroom**—hairsprays, moth balls, polish remover
- **Bathroom**—deodorants, cleaning products, air fresheners
- **Garage/workshop**—antifreeze, car wash, gasoline, kerosene, paint & paint thinners, pesticides, refrigerants
- **Office**—markers, glues & adhesives, correction fluid

Plus many more!!!

Contact Information:

Vaneta Andrews, Prevention Specialist

Family Counseling Center, 902 W. Jourdan, Newton, IL 62448

Ph: 618-783-8615 email: prevent10@yahoo.com

Signs of an Inhalant User:

There is a common link between inhalant use and problems in school—failing grades, chronic absences and general apathy. Other signs include the following:

- *Paint or stains on body or clothing.*
- *Spots or sores around the mouth.*
- *Red or runny eyes or nose.*
- *Chemical breath odor.*
- *Drunk, dazed or dizzy appearance.*
- *Nausea, loss of appetite.*
- *Anxiety, excitability, irritability.*

What To Do When Someone Is Huffing

- Remain Calm and do not panic.
- Do not excite or argue with the abuser when they are under the influence, as they can become aggressive or violent.
- If the person is unconscious, call for help. CPR should be administered until help arrives.
- If the person is conscious, keep him or her calm and in a well-ventilated room.
- Excitement or stimulation can cause hallucinations or violence.
- Activity or stress may cause heart problems which may lead to “Sudden Sniffing Death”.
- Talk with other persons present or check the area for clues to what was used.
- Once the person is recovered, seek professional help for abuser: school nurse, counselor, physician, other health care worker.
- If use is suspected, adults should be frank but not accusatory in discussions with youth about potential inhalant use.

BEWARE—Inhaling Helium from a Balloon can be Dangerous

Kids crack up when they hear the high-pitched, cartoon-like voice of someone who has just inhaled helium. But the practice is no laughing matter. This colorless, odorless, tasteless and non-toxic gas can cause injury and even death after prolonged inhalation. Helium may be dangerous when inhaled from a balloon, but it can be deadly when it comes from a pressurized tank. Helium inhalation can cause sudden loss of consciousness, nausea, dizziness, seizures, uncontrolled falling, visual disturbances, headaches, lung damage and asphyxiation. Due to the growing availability of helium in rental tanks used to fill balloons, there is a greater chance of helium inhalation incidents occurring.