



National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week

Parent and Educator Toolkit

Alliance for Consumer Education



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Dear Educators and Parents, Each day over 17,000 young adults use an inhalant to get high, significantly risking their life in the process¹. Additionally, in 2015, 47% of the 2.2 million poison exposures reported by the American Association of Poison Control Centers occurred to children under the age of six.

You can help us spread awareness and work to save lives during National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week (NIPAW) from March 18-24, 2018. In the past year, ACE has learned from experts from government agencies, global household product companies, first responders and association leaders. This year, we wanted to translate that knowledge into a national digital campaign with the aim to educate parents and educators on how to teach the children in their lives how to handle the products we use every day. To help spread the word:

1. Follow ACE on Facebook @AllianceforConsumerEd and on Twitter @consumered. Share ACE's educational content across your social media channels. On page four and five, you will find example Facebook and Twitter graphics to accompany the posts.
2. Educate your children or students about poisons and inhalants using the activity sheets and inhalant abuse prevention resources on pages 6-9.
3. Take advantage of our resources and new ACE content on inhalant abuse and accidental poisonings that can be found at ConsumerEd.org/NIPAW

We thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Sara Stickler
Executive Director
Alliance for Consumer Education (ACE)

¹ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality



What is inhalant abuse?

Inhalant abuse consists of intentionally inhaling volatile substances to achieve an altered mental state, or high. Unlike other abused substances, inhalants are categorized by the method in which they are used, rather than the substance itself. Household products are abused by people of all genders, ethnicities, economic background, and ages.

Known by many names –air blast, discorama, hippie crack, medusa, moon gas, oz, and poor man’s pot – inhalant abuse can be deadly.

What products can be abused?

There are three classifications of inhalants: volatile solvents (fuels and anesthetics), nitrous oxide, and volatile alkyl nitrites. These products may seem unfamiliar, or even dangerous, but they are found in everyday products that are safe when used properly. *Such products include:*

SOLVENTS: paint thinners, glue, art supplies, gasoline

GASES: propane tanks, whipped cream dispensers, chloroform, nitrous oxide

AEROSOLS: Spray paints, deodorant spray, computer duster, cooking spray

NITRITES: room odorize, leather cleaner, liquid aroma

What are the dangers?

The risks associated with inhalant abuse increase with prolonged use. However, any time a person abuses an inhalant they put themselves at risk of “sudden sniffing death syndrome,” defined as immediate death from cardiac arrhythmia – or malfunction of the heart’s electrical system.

Other side effects include:

DIRECT: nervous system damage, dementia, mood changes, loss of coordination, cognitive impairment

INDIRECT: while intoxicated, individuals are susceptible to risky behaviors, accidental injury, and death from motor vehicle crashes, and hypothermia

Fortunately, studies show that once stopping inhalant abuse reverses most side effects.

Why are teens vulnerable?

Children and teens are particularly vulnerable to abusing inhalants – awareness of the dangers of inhalant abuse is low, products that can be abused are readily available at homes, schools, and other places, and it is hard to detect on medical screenings. The peak age of inhalant abuse is 14 to 15 years old but can start as young as 5 or 6 years old.

More than 70% of inhalant abusers are younger than 18.



What is accidental poisoning?

Accidental poisoning occurs when an individual causes themselves unintentional bodily harm. Young children are the most vulnerable to accidental poisoning as they are learning about the world and the products that are safe to touch, smell, and ingest. Adults are still susceptible to accidental poisoning, especially in cases where labels were removed from products, or medications were removed from their original container.

What products commonly cause accidental poisoning?

The most common place for accidental poisoning to take place is in the home. Children can be curious about household products that may seem fun to play with, resemble candy, or are within reach. The list of products that can harm when improperly used include:

MEDICATIONS: cough syrup, mouthwash, vitamins, antiseptics, antibiotics, sedatives, antidepressants, etc.

CLEANING PRODUCTS: detergents, cleaning sprays, bleach, drain cleaners

COSMETICS: creams, shampoos, perfumes, mascara, foundation, and concealer

FOUND IN THE HOME: alcohol, cigarettes (when ingested), pesticides, car products, glue, batteries

How can I protect my family?

Keeping labels on products eliminates confusion about the content of a product and preserves instructions that indicate proper use. To keep children safe, keep products out of reach and out of sight from children – use child-resistant locks for cupboards and doors around small children.

Most importantly, have a conversation with your child: Talk with your children about what is safe to taste and what is not safe to taste. For example, colored liquids may look like juice, so teach your children to ask an adult before they try something.

What to do in an emergency.

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, stomach pain, burns around the mouth. Even small amounts of poison can cause serious damage, such as seizures, cardiac arrest, coma, even death. Call Poison Control Center, **1-800-222-1222**, for expert advice. Treatments include:

ACTIVATED CHARCOAL: to absorb the poison – does not work for all poison

OBSERVATION: by medical professionals to monitor condition of patient and possible delayed effects

BLOOD TESTS: to check the levels of poison and inform best treatment options

ADMISSION: to a hospital or medical facility



Be a Digital Advocate

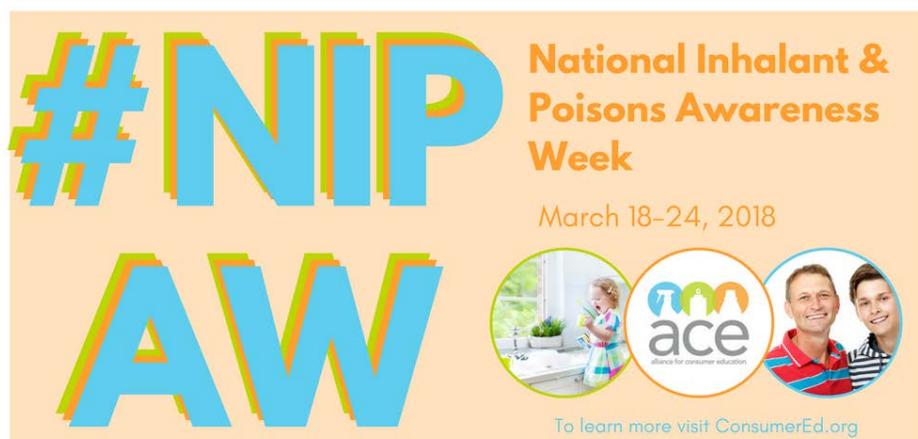
From March 18-24, 2018, ACE will be sharing information on inhalant abuse and poison prevention on social media. By sharing with your friends and family, you can be an advocate for inhalant abuse and accidental poisoning prevention. We thank you for your support!

You can also find all of graphics in our digital library at ConsumerEd.org/NIPAW

Help us get the word out on Facebook!

SAMPLE TEXT:

It's National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week! Did you know that a child is 50% less likely to try an inhalant if an adult has spoken to them about the dangers of inhalant abuse? Did you also know that more than 90% of accidental poisonings occur in the home? Get informed at ConsumerEd.org to protect our homes and families. #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018



SAMPLE TEXT:

National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week (NIPAW) is highlighting the importance of keeping our children safe by keeping potential harmful products out of reach and out of sight from kids. You can find more information at ConsumerEd.org #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018





SAMPLE TEXT:

National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week (NIPAW) is a great time to discuss inhalant abuse with children and teens. Research shows that kids are 50% less likely to abuse inhalants when they've talked about it with an adult. Start the conversation today. Learn more at ConsumerEd.org #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018



Help us get the word out on Twitter!

Copy and paste text and graphics will appear when you tweet!

It's National Inhalants and Poison Awareness Week! Spread the word to help prevent inhalant abuse and accidental poisonings. #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018 pic.twitter.com/SIkDypzoU3

Keep our children safe by keeping potential harmful products out of reach and out of sight from kids. You can find more information at ConsumerEd.org #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018 pic.twitter.com/ODttclXlrg

Research shows that kids are 50% less likely to abuse inhalants when they've talked about it with an adult. Start the conversation today. Learn more at ConsumerEd.org #PreventAccidents #NIPAW2018 pic.twitter.com/wfdvHNsRdH



Communities across the country depend on teachers to educate them about the world around them – that’s why ACE developed tools to talk to your student about inhalant prevention and accidental poisonings.

For students aged 11-17:

Download ACE’s Inhalant Abuse Quiz: <http://www.consumered.org/teach/inhalant-abuse-quiz-and-lessonplan>

Facilitate a conversation about inhalant abuse prevention using the Facilitators Guide and SADD/ACE Lesson

PLANS: <http://www.consumered.org/teach/saddace-lesson-plans>

Safety First!

This week is National Poison Prevention Week. It is important to think before touching or tasting something. Some things that are fun to look at or even play with should not be put in your mouth as they may cause harm to you and your body. Always ask an adult before tasting something. Let's practice!

Cut the pictures out below. Look at each picture and determine if the item is something you think is safe to taste or if it is something you should not put into your mouth. Glue the picture on the correct side.

Safe to taste and safe to put in your mouth

NOT Safe to taste and NOT safe to put in your mouth



Keeping Your Body Safe: Making Smart Choices

Keeping your body safe is an important job. Your parents, teachers, coaches and other adult leaders help you in keeping your body safe by protecting you and helping you make safe and healthy decisions. It is also important that you keep your own body safe by not smelling, sniffing, tasting, or swallowing things that are unsafe for your body. What are some things that may be unsafe to sniff or smell? What things may be unsafe to taste or swallow? Answer the following questions to tell how you will keep your body safe.

NAME: _____

1. Why is it important to think about what you put into your body?

2. What may happen if you put something into your body that is not meant to be there?

3. Your friend, Alex, sees a bottle with a blue liquid in it and wants to drink it. The bottle does not have a label. Do you think it would be safe for Alex to drink this blue liquid?



4. What should you do if something you smell is making you feel not right, like dizzy or light headed?



What are some warning signs that you should not smell or taste something? How can you find these warning signs?

Keeping your body safe is the first step in making sure you grow up to be strong and healthy. Draw a picture of what you want to be when you grow up. Then list three ways you will keep your body safe.

I will keep my body safe by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Dear Parent,

(Insert Date)

We know that protecting your child and keeping your child healthy is important to you. This week is National Poison Prevention Week. Today in class we discussed keeping your child safe by making smart choices about what we put inside our body. Accidental and intentional poisonings can have dangerous and serious consequences. Keeping your child safe from poisonings is a team effort as we all work to keep household products, medicines, cosmetics, and other foreign bodies out of the reach of children.

To Prevent Poisonings:

- Read label directions for proper storage and disposal instructions
- Store products out of the reach and out of sight from children
- Keep products in their original containers, with the label so products can be easily identified and label directions can be read
- Talk with your children about what is safe to taste and sniff, and what is not safe to taste or sniff. For example, colored liquids may look like juice, so teach your children to ask an adult before they try something.

As children age, they may begin experimenting with drugs and alcohol. Sometimes, the first thing children turn to are inhalants, which are everyday products that you have in your home. This is considered intentional poisoning or inhalant abuse, and it can be deadly so having the conversation about putting appropriate things in your body at a young age is important. Some children start experimenting with inhalants as young as ten years of age.

To learn more about inhalant abuse, poison prevention, and for information on how to have these types of conversations with your children visit www.consumer.org. Store the Poison Control number in your phone for emergencies: 1-800-222-1222.

These safety messages can be addressed in daily conversations with your child and we appreciate your help and support as we work to keep your child healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

(teacher name and signature)



Tips for Talking to Tweens about Inhalant Abuse

Each day over 17,000 young adults use inhalants for the sole purpose of getting high. Studies have shown that 10 is the average age children use inhalants for the first time. Over 1,400 household products can be abused; these products are inexpensive, legal, and readily available in the home, office, school, or local grocery store. Today, when we talk to parents about inhalant abuse, we primarily hear “I didn’t realize people still did that” or “Wasn’t that big in the 90’s?”-inhalant abuse still exists and tends to be the first “high” children experience before moving onto other drugs like marijuana or tobacco. Teens say that they rely on the adults in their lives to help guide when making difficult decisions and to provide good advice. Talking to your child early about inhalant abuse is one way to prevent them from abusing these products and harming their bodies.

Tips for Talking to Your Tween (10-14 years old)

- Ask your tween if he/she knows about inhalant abuse. Has he/she seen or heard other kids abusing these products.
- Reinforce resistance to peer pressure and provide your tween with ways to say no-“That’s not for me” or “No thanks, that stuff can be really dangerous.”
- Set your expectations and be clear. Let your tween know where you stand on inhalant abuse and how you would feel if you found out they were doing it. Emphasize that unsafe actions and risky behavior have serious consequences.
- Have more than one conversation about inhalant abuse and the harmful consequences. Talk about it often, inhalant abuse conversations shouldn’t be one and done. Long conversations are not needed; 60 second chats regularly will reiterate the risks and expectations to your tween.
- Talk to your tween about the consequences of inhalant abuse (damage to brain, liver, lungs, and kidneys; loss of memory and smell; death-even the first time).
- Change the conversation as your child gets older. Reinforcing the dangers of intentionally misusing these products is important when your child is younger, but as they move into middle school and their early teen years, it is important that the conversation shifts as well to cover your expectations and the deadly consequences.
- Encourage your tween to ask questions!

To learn more visit: www.inhalant.org



Thank you for your continued support of the Alliance of Consumer Education and its mission to educate consumers and improve lives.

For more information, feel free to contact:

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