



Promoting positive youth development in the Chagrin Valley
through family, school and community partnerships.
www.cp4y.org

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Dangerous **“GAMES”**

**The Single Best Weapon Parents Have is Information:
TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN...**

HUFFING

also known as inhalant abuse, is intentionally inhaling fumes from common household products to get a quick, intense high. Over one thousand products can be used: paint, gasoline, butane, permanent markers, white out, air freshener, canned whipped cream, cooking spray, hair spray, and computer cleaners.

Huffing produces a fleeting high – less than a minute, so young people repeatedly inhale to keep the high going.

What are the signs of inhalant abuse?

- * chemical odor on breath
- * paint or stains on body or clothing
- * spots or sores around mouth
- * excitability, anxiety, irritability
- * red or runny eyes or nose, sore tongue
- * drunk, dazed or dizzy appearance
- * nausea, loss of appetite
- * mood swings and fainting



If you find aerosol products in a teen's bedroom, be suspicious. Air freshener, in particular, may be used either to inhale or to disguise other smells.

Q: Who is at risk?

A: Inhalants are used by teenagers in all walks of life. Teenagers may underestimate the harmfulness and feel it is only "canned air."

Inhalant use peaks in middle school and decreases throughout high school. Inhalants are relatively easy for younger students to obtain; they're cheap, legal and available. According to local statistics, past 30-day use of inhalants range from a low of 2.7% in eighth-grade to a high of 3.9% in the seventh and ninth-grades.*

Q: What can inhalants do to the body?

A: Anytime a person uses an inhalant, it can be fatal, even the first time. Inhalant use can impair all organs, memory and hearing. Huffing kills brain cells every time and can cause permanent brain damage. Inhalants are physically and psychologically addicting and users suffer withdrawal symptoms.

Q: How should I talk to my child about inhalants?

A: Describe the products as poisons, not drugs; it's easy to explain why an individual should never take poisons. Please talk to your child early: inhalant use can begin in elementary school and is considered a gateway to further substance abuse. Studies show kids are 50 percent less likely to try inhalants if their parents have warned them of the dangers. +

Resources for more information:

National Inhalant Prevention Coalition – www.inhalants.org or

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America – www.drugfreeamerica.org

THE CHOKING GAME

also known as Dreaming, Fainting, Black-out, Space Monkey, Space Cowboy and other names, involves stopping the flow of oxygen and blood to the brain by applying pressure to the arteries in the neck, then releasing to cause a rush or high as consciousness returns. Kids use bags, belts, ties, or their own hands to choke themselves or their friends. Another version of the game is when a child hyperventilates until their arms tingle, then another child squeezes them so they pass out for a few seconds. Children play this game in groups, at parties or sleepovers, unaware of the danger.

Q: Why do children play the Choking Game?

A: Initially, there is a feeling of light-headedness from reduced oxygen flow to the brain. This is followed by a "rush" or high with the removal of the pressure on the neck or chest. This high can become addictive, leading some children to play the game alone, which may tragically lead to unintentional death.

Q: What harm can it cause?

A: If the brain is deprived of oxygen long enough, the heart can stop and sudden death can occur. Other serious consequences can be brain damage, stroke, seizures or retinal damage. Trauma injury can occur if children pass out and hit furniture or the floor.

Q: Who plays?

A: The most frequently observed age range is 9 – 14 years old. Since the year 2000, deaths due to the choking game multiplied eleven-fold, with the highest fatality rates between the ages 12-15 years old.



The PASS OUT Game gains popularity among US children and teens.

Q: What are the warning signs?

A: Severe headaches, marks on the neck and blood-shot eyes. Parents might find ties or ropes arranged in unusual ways.

Q: How should I talk to my child about the choking game?

A: Treat this like any other discussion of high-risk behavior. Make sure your child understands the dangers and that children have died from playing this game.

Resources for additional information:

www.deadlygameschildrenplay.com or www.connectwithkids.com

*Communities That Care Youth Survey, 2005

+White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy

Tips to Protect Your Children:

1. TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

early and often about risky behaviors. PARENTS have the greatest influence in their lives.

2. Be alert for behavioral changes and other warning signs.

3. Stay involved in your teen's life – teens who feel connected to their families engage in less risky behavior.

4. Connect with your children's friends.

5. Provide activities for constructive use of time.