Guam joins the rest of the United States in the observance of National Inhalant & Poisons Awareness Week from March 16 to 23, highlighting the national drive to curb inhalant abuse, especially among youngsters.

The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Prevention and Training Branch is spearheading the local campaign billed "Don't Huff That Stuff." The campaign is designed to raise public awareness about the dangers of inhalant abuse and to empower the community to take steps to address the issue.

Guam's "Don't Huff That Stuff" campaign is patterned after the National Inhalant Prevention Coalition's (NIPC) successful prevention campaign that includes programs involving youth, schools, media, police departments, health organizations, village officials and civic groups among others.

The multi-sectoral participation has proven to be an effective means of mobilizing communities to reduce inhalant use. The coalition's study found that results from Texas, for example, have been remarkable. Between 1992 and 1994, there was a reduction of more than 30 percent in elementary school inhalant use and a reduction of more than 20 percent at the high school level (based on state agency surveys of more than 176,000 students). This translates into over 100,000 students who may have used inhalants but didn't.

Guam statistics have indicated the tragic impact of inhalant abuse among local families. The 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports that current inhalant use among high school students on Guam (6.3 percent) is higher than the United States (3.9 percent) and has surpassed the nationwide rates from 2001 up until 2005.

In 2006, F.B. Leon Guerrero Middle School lost a young teenage student, who died...
PEACE is a community-based effort established by the Prevention and Training Branch of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, with guidance by the Governor’s PEACE Council and the State Epidemiological Work group. PEACE strives to:

- Raise awareness about the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances on Guam;
- Prevent/reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, including underage drinking;
- Promote alcohol-free, tobacco-free and other drug-free lifestyles;
- Reduce the harmful outcomes associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; and
- Build Guam’s capacity and infrastructure for establishing and sustaining evidence-based substance abuse prevention and early intervention programs that are effective.

**PEACE Partnerships**

PEACE partners include Guam’s Mayors, Vice-mayors and other key leaders who represent the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches of Government, as well as youth and parents in our island community. Through funds from the SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework, PEACE sub-granted six (6) community drug free coalitions: Community Services and Resources, Inc. (Community Voices), Island Families of Micronesia (Partners For Prevention), Oasis Prevention Empowerment Network (O.P.E.N), Pacific Abundant Living Ministries, Inc. (Magof Health), PA’A TAOTAO TANO (Lagu Healthy Families), and Pingelapese Guam Organization. All of the newly established drug free coalitions are working towards a shared vision—one island community committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and healthy choices that are alcohol free, tobacco free, and drug free. PEACE reaches out to communities by offering alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention and early intervention tools and resources.

**PEACE Council Members:**

- Christopher M. Duenas, Department of Youth Affairs, Chairperson
- Dr. Keith Horinouchi, DrPH, CNS, Guam Seventh Day Adventist Wellness Center, Co-Chairperson
- Lola E. Leon Guerrero, Bureau of Statistics and Plans
- Allen Ward, LPP Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Lead Public Health Advisor Annette M. David, MD, MPH, FACP, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- J. Peter Roberto, Department of Public Health and Social Services
- Vincent Quichocho, Guam Memorial Hospital Authority
- William Melendez, Jr., Guam Community College
- Chief Paul Suba, Guam Police Department
- Lieutenant Gerard Baleto, Guam National Guard Counter Drug Program
- Anthony Quenga, Guam Youth Congress
- Doris LG Tolentino, GPSS Head Start Program
- Patrick Wolff, Inafa Maolek Mediation Center
- Senator Frank Blas, Jr., Lihestratian Guahan (Guam Legislature)
- Vice Mayor Louise Rivera, Mayor’s Council of Guam
- Kasma Aldis, Pohnpeian Family Organization
- Agent Antonio Marquez, Regional Drug Enforcement Administration
- Judge Elizabeth Barrett-Anderson, Superior Court of Guam
- Peter R. Barcinas, University of Guam—Cooperative Extension Services
- Rossanna Villagomez-Aguon, US Probation Office
- Minor Portusach-Cepeda Ulloa, Youth for Youth LIVE! Guam
- Sarah Thomas-Nededog, Sanctuary, Inc.
- Jermaine Alerta, Community Representative
- Catholic Social Services
- Guam Public School System
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving

**STATE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL WORK GROUP (SEW):**

- SEW Lead: Annette M. David, MD, MPH, FACP
Common household items may look innocent, but some of them may lead youngsters to develop a dangerous sniffing habit. Unknown to unsuspecting parents, household products are the drugs of choice for substance-dependent preteens and young teens, according to a federal study released last week.

Data from the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse show that 1.1 million 12-to-17-year-olds acknowledge using inhalants last year. "Inhalants are everywhere in the house and garage, and parents often do not realize that [products] are not being used for crafts or science projects," Dr. H. Westley Clark, the center’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Statistics director, said in a press statement.

Clark said the center’s data also indicate that there are almost 600,000 teenagers starting using inhalants annually. "While the data show that often children move away from using inhalants as they grow older, they often move on to other illicit drugs," Clark said.

Survey showed that by age 14, inhalant use dropped behind the use of marijuana, painkillers and other drugs. "Inhalants are a health hazard that can damage the brain, heart, liver, or kidneys," Clark stated, warning parents that inhalants can "cause severe damage and even death."

The federal study found that 45 percent of teens who used inhalants suffer from psychiatric disorders, compared with 29 percent of teens who used other drugs. Statistics indicated that teenage girls seem particularly vulnerable to inhalant abuse, as they account for 41 percent of hospital admissions for this specific condition.

Clark advised parents to clearly explain to their children that inhalants are deadly poisons.

For 16- and 17-year-olds who used drugs, 12.4 percent use inhalants and 35.2 percent used painkillers, while 81.4 percent used marijuana and 34.2 percent used other illegal drugs, according to the report. Among 17-year-olds, 59.3 percent of new inhalant users move on to nitrous oxide (laughing gas).
The percentage of teenagers huffing dangerous fumes to get high appears to be on the decline in the United States, but not in Guam, where inhalant use is far more prevalent than parents probably realize.

The latest Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) showed that the percentage of lifetime inhalant use among high school students in Guam (6.3 percent) is higher than the U.S. (3.9 percent) and surpassed the national average rate from 2001 and 2005.

Between 1995 and 2005, inhalant use among high school students nationwide consistently dropped from 20.3 percent to 12.4 percent.

The downward trend in the rest of the US doesn’t reflect in Guam, where the bi-annual rates of inhalant use were erratic for the past 10 years.

According to the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, inhalant use is more common among middle school students. One of 6 (16%) of Guam’s middle school youth and one of 7 (14%) of Guam’s high school youth reported having tried or have used inhalants.

In 1995, inhalant use was recorded at 15.1 percent. The figure went up to 18.2 percent in 1997 and dipped to 14.8 percent in 1999. In 2001, inhalant use again increased to 17.2 percent, and went down to 14.9 in 2003. In 2005, inhalant use rate in Guam has slightly decreased to 14.1 percent, but still surpassed the 12.4 percent nationwide rate in the same year.

Inhalant Abuse Higher in Guam than in US

YRBS also indicates that inhalant use is more prevalent among middle school students than high school students.

Statistics from the Guam Police Department’s Juvenile Investigation Section showed that approximately 20 percent of inhalant use cases were reported in 2006 and are pending investigation.

According to the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, inhalant use ed by DMHSA, the average age of first use on Guam is between the ages of 11 and 12 years old. The Department of Youth Affairs also reported that inhalants are among the most common substances being abused by youngsters involved in court cases. In 2005, about 25 percent (or one in four of youth committed to the DYA facility) reported experimenting with inhalants.

Inhalants Harmful Effects

- Damage to brain and nervous system
- Nose bleeds, loss of smell
- Hearing loss
- Irregular heartbeat
- Pain in the: chest, muscles, joints
- Toxic effects to: lungs, liver, kidneys
- Bone marrow damage
- Arm or leg spasms
- Sudden death
- Vomiting
- Suffocation

For more information, contact: 677-2679/8063
Or visit us at: www.peacegguam.org
www.healthychoicesguam.org

Accredited by BOC EPFTEF; CQI 2002-2005, Guam State Education Board PEACE
Guam law prohibits the use of aerosol spray products, volatile chemicals, substance and other inhalants that release toxic vapors for purposes other than what is identified in the manufacturer’s label instructions. It is illegal to inhale fumes of these types of products for the purpose of getting high. Possession of these products for illegal use is also prohibited.

The violator faces petty misdemeanor charges. If the violator is a minor, he or she can be charged in juvenile court. But the regulations apply not only to users. PL 28-25 has expanded the regulations by prohibiting retailers from selling butane and propane products to those under 18.

The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse’s “Official List of Known Inhalants with Potential Abuse,” include butane, butane lighters, butane refills, propane, propane refills and propane torch. The official list was widely distributed to the community in 2006 to increase public awareness and to encourage the community to take action in preventing inhalant use, especially among children and youth.

The fumes from the listed products are considered harmful when inhaled and may cause severe, long term damages to the brain, liver and kidneys or Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome.

Under the amended law, any person or business entity is liable for petty misdemeanor or if found selling or giving these products to minors.

The law, however, doesn’t apply to the inhalation of a prescription or over-the-counter product for medical or dental purposes.

**Drug (noun):** Any substance (inhalants included) that has a physiological effect when introduced into the body, taken for its narcotic or stimulant effects, often illegally.

**KNOWLEDGE IS KEY TO PREVENTION!**

“TAKE THE TIME TO LEARN THE EFFECT THAT DRUGS (INHALANTS) HAVE ON OUR YOUTH. GET INVOLVED AND HELP SAVE SOMEONE’S LIFE TODAY. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER IN REMOVING THE CUSTOMER. BY DOING SO, THE MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS WILL HAVE NO BUSINESS. WHEN SOMETHING HAS NO VALUE, NO ONE WILL PAY FOR IT.”

*Joey Lopez, Sr. (October 2003)*

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**NO KA OI**

Termite & Pest Control (Guam), Inc.

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SAIPAN OFFICE Tel: (670)322-BUGS(2847) Email: nkospn@pticom.com

www.nokaoiguam.com

NOKA01 is a drug-free company, with mandatory/random drug-testing.
**What Every Parent Needs to Know About Inhalant Abuse**

I
halants are a diverse group of substances that include volatile solvents, gases, and nitrites that can be sniffed, snorted, huffed, or bagged to produce psychoactive effects similar to alcohol intoxication.

This type of drug is inexpensive and accessible. It’s in your kitchen, bathroom, office, and garage.

Inhalants provide an instant rush that lasts only about 5 to 15 minutes. In some instances, first use can be fatal. This is called the “Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome.”

Medical experts say chronic use of inhalants can cause irreversible physical and mental damage to the brain, heart, liver and kidneys.

Short term effects include depriving the brain, heart and other organs of oxygen. An irregular heart rhythm may develop and cause sudden death, even in healthy children.

Medical studies established that chronic inhalant users have demonstrated a range of mental disorder, from mild cognitive impairment (such as lack of concentration, poor memory and poor learning ability) to severe dementia.

Deep inhaling of toxic vapors may result in losing touch with one’s surroundings, a loss of self control, violent behavior, giddiness, unconsciousness. At higher dosages, they can create hallucinations.

These products can cause an addiction as difficult to treat as addiction to narcotics or cocaine.

Since items that can be abused are within their reach, school-age kids are at risk. But because the intoxicating effect of toxic fumes go away instantly, inhalant abuse is easy to hide from unsuspecting parents.

Experts have listed signs of possible inhalant abuse to look for. Physical signs include slurred speech, drunk, dizzy, or dazed appearance, unusual breath odor, chemical smell on clothing, paint stains on body or face, red eyes and runny nose. Behavioral signs include change in friends or interest, decline in school performance, excitability of irritability.

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**Street Terms for Inhalants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Air blast</th>
<th>Discorama Glading (using inhalant)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ames (amyl nitrite)</td>
<td>Gluey Hardware (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aroma of men (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
<td>Hippie crack</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bagging (using inhalants)</td>
<td>Huff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolt (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
<td>Huffing (sniffing an inhalant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boppers (amyl nitrite)</td>
<td>Kick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buzz bomb (nitrous oxide)</td>
<td>Laughing gas (nitrous oxide)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climax (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
<td>Medusa Moon gas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Oz</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pearls (amyl nitrite)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poor man’s pot</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poppers (isobutyl nitrite, amyl nitrite)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Riches (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rush (isobutyl nitrite)</td>
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**Before You Risk It…**

Get the facts. Inhalants affect your brain. Inhalants are substances of fumes from products such as glue or paint thinner that are sniffed or “huffed” to cause an immediate high. Because they affect your brain with much greater speed and force than many other substances, they can cause irreversible physical and mental damage before you know what’s happened.

Inhalants affect your heart. Inhalants stave off the body’s need for oxygen and force the heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly—that can be dangerous for your body.

Inhalants damage other parts of your body. People who use inhalants can experience dizziness and nosebleeds; develop liver, lung, and kidney problems; and lose their sense of hearing or smell. Chronic use can lead to muscle wasting and reduced muscle tone and strength.

Inhalants cause sudden death. Inhalants can kill you instantly. Inhalant users can die by suffocation, choking on their vomit, or having a heart attack.

**Get the Facts…**

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**Weekly Updates…**

Stay Clean & Drug Free!

from the

Mayor Francisco C.
Blas

Vice-Mayor Louise
Rivera

Tamuning-Tumon-Harmon Mayor’s Office

**Learn more at the Yearth for Youth Annual Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on April 18-20, 2008. Call Grace L. Rosadino 477-9079.**

**Guam Public Law 28-25: Regulates the sale of inhalants to minors.**

**Guam Department of Health and Social Services:**

- **Information Line:** 1-800-729-6686
- **Emergency Hotline:** 1-647-8333
- **Website:** www.healthychoicesguam.org
- **Healthy Choices Guam:** www.healthychoicesguam.org
Sanctuary’s mission statement is “helping youth and families help themselves.” Its vision is that it is a community-based organization which exists to improve the quality of life for Guam’s youth to promote reconciliation during times of family conflicts, to foster the development of responsible community members, and to advocate for their needs in an effort to preserve family unity, and build the foundation for self-sufficiency by providing: 24-hour crisis intervention services; a temporary safe refuge during family conflicts and abuse; supportive counseling for youth and their families; life skills training and education; outreach and prevention programs as well as creative diversion youth development programs.”

Sanctuary provides a full continuum of services to youth and families. Being a nonprofit and community-based, this public benefit entity plays a vital role in the community, especially as an alternative to the juvenile justice system. It is also the only group foster home for adolescents and maintains the sole residential treatment program for youth with substance abuse issues.

36 years ago, Sanctuary was founded because our island needed a program that could support youth and their families through difficult times.

Sanctuary continues to be here for youth, families, government and private agencies, and neighbors and friends. We have a variety of services to support positive youth development because we want to see young people be safe, happy, and productive.
Lesson plan developed by Dawn Reyes, a former Teacher and current Assistant Principal of Inarajan Middle School.

When you're ready to quit, we're ready to help.

Talk to an adult today to help save your tomorrow.

INHALANTS QUIZ

1. All inhalants are illegal.  
T  /  F

2. Illegal inhalants are often common household items. 
T  /  F

3. Inhalants get into the body through the circulatory system.  
T  /  F

4. Inhalants make a person feel drunk, uninhibited and uncoordinated. 
T  /  F

5. Inhalants can cause a heart attack.  
T  /  F

6. Inhalants are not addictive.  
T  /  F

7. You need a lot of money to use inhalants. 
T  /  F

8. Common illegal inhalants include glue, gas, and butane. 
T  /  F

9. Inhalants affect the heart, the brain, the lungs, the skin and the blood. 
T  /  F

10. Vomiting, hallucinations and seizures are withdrawal symptoms of inhalants. 
T  /  F

11. Nail polish remover and White-Out are inhalants. 
T  /  F

12. Personality changes, loss of memory and slurred speech are signs of brain damage caused by using inhalants. 
T  /  F

13. A person who uses inhalants often probably eats a lot. 
T  /  F

14. A person who uses inhalants usually has beautiful skin. 
T  /  F

15. Inhaling prescription medicine as the doctor ordered is legal. 
T  /  F

16. Inhalants are substances that enter the body through the respiratory system. 
T  /  F

17. Inhalants are used for the purpose of becoming under the influence of that substance. 
T  /  F

18. Inhalation makes you feel? 
T  /  F

19. Inhalants and the laws prohibiting their use make inhalants dangerous. 
T  /  F

20. The term "inhalants" refers to substances that enters the body through the respiratory system. 
T  /  F

21. The term "inhalants" refers to substances that are used for the purpose of becoming under the influence of that substance. 
T  /  F

22. Inhalation makes you lose appetite, excitability and/or irritability. 
T  /  F

23. Inhalation makes you have drowsy effects. 
T  /  F

24. Inhalation makes you lose memory. 
T  /  F

25. Inhalation makes you lose function. 
T  /  F

26. Inhalation makes you lose hearing. 
T  /  F

27. Inhalation makes you lose vision. 
T  /  F

28. Inhalation makes you lose reflex function. 
T  /  F

29. Inhalation makes you lose both hearing and vision. 
T  /  F

30. Inhalation makes you lose reflex function, hearing, vision and be drowsy. 
T  /  F

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