

National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week March 19-24

Knox County inhalant abuse above state and national averages

Inhalants are cheap, legal, accessible products that are as popular among middle school students as marijuana. Few know the deadly effects the poisons in these products have on the brain and body when they are inhaled or “huffed.” It’s like playing Russian Roulette. The user can die the 1st, 10th or 100th time a product is misused as an inhalant.

Prevention through education has proven to work against this popular form of substance abuse. This is why the National Inhalant Prevention Coalition has developed **National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week (NIPAW)**, an annual media-based, community-level program that takes place the third week in March. NIPAW is designed to increase understanding about the use and risks of inhalant involvement. It is an inclusive program that involves youth, schools, media, police departments, health organization, civics groups and more. It has proven to be an effective means of mobilizing communities to reduce inhalant use. Almost 2,000 organizations and individuals from 46 states participated in the last NIPAW campaign.

“... a large part of the problem, is that young people are unaware of the damage inhalants can cause.”

NIPAW presents an opportunity for community organizations to increase awareness about this alarming issue. According to SAMHSA’s report, *Characteristics of Recent Adolescent Inhalant Initiates*, the most popular inhalants for new users are glue, shoe polish, gasoline or lighter fluid, nitrous oxide or whippets, spray paints, correction fluid, cleaning fluid, aerosol sprays, locker room deodorizers, lacquer thinners and paint solvents.

Harvey Weiss, Executive Director of the **National Inhalant Prevention Coalition**, said a large part of the problem, is that young people are unaware of the damage inhalants can cause. Communities, he said, can play an important role in educating youth about the effects of inhalant use and in teaching parents about the warning signs of inhalant use.

Inhalants are an equal opportunity method of substance abuse, although statistics show that young, white males have the highest usage rates. Nearly all abused products produce effects similar to anesthetics, which slow down the body’s

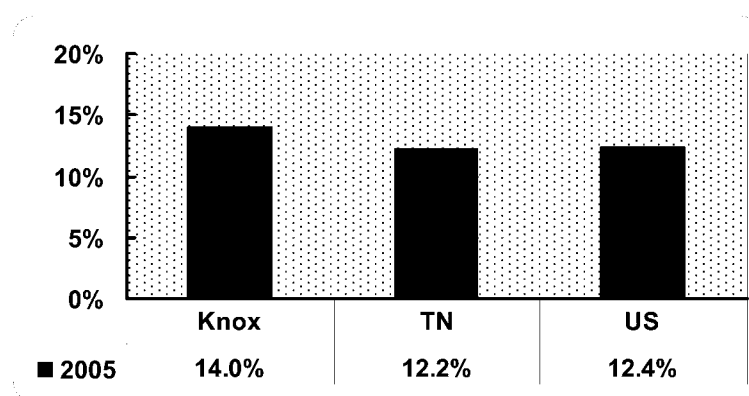


Figure 1: **Inhalant Use: Knox County, Tennessee, United States, 2005**
Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Knox County Health Department, 2005.

function. Varying upon level of dosage, the user can experience slight stimulation, feeling of less inhibition or loss of consciousness. The user can also suffer from Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. Other effects include damage to the heart, kidney, brain, liver, bone marrow and other organs. Results similar to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome may also occur when inhalants are used during pregnancy. Inhalants are physically and psychologically addicting and users suffer withdrawal symptoms.

There is a common link between inhalant use and problems in school — failing grades, chronic absences and general apathy. Other signs include the following: paint or stains on body or clothing, spots or sores around the mouth, red or runny eyes or nose, chemical breath odor, drunk, dazed or dizzy appearance, nausea, loss of appetite, anxiety, excitability, irritability.

It is never too early to teach your children about the dangers of inhalants. Inhalant use starts as early as elementary school and is considered a gateway to further substance abuse. Parents often remain ignorant of inhalant use or do not educate their children until it is too late. Inhalants are not drugs. They are poisons and toxins and should be discussed as such. There are, however, a few age appropriate guidelines that can be useful when educating your children. For more information, please visit www.inhalants.org and www.metrodrug.org

Blacks, Hispanics less likely to access treatment

Only a small percentage of Americans with addiction problems get treatment, and the problem of treatment access is especially acute for blacks and Hispanics, *HealthDay News* reported Jan. 5.

The study found that Hispanics have higher rates of alcohol problems than blacks or whites, but that Hispanics and blacks who had severe alcohol problems were less likely than whites to get treatment.

Dr. Angela Masini is a clinical psychologist in Knoxville where she has worked with a variety of populations. According to Masini, the Hispanic population in Knoxville has been underserved, especially with regards to alcohol problems. “A survey done by the Mental Health Association about two years ago found that the major block to treatment, among some Latinos, was the language barrier. Other roadblocks included lack of information, lack of familiarity with treatment agencies and no medical insurance.”

Masini suggests outreach into the Latino community would be a positive step. “Agencies or organizations seeking to increase their accessibility to the Latino

community could do a number of things, such as hiring bilingual staff, providing interpreters and coordinating with the Latino Task Force as they develop service initiatives. Even something on a smaller scale like teaching key Spanish words to front-line staff would make a non-English speaking person feel more welcome.”

For more information on area Latino Task Force members, contact: Lisa Barba, TN Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (865) 406-3297; Lourdes Perez, Hispanic Ministries, (865) 637-4769; and Megan McCleary, Catholic Charities (865) 971-3550. The task force can be emailed at latino_task_force@yahoo.com.

The entire study appears in the January 2007 issue of the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*. Reference: Schmidt, Laura A. (2007) Ethnic Disparities in Clinical Severity and Services for Alcohol Problems: Results from the National Alcohol Survey. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 31(1): 48.

Youngest drinkers likelier to use alcohol for stress relief as adults

The younger someone starts drinking alcoholic beverages, the more likely he or she is to reach for a drink to relieve stress when older, a large new study suggests.

The steeper slope of “stress-reactive drinking among persons who started drinking at 14 or younger is of particular concern because their base levels of drinking are already higher than those of other drinkers,” even when not experiencing stress, according to lead study author Deborah Dawson, Ph.D., of the National Institutes of Health.

The study, based on data collected in a 2001-2002 survey of nearly 27,000 past-year drinkers, appears in the January issue of the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*.

Respondents were asked whether they had experienced 12 different types of stressful events in the previous year, such as death of a family member or close friend, unemployment for more than a month, financial crises, legal problems or disruption of a marriage or romantic relationship.

Average daily consumption of alcohol increased by 19 percent with each additional stressful event experienced among those who started drinking at 14 or younger compared with 3 percent among those who took their first drink at 18 or older.

After adjusting for other factors that might be related to the amount of alcohol consumed, the researchers said “the association between stress and volume of consumption was significant only for early initiators.”

The findings “provide one key to understanding why these early initiators are at greatly increased risk of developing alcohol use disorders,” according to the authors, who say the results suggest that young teens “would benefit from prevention efforts that include stress-reduction techniques that could serve as an alternative to drinking.”

But there is no simple way to prevent children and adolescents from drinking, said Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., vice president for research and health policy at Pinney Associates in Bethesda, Md.

“As we have learned from tobacco and other drug use prevention, it is a mistake to wait until the average age of onset use and problems,” Henningfield said. “Prevention must start in the formative years of primary school or earlier.”

Drug-Free Community Coalition elects Don Lindsey 2007-2008 chair



Don Lindsey of AAA of East Tennessee has been elected Chair of the Drug-Free Community Coalition. Amanda Watts of the Law Enforcement Innovation Center was selected Vice-Chair. Don recently traveled to the Drug-Free Communities Grantee meeting in Washington D.C.

to learn more about national coalition efforts. Don is pictured above with **Roe Wilson**, MDC Drug-Free Grant Program Manager.

Alcohol, drugs still play key role in defining "fun" colleges

From the Princeton Review to CollegeHumor.com, the availability of alcohol and other drugs remains a key measure of a college's “fun” quotient, the *Washington Post* reported Jan. 3.

CollegeHumor.com, for example, uses indicators like bar closing hours and drug interest alongside availability of free condoms and percentage of students in fraternities and sororities to rate schools. Likewise, Princeton Review's list of top party schools relies heavily on estimated use of alcohol and other drugs.

However, some are calling for a broader definition of “fun” in ranking schools. Frederic D. Homer, a philosophy professor at the University of Wyoming, said that college students tend to distinguish between fun with no purpose and fun with a purpose — the difference, say, between an intramural soccer game and a varsity contest. He found that students used the same criteria for drinking: low-level consumption was considered casual fun, but binge drinking fell into the category of fun with a purpose — to escape from stress or other problems.

School administrators often work hard to create “fun” activities that don't involve alcohol, such as “dive-in” movies shown at an indoor pool, or a trip to the big city. But many students say that a big part of the fun in drinking is that it is illegal, and involves some risk — an appealing mix to young adults, especially when it involved friends.

Got PRIDE?



If you believe that teens can be empowered to change their environment, then you are the person to help the Metropolitan Drug Commission's new **PRIDE** Team at Fulton High School. We need your financial support to help our **PRIDE** team attend the 30th Annual **PRIDE** World Drug Prevention Conference in Charleston, West Virginia, April 11-14, 2007. Twenty scholarships in the amount of \$500 each are needed immediately. This conference is critical to the team's future success and will train them to lead peer to peer prevention efforts within their school and community.

The **PRIDE** team is the fastest growing club at Fulton High School. Why? The students see a need to change their school from within to address drug use, teen pregnancy and drop out rates. You can empower them with your financial support.

In less than six months, membership has grown to 30 and the team has volunteered in the Baptist Turkey Trot, hosted a Drug-Free poster contest, walked in the Martin Luther King, Jr. parade, celebrated Valentine's Day with residents of a local assisted living facility and sold Valentine's Day carnations to help fund their trip to the PRIDE Conference. A special thanks to **Commissioner Ivan Harmon**, **Russ Jensen**, **Food City's VP of Store Operations John Jones** and **Petree's Flowers** for donating the carnations and making this fundraiser a huge success!

Your **PRIDE** Team sponsorship will not go unnoticed and the Metropolitan Drug Commission will work hard to communicate your generosity. Your name will be included in all upcoming newsletters, press releases and website content. Call Tyra Haag at 588-5550 or Terry Templin at 594-1240 to offer your support.

Monitoring the Future survey results: Teen drug use down, prescription drug abuse up

Results from the 32nd annual *Monitoring the Future* survey were released in late December, 2006. Sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the survey results show a continuation of the decade-long decline in illicit drug and alcohol use among adolescents in the U.S. *Monitoring the Future* surveys eighth, tenth and twelfth grade students across the nation. Results show a downward trend of teen drug use, especially among older teens, but of particular concern is the abuse of prescription drugs, which remains high at *each grade level*.

Substances showing a decline in annual use were alcohol, marijuana, methamphetamine, and cocaine while substances showing a rise in use were ecstasy, *OxyContin* and *Vicodin*. Other substances were measured to show very little or no change including inhalants, LSD, other hallucinogens, heroin, sedatives, tranquilizers, steroids and "club drugs."

According to Lloyd Johnston, principal investigator of *Monitoring the Future*, "perceived risk is often a leading indicator of changes in actual [drug] use." For this reason, it is important to continue to educate young adolescents on the dangers of drug use before they enter the age cohort to which it is associated.

Additional information about the 2006 *Monitoring the Future* (MTF) survey is available at www.monitoringthefuture.org.

Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G. & Schulenberg, J. E. (December 21, 2006). *Teen drug use continues down in 2006, particularly among older teens; but use of prescription-type drugs remains high*. University of Michigan News and Information Services: Ann Arbor, MI. [On-line]. Available: www.monitoringthefuture.org; accessed January 12, 2007.

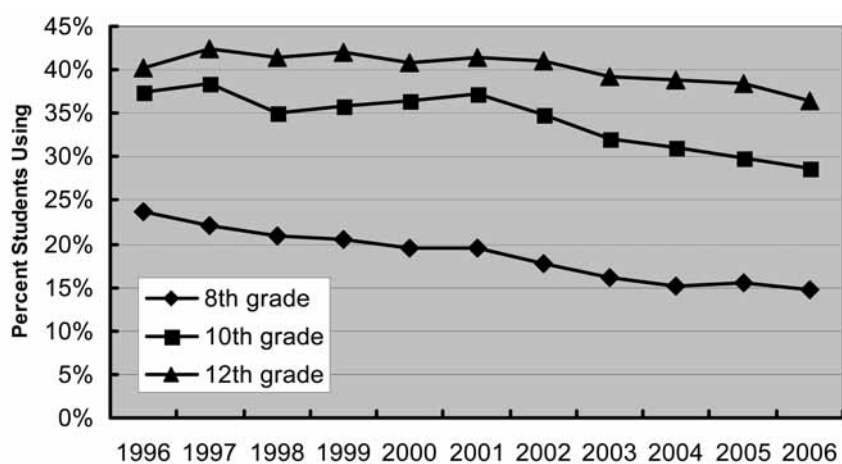


Figure 1: **Annual Illicit Drug Use Trends for Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Graders** Source: Drug and Alcohol Table 2: Annual Prevalence of Use of Various Drugs for Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Graders. *Monitoring the Future* In-School Survey, 2006.

HBO's *Addiction Project*

One in four Americans has a family member who is struggling with addiction. In 2005, there were 23.2 million Americans who needed treatment for their illicit drug or alcohol abuse problems, yet only about 10% received the treatment they needed.

In an unprecedented partnership, Join Together, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), and Faces & Voices of Recovery are uniting to help communities make the most of a powerful opportunity to bring the message of addiction treatment and recovery to millions of Americans.

On March 15-18, HBO will launch the *Addiction Project*, a groundbreaking multi-media campaign to help Americans understand addiction as a treatable brain disease, spotlight new treatment advancements, and provide hope for long-term recovery. The 14-part series will air during a free HBO preview weekend, and it kicks off with a March 15 broadcast of the centerpiece documentary *ADDICTION* at 9 p.m. ET.

Moving out of drug-plagued neighborhoods helps girls, not boys

A study of families who fled drug- and crime-infested neighborhoods for more stable shores found that the move tended to help the female children but not the boys, the *Wall Street Journal* reported Dec. 28.

Federal policy has supported such moves to help fight poverty, providing housing vouchers that give poor people more choices about where they want to live. About 2 million families use Section 8 vouchers that subsidize rents, and federal officials also have shut down big urban housing projects and dispersed residents.

In a federal study started in 1994, families who received vouchers were compared to those that stayed in high-poverty neighborhoods. Researchers found that adults who moved felt better physically and mentally, but did not fare better financially. Girls who moved also did better than those who stayed, but boys fared worse than those left behind. For example, 83 percent of relocated girls either stayed in high school or graduated, compared to 71 percent of those who didn't move.

But school participation declined among teenage boys who relocated, and property crime, mental stress, and smoking increased. "It seems like the boys were less able to make social connections to their new areas," said Jeffrey Kling, a Brookings Institution economist.

Experts said some families had problems because they didn't move far enough away from their old neighborhoods — allowing children to go back and hang out with their old friends — or didn't get into an area with better schools.

Drug Alert: New strawberry-flavored meth hits the streets

Law enforcement officials in Carson City, Nev. have discovered a new kind of methamphetamine that they fear can be more attractive to young people—bright pink strawberry-flavored meth. The event was reported in the Jan. 29th issue of the *Nevada Appeal*.

This new type of meth will more than likely be more attractive to a younger crowd and may surface in schools. Parents and teachers should be aware of this new kind of drug that is making its way into our culture.

Officials discovered the drug during a search of an apartment. The drug was being sold by an alleged gang member as "strawberry quick."

The article noted that flavored methamphetamine is the newest metamorphosis of the dangerous street drug made from ephedrine and toxic chemical such as lye and battery acid. "Strawberry quick" methamphetamine is popular among new users who snort it because the flavoring can cut down on the taste. Officials said teenagers, who have been taught meth is dangerous, may see this flavored version as less harmful.

Join our efforts!

Would you like to become a community leader in youth substance abuse prevention? Start by joining the Drug-Free Community Coalition. The coalition meets from 12-1 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Knox County Health Department Community Room located at 140 Dameron Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917. Participation can increase knowledge of substance abuse and the tough issues our young people are facing today. Because our group represents all sectors of the community, coalition members have an opportunity to network and discover local resources. If you would like to join our efforts, contact the coalition coordinator, Aneisa McDonald at (865) 588-5550 or aneisamc@bellsouth.net. Lunch will be available for those who RSVP by the Friday prior to the meeting. The 2007 meeting dates are below: 2/27; 3/27; 4/24; 5/22; 6/26; 7/24; 8/28; 9/25; 10/23; 11/27; 12/18.

Announcements

2007 Knoxville Youth Summit

Mark your calendars for the **2007 Knoxville Youth Summit**, Saturday, March 31st. The Youth Summit is Knoxville's premier event for youth, by youth. Local teens coordinate the event and facilitate the day's activities so that youth leave empowered to change their communities. This year's Summit will give high school students an opportunity to perform community service at a variety of locations then come together to talk directly with community officials about issues affecting teens. Clubs, organizations and youth groups are encouraged to attend with an adult chaperone. For more information contact Leah Adinolfi at 523-9131 x246 or email adinolfi@unitedwayknox.org

Smoky Mountains School on Core Functions Conference

Save the date for the Second Annual **Smoky Mountains School on Core Functions Conference** April 4-6, 2007 at the Park Vista Hotel in Gatlinburg, TN. The cost is \$175.00 for NAADAC members and \$195.00 for non-members. Call Park Vista for conference rates- \$75.00 per night @ (865) 436-9211 or (800) 421-PARK, or online@ <http://www.parkvista.com>. The conference is proudly presented by ETAADAC and MTAADAC. For additional information, visit www.etaadac.org or contact Bob Garrett at bgarrett@etaadac.org or by phone at (865) 455-6415.

National & Global Youth Service Day

Millions of young people will change the world on **National and Global Youth Service Day** (N & GYSD), the largest service event in the world. Save the date—N & GYSD is April 20-22, 2007. This event supports youth on a life-long path of service and civic engagement, and educates the public, the media, and elected officials about the role of youth as community leaders. Please let the Metropolitan Drug Commission know if your organization would like to participate. For more information on N & GYSD, visit Youth Service America's website at <http://www.yrsa.org/nysd/index.cfm>.

MDC in Action

During the fourth quarter (Oct-Dec), the MDC serviced the community by providing:

126 Treatment Referrals
9,776 Prevention Materials & Resources
252,834 Website Hits

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To submit an announcement or article to the Metropolitan Drug Commission's **ALERT**, please call (865) 588-5550.



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Metropolitan Drug Commission
A PUBLICATION OF NEWS AND EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2007

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE for information about starting or maintaining a Drug-free Workplace Program; parent resources; treatment options; general drug descriptions, including warning signs and effects; and local and national research about drug use.

www.metrodrug.org

This project is funded under an agreement with TCCY