



Parents, don't be clueless...

Know the warning signs

Because effects come and go so quickly, it is often hard to detect youth that are under the influence of an inhalant.

Some indicators to watch for:

- Change in friends or interests
- Decline in school performance
- Disorientation, dazed appearance
- Slurred speech
- Coordination difficulties
- Chemical odor on clothes and breath
- Red spots or sores around the mouth/nose
- Paint or stains on face and hands
- Loss of appetite, lethargy
- Increase and intensity of headaches
- Excitability and irritability
- Empty lighters, spray cans, plastic bags, balloons or rags with chemical odors, and empty pressurized whipped cream containers



Ricky's Mom Had Never Heard of Inhalant Abuse



Ricky Joe Stem, Jr.
1980 – 1996

Ricky was a wonderful son: full of life, ambition, and goals. A promising future before him—erased with one careless act. Inhalant Abuse/huffing came disguised to Ricky as harmless fun—but harmless fun killed our son. We never warned him about huffing or Inhalant Abuse—why? We had never heard of Inhalant Abuse. Talk directly to your child today, before it is too late. Within this brochure is valuable information that could save YOUR child's life. No parent has the luxury of saying, "My child would never try huffing/Inhalants."

Sincerely,
Ricky Sr. and Diane Stem

R.I.C.K.Y.
Remember Inhalants Can Kill You

This brochure was created by
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in cooperation with:

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American Association of Poison Control Centers
National Inhalant Abuse Prevention Coalition
American School Counselor Association
Partnership For A Drug-Free America
CSPA Product Care™



Alliance for Consumer Education®
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What every parent needs to know about

Inhalant Abuse





Inhalant Abuse refers to the deliberate inhalation or “sniffing” of fumes, vapors or gases from common household products for the purpose of getting high. Inhalant Abuse is an often-overlooked form of substance abuse, but it is no less dangerous than abusing drugs or alcohol. In fact, children can die the very first time they intentionally inhale a product to get high. This is called “Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome.”

Abusing Inhalants can kill and can cause brain, liver, kidney damage or lead to the use of illegal drugs or alcohol.

Inhalants are often the first drug to be abused. In fact, one in five kids has admitted to abusing a product as an Inhalant by the time they reach eighth grade — the time that pre-teen experimentation with Inhalants peaks. While young people may have a hard time getting illegal drugs or alcohol, there are more than 1,400 common items that can be “sniffed” or “huffed,” including many that are found in the kitchen, garage, office, school or convenience store, such as:

- Correction fluid, rubber cement, computer keyboard cleaners
- Refrigerant, gasoline, propane, nitrous oxide, butane
- Glue, marking pens, spray paint
- Dusting spray, hair spray, air fresheners, whipped cream, cooking sprays

These products are safely used by millions of people every day — but they can be deadly when misused as drugs. Parents can help keep their children safe and healthy by educating them about the dangers of Inhalant Abuse.

Communication is Prevention...

Tips For Talking To Children (6-to-11 year-olds)

Discuss the purpose of common household products. Emphasize that when they are not used appropriately, certain fumes or gases may harm the body and make them sick.

- Discuss what fumes are and what effects they may have on a healthy body.
- Play a game, “Is it safe to smell or touch?”
- Read product labels together, discuss directions, answer any questions honestly.
- Suggest opening windows or using fans when products call for proper ventilation.
- Teach by example—show your child that you use household products according to the directions.
- Monitor your child’s activities and friends.
- Look for “teachable moments.”

Talk Tough With Teens

According to national surveys, more than 2 million kids aged 12–17 have used some form of an inhalant to get high.

- Ask your teen what they know about Inhalants.
- Do they have friends who abuse Inhalants?
- Ask if they know the physical damage that can occur from “sniffing”
 - Damage to brain, liver, lungs, kidneys
 - Loss of memory and smell
 - Death—even the first time
- Tell your child that the consequences of abusing products are as dangerous as those from abusing alcohol or using illegal drugs.
- Let them know that sniffing products to get high is not the way to fit in. Help them address peer pressure. It may seem harmless, but the high can come with a deadly cost.

- Be absolutely clear—emphasize that unsafe actions and risky behavior have serious consequences.
- Encourage your child to come to you, or a teacher, clergy, counselor, coach or adult friend if they have any questions or concerns.
- Monitor their activities, know their friends, be a good listener, set limits.
- Seize communication opportunities.

What to Do In Case Of An Emergency

If you find your child unconscious or you suspect your child is under the influence of an Inhalant,

- Call 911 immediately.
- Keep child calm, reduce cardiac stress.
- Try to determine the source of the Inhalant so the medical professionals can help more quickly.

If you suspect your child might be abusing Inhalants, call your poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 or the 1-800 number on the label of the product.

Find Out More...

You may not know as much about the dangers of Inhalant Abuse as you do about the dangers of illegal drugs, tobacco and alcohol abuse. This pamphlet provides a brief overview of Inhalant Abuse, but there is more to know. Visit the ACE website at www.Inhalant.org for more information about Inhalant Abuse warning signs, products that can be abused and what you can do to help prevent Inhalant Abuse in your home and community.

