

INHALANTS

What Parents Should Know

We carefully label and safely store many household products that are harmful or fatal if swallowed. But what about the hundreds of products — glue, paint, lighter fluid, fingernail polish, permanent markers, and anything in aerosol cans — that young people can sniff to get a rapid, dangerous "high?" It's easy to buy or find inhalants, and abuse is on the increase. In 1994, one in five eighth graders reported using inhalants at least once.

An inhalant "high" gives a feeling of well-being and reduces inhibitions, much like the effects of alcohol and other sedatives. Higher doses produce laughter and giddiness, feelings of floating, time and space distortions, and hallucinations.

Some signs of inhalant abuse:

- slow speech
- disorientation
- spots or sores around the mouth
- headaches and nausea
- a general drunken appearance

Make No Mistake — Inhalants Can Be Deadly

Some people die from heart failure or suffocation the first time they sniff to get high. Chronic abuse can cause severe, permanent brain damage.

Other side effects include breathing problems, heart palpitations, muscle weakness, abnormalities in liver and kidney function, chromosome damage, loss of appetite and weight, impaired judgment that can lead to confusion, panic, and violent behavior.

"Sniffing" is frequently a first step to such drugs as crack and heroin.



**TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME**

MARIJUANA

Common, Dangerous, and Still Illegal

In 1994, three in ten high school seniors said they smoked marijuana at least once. It's the most widely used illicit drug in the United States and tends to be the first illegal drug teens use.

Just because it's common doesn't mean marijuana is safe. In fact, the marijuana used today is far stronger than that available two or three decades ago — and far more dangerous.

Using Marijuana May Cause...

- Memory problems
- Reduced abilities to do things that need concentration and coordination, such as driving a car
- Increased appetite
- Decreased inhibitions
- Bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and throat
- Lower testosterone levels and sperm counts in men
- Increased testosterone in women, which can cause acne and increased facial and body hair
- Paranoia and hallucinations
- Diminished or extinguished sexual pleasure
- Psychological dependence so that over time more of the drug is needed to get the same effect

Marijuana Is Still Illegal.

Depending on where an individual is arrested, penalties for possession, use, and dealing can be harsh. Convicted individuals face fines, possible imprisonment, and a criminal record.



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