

- **Inhalants are chemical vapors that produce mind-altering effects when inhaled. Intoxication can last only a few minutes or for hours if taken repeatedly.**
- **These toxic and poisonous chemical vapors are found in more than 1,400 common household products and typically belong to the following categories:**
 - ✚ **volatile solvents: paint thinner, gasoline, glue, correction fluid**
 - ✚ **aerosols: spray paint, deodorant, hair spray, vegetable oil and fabric protectorspray**
 - ✚ **gases: ether, chloroform, nitrous oxide (laughing gas – most popular and found in whipped cream dispensers)**
 - ✚ **nitrates: amyl, butyl and cyclohexyl**
- **Inhalant products are inexpensive, readily available, and not typically seen as cause for alarm when in a youth's possession.**
- **Because these products are not illegal and stored around the home, children often do not perceive the hidden dangers in experimenting with inhaling them and do not feel they "are using drugs".**
- **Users inhale these chemicals by sniffing, snorting, bagging, or huffing (chemical-soaked rag/cloth inhaled through the mouth). They also inhale from balloons filled with nitrous oxide or other devices, commonly referred to as snappers or poppers, in which inhalants are sold.**
- **Nearly all abused inhalants produce a pleasurable effect by depressing the central nervous system.**
- **Toluene, a solvent found in many commonly abused inhalants (airplane glue, paint sprays, paint, and nail polish removers), activates the brains dopamine system which has been shown to play a role in the rewarding effects of many other drugs.**
- **Nitrates dilate and relax blood vessels, and do not act as anesthetic agents like other inhalants.**
- **Inhalants destroy the outer lining of brain cells making communication between cells impossible.**
- **Individuals of all ages use inhalants, but the average age of inhalant abusers is 14 years old (NDIC).**
- **Inhalant abuse is the highest among eighth graders; many of which started before age 10.**
- **One in four inhalant abusers have quit or been permanently suspended from school.**
- **Inhalant abuse can become chronic and extend into adulthood.**
- **Inhalants are considered a gateway drug. Abusers almost always move on to other drugs.**
- **Nearly one out of three inhalant abusers has been arrested for a substance abuse-related offense.**
- **Side-effects associated with inhalant abuse include dizziness, intense hallucinations, delusions, belligerence, apathy, loss of bowel or bladder control, blisters or rash around the nose or mouth, headaches, runny and red nose, persistent cough, lost sense of smell, slurred speech, forgetfulness, impaired judgment and blackouts. Users are at a greater risk for accidents and injury.**

- Long-term abusers experience weight loss, muscle weakness, disorientation, poor concentration, poor coordination, hearing and memory loss, irritability, depression, dramatic changes to one's physical appearance, blood disorders, severe and sometimes irreversible heart, liver, kidney, lung, and brain damage.
- Individuals who stop inhalant abuse often experience the following withdrawal symptoms: sweating, rapid pulse, hand tremors, insomnia, nausea, vomiting, hallucinations, and grand mal seizures.
- Death can occur after a single use of inhalants or after prolonged use.
- Approximately 100 - 150 young people die each year from inhalant abuse.
- As many as 22% of those who die, do so the first time they try it, as a result of "Sudden Sniffing Death".
- Sudden Sniffing Death may occur within minutes of inhalant abuse from irregular heart rhythm leading to heart failure or suffocation by displacing oxygen in the lungs so that breathing ceases.
- "Dusting" is inhaling, "Dust Off". Abusers are typically 9 – 15 year olds and think its just compressed air, but it contains a propellant called R2; a refrigerant that is a gas heavier than air. When inhaled, it omits good air with oxygen from entering the lungs. Users feel dizzy; buzzed because it decreases oxygen to the brain and heart. Dusting is being compared to Russian Roulette. Death usually occurs while inhaling or within 2 seconds of finishing "the hit".
- Inhalant abusers can die from heart failure, asphyxiation, suffocation, choking (on vomit), or fatal injury.
- Signs of Inhalant Abuse:

*spray cans that feel full but do "not work"

*plastic bags

*red, watery eyes, runny nose

*spots/sores/rash around the mouth

*drunk, dazed, dizzy behaviors

*old rags/socks smelling of chemicals around the house, car, bedroom

*paint marks on cloths or skin

*decrease appetite or weight loss

*headaches

*chemical smell on breath

*chronic cough

- Street Terms for Inhalants:

Amys

Boppers

Glading

Head cleaner

Kick

Pearls

Rush

Bang

Bullet

Gluey

Hippie crack

Locker room

Poor man's pot

Snappers

Bolt

Climax

Hardware

Huff

Moon gas

Poppers

Whippets

- The common household products misused as inhalants are legally available for their legitimate uses intended. However, 46 states have enacted legislation designed to prevent products commonly used as inhalants from being sold to minors.

Resources:

www.intheknowzone.com/inhalants/ssdd/

www.usdoj.gov/ndic

www.nih.gov

www.cdc.gov

www.omhrc.gov

www.health.org

home.leo.gov/legis/ndic

www.drugabuse.gov

www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

www.preventiondss.org

www.samhsa.gov