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# Email Alert

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Updating you about current events in the battle against addictions

## Inhalant Abuse - A Review

By now you are probably aware of the dangers of inhalant abuse. Although we have sent out other e-alerts about inhalant abuse in the past, we are doing this one for a few reasons. First, it never hurts to remind people about the dangers of substance abuse. Second, the National Inhalants Prevention Awareness Campaign will be held during the week of March 15-21, 2009. Finally, SERAC will be hosting a training session about inhalant abuse on February 27, 2009.

### What is inhalant abuse?

Inhalant abuse refers to the intentional breathing of gas or vapors in order to get high. Products which are inhaled include everyday, legal products like paint, glue, cooking spray and air freshener which are readily available to anyone of any age at many stores. Because they are common household products that are readily available many fail to realize just how dangerous and potentially deadly these products can be when abused.

### What can inhalants do to the body?

The effects of inhalants on the body resemble the effects of alcohol and include slurred speech, lack of coordination, dizziness and loss of consciousness. Inhalants actually displace air from the lungs and deprive cells throughout the body of oxygen. Although all cells are susceptible to a lack of oxygen, the cells in the brain are particularly sensitive. Lack of oxygen related to inhalant use can result in brain damage. Inhalant use, even just once, can result in Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome.

### How common is inhalant abuse?

According to the National Monitoring the Future Survey in 2007, more 8<sup>th</sup> graders (15.6%) have tried inhalants in their lifetime than any other illicit drug including marijuana. According to the Connecticut School Health Survey 2007, 11.2% of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders in Connecticut reported using inhalants at least once in their lifetime. Rates tended to be higher among males and among younger individuals. The highest rates of inhalant abuse were reported by White and Hispanic students while the lowest rates were reported by African American students. National and State level data suggest that inhalant use rates have remained largely unchanged over the past several years.

To learn more about Inhalants please consider attending our training session on February 27. To register call the office or visit our website.

### Sources:

<http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm>

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofacts/Inhalants.html>

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