

# INHALANTS

## How Much Do You Know About Inhalant Use?

Inhalant abuse is the deliberate inhalation of fumes from common products found in homes, offices and schools to get high. Inhalant use can cause brain damage and can lead to death even at the trial stage.

## Inhalants: Facts Every Parent Should Know

- There are approximately 1000 ordinary household products (ex. glues/adhesives, nail polisher remover, marking pens, paint thinner, spray paint, butane lighter fluid, gasoline, propane gas, household cleaners, deodorants, whipping cream aerosols, air conditioning coolants) that are deliberately inhaled or sniffed by children to get high.
- Initial use of inhalants often starts in elementary school.
- One in five 8th grade students have used inhalants.
- Sniffing can severely damage many parts of the body, including the brain, heart, liver and kidneys.
- “Sudden Sniffing Death” can occur during or right after sniffing.
- Even first time users can die from sniffing inhalants. The heart begins to overwork; beating rapidly but unevenly and can lead to cardiac arrest.

## Tips for Parents:

- Educate yourself.
- Talk early and often. Communicate with your child about this harmful behavior.
- Remember when talking with your child that inhalants are not drugs; they are poisons and toxins and should be discussed as such.
- Parents who suspect their children are using should be alert for changes in their child’s attitudes and interests, decline in school performance, disoriented/dazed appearance, slurred speech, and chemical odors on their child’s clothes, breath or backpack. In addition, adults should look for red spots or sores around the nose and/or mouth, complaints of headaches, empty lighters, spray cans, or household containers or rags or plastic bags with chemical odors.

## WHAT THE DATA SHOW:

Nationally, while overall teen drug use is declining, data show that fewer pre-teens see the risk in inhalant use and are more willing to experiment. Over the past two years, according to a study conducted by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, inhalant abuse by 8th graders increased by 18 percent (from 22 to 26 percent) and by 44 percent (from 18 to 26 percent) among 6th graders.

In Connecticut, according to the most recent survey of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, nearly 7 percent of 7th and 8th graders reported recent use of inhalants, and 5.3 percent of 9th and 10th graders reported use.

**For more information:**

Partnership for a Drug-Free America: [ <http://www.drugfreeamerica.org>  
]www.drugfreeamerica.org

National Inhalants and Poisons Coalition: [ <http://www.inhalant.org> ]www.inhalant.org

The Governor's Prevention Partnership:

[<http://www.preventionworksct.org> ]www.preventionworksct.org

CT Prevention Network: [ <http://www.ctprevention.org/mawsac>

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