



Inhalants Are the Most Popular Illicit Drug among 12- and 13-Year-Olds

Generally speaking, the percentages of adolescents and teens using most illicit drugs increases with age. There is, however, one exception: inhalants. SAMHSA's 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reports that rates of past-year inhalant use increase steadily from 3.4 percent at age 12 to 5.3 percent at age 14 -- then decline to 3.9 percent by age 17. Additionally, inhalants are the most popular illicit drug among 12- and 13-year-olds, with 45.5 percent of that age group using illegal drugs between 2002 and 2006 reporting inhalant use. The second most popular drug among this age group is pain relievers, at a distant 36.5 percent. The three most commonly used types of inhalants were glue, shoe polish, or toluene; spray paints; and gasoline or lighter fluid. **For the full report click here:** <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/inhalants/inhalants.pdf>

School Nurses Helping Prevent Prescription Drug Abuse

The National Association of School Nurses announced 'Smart Moves, Smart Choices,' a program that responds to the growing rate of prescription drug abuse among middle and high school students nationwide. The program, which features a news series and Web-based resources including videos and lesson plans for use by school nurses, teachers and parents; educates teens about the serious risks of abusing prescription medicines, such as those used legitimately to treat pain. **For the full story click here:** <http://www.jointogether.org/news/yourturn/announcements/2008/school-nurses-prescription.html>



For more information on HCTC, Youth Development and for the latest on upcoming HCTC Meetings and Activities **Go To:** <http://www.gvhp.org/orgmain.asp?orgid=12&storyTypeID=&sid=&>



FOCUS ON ALCOHOL AND THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF DRINKING

Many young people do not understand the serious health risks posed by alcohol use. Alcohol can cause a loss of coordination, slowed reflexes, distorted vision, memory lapses, and blackouts. It can also lead to risky behaviors, like having unprotected sex. This may expose young people to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases or cause unwanted pregnancy. Community groups can help educate young people about the physical effects of drinking and teach them to make healthy decisions.

Facts

- ☑ 33% of 9th graders report having ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol (Centers for Disease Control)
- ☑ Among 12 to 17 year olds who are current drinkers, 31% have exhibited extreme levels of psychological distress and 39% have exhibited serious behavioral problems (SAMHSA)
- ☑ 40% of children who start drinking before the age of 15 will become alcoholics at some point in their lives. Delaying the use of alcohol until the legal age helps avoid many of the associated problems. If the onset of drinking is delayed by 5 years, a child's risk of serious alcohol problems is cut in half (National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism)

What to Do:

- ☑ Recruit prevention professionals, doctors, law enforcement, recovering youth or youth impaired-driving crash survivors to serve on a "speaker's forum" about the effects of alcohol on underage youth.
- ☑ Utilize *Parents Who Host Lose the Most Materials* to organize an aggressive outreach effort to enlist parents' support of alcohol-free proms and graduation parties. Encourage parents to hold informal discussions with their children about the physical effects of alcohol and why alcohol is illegal for those under 21. Provide fact sheets, sample discussion points, and other materials to adults interested in participating. **How to do it:** Simple! Just Contact Rachel Pena, HCTC Coordinator: 227-0279