

## 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. It is often overlooked, but is no less dangerous than abusing drugs or alcohol. In fact, children can die the first time they intentionally inhale a product. If it doesn’t kill them, it can cause brain, liver, or kidney damage. The highs produced by inhalants are similar to alcohol intoxication and the chemicals proceed rapidly to the brain. These products are addictive as well as highly toxic.

Inhalants are often the first drug to be abused. 1 in 5 kids have admitted inhaling a product to get high by the time they reach the eighth grade. According to national surveys, more than 2 million kids aged 12-17, have used some form of an inhalant to get high. These inhalants are hard to detect and are easily accessible to children. They can commonly be found in the kitchen, garage, office, and school. Some of the abused products include: correction fluid, rubber cement, refrigerant, gasoline, propane, glue, marking pens, spray paint, nitrous oxide, hair spray, nail polish remover, axe deodorant spray, air fresheners, and dust-off for computers. Because effects come and go so quickly, it is often hard to detect youth that are under the influence of an inhalant.

Parents can help keep their children safe by educating them about this dangerous behavior. Emphasize that when they are not used appropriately, certain fumes or gases may harm the body by acting as a poison and making them sick. 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, visit [www.inhalant.org](http://www.inhalant.org).