



# Hidden Dangers in Your Home

A PRESENTATION PROVIDED BY [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com)

 GetSmartAboutDrugs  
A DEA Resource for Parents

 COMMUNITIES  
of PRACTICE

Published June 2010

Welcome to DEA's Get Smart About Drugs presentation about Hidden Dangers in Your Home.

*Introduce yourself, tell audience the organization you work for, etc.*

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I work with \_\_\_\_\_.

Hidden Dangers in Your Home

www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com

## What is Get Smart About Drugs?

- An educational outreach and awareness website that helps parents and caregivers identify and prevent drug abuse
- Located at [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com)
- Provides a number of resources parents can use to get help if they suspect their child has a problem with drugs

A screenshot of the Get Smart About Drugs website. The page features a header with the DEA logo and the title 'Hidden Dangers in Your Home'. Below the header, there is a navigation menu and a main content area with various articles and resources. The website is designed to be user-friendly and informative for parents and caregivers.

Get Smart About Drugs is an educational outreach and awareness website that helps parents and caregivers identify and prevent drug abuse. The website, located at [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com), also provides a number of resources parents can use to get help if they suspect their child has a problem with drugs.

The website features tools to help parents:

- Visually identify drugs
- Understand hidden dangers in their home
- Learn the signs of drug use
- Prevent drug abuse in their home
- Explore ways to talk to their children about drugs
- Find resources for getting help



## Household Products

- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter medications
- Inhalants



Today, we're going to talk about items in your home that could put children at risk for drug abuse.

They include:

- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter medications
- Inhalants



## Hidden Dangers in Your Home

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### The Facts

- 20% of teens in grades 9-12 have abused a prescription medication at least once in their lives
- 15% of teens have abused a prescription pain reliever in the last year
- 8% of teens have reported over-the-counter cough medicine abuse

*Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2009 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey*

According to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's 2009 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey:

- 20% of teens in grades 9-12 have abused a prescription medication at least once in their lives
- 15% of teens have abused a prescription pain reliever in the last year
- 8% of teens have reported over-the-counter cough medicine abuse



### The Facts

- Everyday 2,500 teenagers use a prescription drug for non-medical reasons for the first time
- More than half (or 56%) of teens in grades 9-12 believe prescription drugs are easier to get than illegal drugs
- 62% of teens believe most teens get prescription drugs from their own family's medicine cabinets
- 63% of teens believe prescription drugs are easy to get from their parent's medicine cabinet, up significantly from 56% in the 2008 study

*Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2009 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey*

The survey also showed that:

- Everyday 2,500 teenagers use a prescription drug for non-medical reasons for the first time
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## Common Prescription Drugs of Abuse

- Narcotics
- Stimulants
- Depressants
- Hallucinogens
- Anabolic Steroids

*Source: Drug Enforcement Administration, Drugs of Abuse, 2005*

So, what prescription drugs do teens who abuse drugs commonly abuse?

There are five classes of drugs of abuse:

- Narcotics
- Stimulants
- Depressants
- Hallucinogens
- Anabolic Steroids

When used appropriately in the practice of medicine, these substances can have very beneficial properties. When used for non-medical purposes, including the desire to get high, these drugs can cause great damage, leading to addiction and even death.

DEA provides many resources for parents to educate themselves on drugs of abuse. On Get Smart About Drugs, you can find an online visual drug glossary as well as download *Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine*, drug information, fact sheets, and access other helpful information and resources.



## Narcotics

Narcotics are available only with a prescription.

Commonly abused narcotics include:

- Cough syrup with codeine
- Fentanyl
- Hydrocodone
- Methadone
- Oxycodone



The first class of commonly abused drugs we will discuss today are narcotics. Narcotics are available only with a doctor's prescription.

Commonly abused narcotics include:

- Cough syrup with codeine
- Fentanyl
- Hydrocodone
- Methadone
- Oxycodone



## Narcotics

Prescribed to:

- Treat mild to severe pain
- Suppress coughs
- Treat diarrhea
- Induce anesthesia

Doctors prescribe these medications to treat mild to severe pain, suppress coughs, treat diarrhea, and induce anesthesia.



### Stimulants

Stimulant medications are only available with a doctor's prescription.

Commonly abused stimulants include:

- Amphetamines
- Methylphenidate and dexamethylphenidate
- Weight control medications, such as:
  - Phentermine (Adipex<sup>®</sup> and Ionamin<sup>®</sup>)
  - Benzphetamine (Didrex<sup>®</sup>)
  - Phendimetrazine (Prelu-2<sup>®</sup>)

The next class of commonly abused drugs is stimulants. Stimulant medications are only available with a doctor's prescription. They include amphetamines, methylphenidate and dexamethylphenidate, and weight control medications, such as phentermine, benzphetamine, and phendimetrazine.



## Prescription Stimulants

Prescribed to treat:

- Obesity
- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD/ADD)



*Sources:*

- Drug Enforcement Administration, *Drugs of Abuse*, 2005
- National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsofAbuse.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsofAbuse.html)

Doctors prescribe stimulants to treat obesity and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders.



## Prescription Depressants

Prescription depressants are available only with a doctor's prescription

Commonly abused prescription depressants include:

- Benzodiazepines, such as Valium<sup>®</sup> and Xanax<sup>®</sup>
- Barbiturates
- Sleeping pills

Depressants are another class of commonly-abused prescription medications. They include benzodiazepines, such as Valium<sup>®</sup> and Xanax<sup>®</sup>, barbiturates, and sleeping pills.



## Prescription Depressants

Prescribed to:

- Induce sleep
- Relieve stress
- Reduce anxiety



Prescription depressants are prescribed to:

- Induce sleep
- Relieve stress
- Reduce anxiety



## Anabolic Steroids

- Anabolic steroids are available only with a doctor's prescription
- Synthetically produced variants of the naturally occurring male hormone
- Used to enhance performance and increase muscle mass

Finally, steroids are a common drug of abuse. Anabolic steroids are available only with a doctor's prescription.

They are synthetically produced variants of the naturally occurring male hormone testosterone.

Anabolic steroids are drugs used to enhance performance and increase muscle mass.

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## Commonly Abused Steroids

- Anadrol<sup>®</sup>
- Andro<sup>®</sup>
- Deca-durabolin<sup>®</sup>
- Depo-testosterone<sup>®</sup>
- Dianobo<sup>®</sup>
- Durabolin<sup>®</sup>
- Equipoise<sup>®</sup>
- Oxandrin<sup>®</sup>
- THG<sup>®</sup>
- Winstrol<sup>®</sup>

Sources:  
•Drug Enforcement Administration, *Drugs of Abuse*, 2005  
•National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsOfAbuse.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsOfAbuse.html)

There are over 100 different types of anabolic steroids. Some of the brand names prescribed include:

- Anadrol<sup>®</sup>
- Andro<sup>®</sup>
- Deca-durabolin<sup>®</sup>
- Depo-testosterone<sup>®</sup>
- Dianobo<sup>®</sup>
- Durabolin<sup>®</sup>
- Equipoise<sup>®</sup>
- Oxandrin<sup>®</sup>
- THG<sup>®</sup>
- Winstrol<sup>®</sup>



## Forms of Anabolic Steroids

- Tablets
- Sublingual tablets (under the tongue)
- Liquid drops
- Gels
- Transdermal patch (on the skin)
- Subdermal implant pellets (underneath the skin)
- Water-based injectable solutions
- Oil-based injectable solutions

*Sources:*

•Drug Enforcement Administration, *Drugs of Abuse*, 2005

•National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsOfAbuse.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/DrugPages/DrugsOfAbuse.html)

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## Adverse Effects of Steroid Abuse On Males and Females

- Acne
- Baldness
- Stunted growth
- High blood pressure, unhealthy cholesterol changes, heart disease, blood clots and stroke
- Liver damage, jaundice, or liver cancer
- Headaches, aching joints, and muscle cramps
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Sleep problems
- Increased risk of ligament and tendon injuries

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, *Steroids: Not Fair Play*, [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

Both males and females who abuse steroids may experience:

- Acne
- Baldness
- Stunted growth
- High blood pressure, unhealthy cholesterol changes, heart disease, blood clots and stroke
- Liver damage, jaundice, or liver cancer
- Headaches, aching joints, and muscle cramps
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Sleep problems
- Increased risk of ligament and tendon injuries

Upon discontinuation of the drug, users may experience prolonged periods of depression, restlessness, insomnia, loss of appetite, decreased sex drive, headaches, and irritability.



## Adverse Effects of Steroid Abuse On Males and Females

- “Roid rage” (severe, aggressive behavior that may result in violence, such as fighting or destroying property)
- Severe mood swings
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not really there)
- Paranoia (extreme feelings of mistrust and fear)
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Depression and thoughts of suicide

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, *Steroids: Not Fair Play*, [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

Males and females who abuse steroids may also experience:

- "Roid rage" (which is severe, aggressive behavior that may result in violence, such as fighting or destroying property)
- Severe mood swings
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not really there)
- Paranoia (extreme feelings of mistrust and fear)
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Depression and thoughts of suicide



## Adverse Effects of Steroid Abuse On Males

- Shrinking of testicles
- A low sperm count
- Impotence (inability to get an erection)
- Breast and nipple growth
- Enlarged prostate

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, *Steroids: Not Fair Play*, [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

Adult males who abuse steroids may experience shrinking of testicles, reduced sperm count, impotence, or the inability to get an erection, and breast and nipple growth. They may also experience an enlarged prostate.



## Adverse Effects of Steroid Abuse on Females

- Breast shrinkage
- More face and body hair
- Voice deepening
- Problems with menstrual periods
- Clitoris enlargement

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, *Steroids: Not Fair Play*, [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

Females who abuse anabolic steroids may experience breast shrinkage, more face and body hair, voice deepening, problems with menstrual periods, and clitoris enlargement.



### Effects of Nonmedical Use of Prescription Drugs

- Euphoria
- Alertness
- Drowsiness
- Disorientation
- Coma
- Death
- Addiction

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

The different types of prescription drugs that teens abuse have different side effects ranging from euphoria and an increased sense of alertness to drowsiness and disorientation when used for nonmedical reasons.

Taking too many medications or mixing medications can lead to coma and even death. Even before coma and death, it can lead to addiction. Addiction is a chronic relapsing brain disease expressed in the form of compulsive behaviors. The initial decision to use drugs is voluntary. Addiction compels a person to become obsessed with obtaining and abusing drugs despite the adverse health and life consequences.



### Where Do Teens Get Medications?

- Medicine cabinets
- Friends
- Doctors or dentists
- Internet pharmacies
- Street dealers

*Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2008 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey*

Believe it or not, it's fairly easy for youth to obtain prescription and over-the-counter medications to get high. They can get them from friends, pharmacies, and the medicine cabinets in their homes or the homes of others. Doctors or dentists may prescribe them for an illness or condition, and they may abuse them or distribute them to their friends. Because they're easily available, many youth are not getting medications from street dealers, but a lot of them still turn to dealers when they can't find a particular medication.

Prescription drugs can also be fairly easily obtained online. Let's talk more about drugs and the Internet.

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## The Internet, Drugs, and Teens

The Internet is full of information about how to use prescription drugs to get high:

- How much to use
- Combining drugs
- What kind of high to expect
- Social networking sites provide information from teens on their personal experiences on how to get high with prescription drugs



Source: "The Possible Dangers of Buying Medicine Over the Internet," U.S. Food and Drug Administration, [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048396.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048396.htm).

Many teens who abuse drugs get them from their families, friends, or relatives, particularly prescription drugs. Since prescription drugs are widely available in the home, many teens do not have to go far to get high.

However, a number of teens who abuse drugs turn to the Internet for prescription drugs, and the world wide web plays a big role in providing information and advice to teens. Here are some things to consider:

The Internet is a tremendous resource for teens to learn about the dangers of drug abuse. However, it is also full of information about how to use prescription drugs to get high—how much to use, what combinations work best, and what a user can expect to experience.

There are thousands of websites dedicated to the proposition that drug use is a rite of passage. So-called "experts" are more than happy to walk teens through a drug experience.

Social networking sites provide information from teens on their personal experiences on how to get high with prescription drugs.

DEA provides information on trends and hot topics on the Get Smart About Drugs website.



### Internet Pharmacies

- “Rogue” pharmacies: Advertise drugs without a prescription or with the “approval” of a “doctor” working for the drug trafficking network.
- Parents should:
  - Be aware of teens’ Internet activity
  - Check credit card and bank statements

Source: “The Possible Dangers of Buying Medicine Over the Internet,” U.S. Food and Drug Administration, [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048396.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048396.htm)

Some pharmacies operating on the Internet are legal, and some are not. Some of the legal pharmacies have voluntarily sought certification as “Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites” (VIPPS) from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacies.

“Rogue” pharmacies pretend to be authentic by operating websites that advertise powerful drugs without a prescription or with the “approval” of a “doctor” working for the drug trafficking network. Teens have access to these websites and are exposed to offers of prescription drugs through e-mail spam or pop-ups.

Parents should be aware of which sites their teens are visiting and should examine credit card and bank statements that may indicate drug purchases.



## Real Stories: Ryan Haight

Francine Haight, Ryan's mother shares her son's story:

*"Ryan Thomas Haight overdosed and died on February 12, 2001, on narcotics (Vicodin) that he had easily purchased on the Internet. A medical doctor that he never saw prescribed them; an Internet pharmacy mailed them to his home. He was only 17 when he purchased them; he was only 18 when he died."*

Source: USA Today, "Teens use Internet to Share Drug Stories," by Donna Leinward, June 19, 2007

18-year-old Ryan Haight died from a drug overdose with drugs he purchased from the Internet. Francine Haight, his mother, shares her son's story.

*"Ryan Thomas Haight overdosed and died on February 12, 2001, on narcotics (Vicodin) that he had easily purchased on the Internet. A medical doctor that he never saw prescribed them; an Internet pharmacy mailed them to his home. He was only 17 when he purchased them; he was only 18 when he died."*



## Real Stories: Ryan Haight

*“It is too easy to meet and chat with strangers on Internet websites that glorify the use of drugs and who can easily talk our children into experimenting. These websites encourage our children to take drugs and share their highs, which is extremely dangerous and can lead to death.”*

Source: USA Today, “Teens use Internet to Share Drug Stories,” by Donna Levinward, June 19, 2007

*“It is too easy to meet and chat with strangers on Internet websites that glorify the use of drugs and who can easily talk our children into experimenting. These websites encourage our children to take drugs and share their highs, which is extremely dangerous and can lead to death,”* Francine Haight said.



### Over-the-Counter Medications

OTC medications are medications that do not require a prescription

- Over 100 medicines contain Dextromethorphan (DXM)
- DXM is a safe and effective ingredient found in many nonprescription drugs (cough medicines and cold remedies) when used according to medicine label direction
- When used in large amounts it produces a “high” feeling as well as dangerous side effects
- Teens can buy them in pharmacies, grocery stores, or superstores
- Many teens find them in their own home or get them from friends

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html)

Another type of drug that youth may commonly abuse and can obtain easily are over-the-counter (OTC) medications, which are medications that do not require a doctor’s prescription. In particular, OTC medications that contain the hallucinogen dextromethorphan, or DXM, are commonly abused. Many cough medicines bought over-the-counter contain DXM.

There are well over 100 medications that contain DXM either as the only active ingredient or in combination with other active ingredients.

These medications (store brands as well as brand names) can be purchased in pharmacies, grocery stores, and superstores. Youth can find them at home in their medicine cabinets or get them from friends.



## Effects of Abusing OTC Medications with DXM

- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Loss of physical coordination
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea and vomiting

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html)

Abuse of OTC medications with DXM can cause:

- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Loss of physical coordination
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea and vomiting



## Effects of Abusing OTC Medications with DXM

- Rapid heart beat
- Drowsiness
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation
- Mild distortions of color and sound
- Visual hallucinations
- “Out-of-body” dissociative sensations
- Loss of motor control

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html](http://www.drugabuse.gov/Infofacts/PainMed.html)

Additional effects of abuse of OTC medications with DXM are:

- Rapid heart beat
- Drowsiness
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation
- Mild distortions of color and sound
- Visual hallucinations
- “Out-of-body” dissociative sensations
- Loss of motor control



### Inhalants

- Ordinary household products that children inhale or sniff to get high
- When a person uses an inhalant, large amounts of toxic chemicals enter the lungs and pass from the bloodstream to the brain, where they damage and kill brain cells

*Sources:*

- National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America [www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug\\_Guide/Inhalants](http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug_Guide/Inhalants)

Another type of commonly-abused substance is inhalants. Inhalants are ordinary household products that children inhale or sniff to get high. There are literally hundreds of household products that can be misused as inhalants. When a person uses an inhalant, large amounts of toxic chemicals enter the lungs and pass from the bloodstream to the brain, where they damage and kill brain cells.



## Inhalants

Hundreds of products can be misused as inhalants, including:

- Nail polish remover
- Household glue
- Hairspray
- Computer keyboard cleaner
- Vegetable cooking spray
- Lighter fluid
- Spray paint
- Gasoline

*Sources:*

- National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America [www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug\\_Guide/Inhalants](http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug_Guide/Inhalants)

There are hundreds of household products that can be misused as inhalants, including: nail polish remover, household glue, hairspray, computer keyboard cleaner, vegetable cooking spray, lighter fluid, cleaning fluid, spray paint, correction fluid, and gasoline.



### How Are Inhalants Used?

- Sniffed
- Snorted
- Bagged (sniffing or inhaling fumes from substances sprayed or deposited inside a plastic or paper bag)
- Huffed from an inhalant-soaked rag stuffed in the mouth
- Many abusers sniff inhalants directly from their containers

*Sources:*

- National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America [www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug\\_Guide/Inhalants](http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug_Guide/Inhalants)

Inhalants are sniffed, snorted, bagged (sniffing or inhaling fumes from substances sprayed or deposited inside a plastic or paper bag), or “huffed,” using an inhalant-soaked rag or sock in the mouth. Many abusers also sniff inhalants directly from their containers.

When a person uses an inhalant, large amounts of toxic chemicals enter the lungs and pass from the blood stream to the brain where they damage and kill brain cells. Kids can start abusing inhalants at a very early age because they are so accessible in the home.



## Effects of Inhalant Abuse

### Short-term inhalant abuse:

- Slurred speech
- Loss of coordination
- Euphoria
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Headache
- Confusion
- Delirium

*Sources:*

- National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America [www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug\\_Guide/Inhalants](http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug_Guide/Inhalants)

What are the effects of inhalant abuse?

Within minutes of inhalation, the abuser experiences intoxication along with other effects similar to those produced by alcohol, including slurred speech, an inability to coordinate movements, euphoria, confusion, delirium, and dizziness. Users may also experience lingering headaches.



### Effects of Inhalant Abuse

#### Long-term inhalant use:

- Compulsive use
- Weight loss
- Muscle weakness
- Disorientation
- Inattentiveness
- Irritability
- Depression
- Damage to the nervous system and other organs
- Irregular and rapid heart rhythms
- Heart failure and death

*Sources:*

- National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America [www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug\\_Guide/Inhalants](http://www.drugfree.org/Portal/Drug_Guide/Inhalants)

Long-term effects include compulsive use, weight loss, muscle weakness, disorientation, inattentiveness, irritability, and depression. Long-term inhalant use can cause damage to the nervous system and other organs. Some of the damaging effects to the body may be at least partially reversible when inhalant abuse is stopped; however, many of the effects from prolonged abuse are irreversible.

Prolonged inhalant use can induce irregular and rapid heart rhythms and lead to heart failure and death.

To learn more about the effects of inhalant abuse, visit the Get Smart About Drugs visual glossary at [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs.html](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs.html).



## Sudden Sniffing Death

- Some abusers continue to inhale repeatedly over the course of several hours
- This can lead to loss of consciousness and death
- It can happen the very first time someone abuses inhalants

Source: National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)

Inhalant abuse is especially dangerous because intoxication only lasts a few minutes, and abusers frequently seek to prolong their high by continuing to inhale repeatedly over the course of several hours. By doing this, abusers can suffer loss of consciousness and death, termed “Sudden Sniffing Death.”

This can happen the very first time someone abuses inhalant.



## Signs and Symptoms of Inhalant Abuse

- 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 glassy-eyed look
- Nausea, loss of appetite
- Anxiety, excitability, irritability

Source: National Inhalant Prevention Coalition, [www.inhalants.org/about.htm](http://www.inhalants.org/about.htm)

Signs and symptoms of inhalant abuse may include:

- 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 glassy-eyed look
- Nausea, loss of appetite
- Anxiety, excitability, irritability



## Learn More

Learn more about drugs, how they affect the mind and body, and their physical characteristics at [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs)



To learn more about drugs and their effects on the mind, body, and physical characteristics, visit [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/identify/drugs).

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## How to Safeguard Your Home

- Monitor
- Secure
- Dispose



Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, [www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx](http://www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx)

With the threat of prescription drugs, OTC medications, and inhalants in your home, how can you safeguard your home and protect your children from abuse?

Safeguard your home in three steps:

1. Monitor your medicine and household products
2. Secure your medications and household items.
3. Dispose expired or unused prescription medications and other household products safely

Let's talk about each method.



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[www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com)

## Monitor

- Take note of how many pills are in your prescription bottles, how many OTC medications you buy, and how often you're buying products like aerosol sprays or glues
- Encourage friends and relatives to monitor their own medicine cabinets and household products

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, [www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx](http://www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx)

The first step to safeguarding your home is to monitor your medicine and household products.

- Would you know if some of your pills were missing?
- Are you running out of household products like aerosol sprays or glue more quickly than you should be?
- Are you refilling medications more often than expected?

When you or a family member gets a prescription, keep track of how many pills that were prescribed. Keep track of your refills. If you're needing to refill medication more often than expected, that could indicate a problem. The same goes for OTC medications and household items that can be abused as inhalants.

Do your kids visit friends and relatives often where they can gain access to a medicine cabinet and other household products? Educate these friends and relatives about the dangers and encourage them to monitor their own medicine cabinets and household products.

Talk to the parents of your children's friends as well.



## Hidden Dangers in Your Home

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### Secure

- Store medications and household products in a secure place your child cannot access
- Ask relatives to lock their medications and household products away
- Encourage parents of your child's friends to do the same

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, [www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx](http://www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx)

The next step is to secure your medications and household items.

64% of kids age 12 to 17 who have abused pain relievers say they got them from their friends or relatives, typically without their knowledge. There's no shame in securing your medications and other household items that could create a potential for abuse.

Take medications out of the medicine cabinet, and hide them in a place only you know about. Do the same with household products that can be abused as inhalants.

If possible, keep all medicines in a safe place, such as a locked cabinet that your child cannot access.

Tell relatives to lock their medications and household products or keep in them a safe place.

Talk to the parents your child's friends, and encourage them to secure their medications and household products as well.



### Dispose

- Discard expired or unused medications and products when your kids are not home
- Mix medication with an undesirable substance like used coffee grounds or kitty litter
- Do not flush medications and products down the drain or toilet unless directions on packaging state otherwise
- Remove personal and identifiable information from prescription bottles and packages
- Contact your city or county government, and ask if there's a safe drug disposal program in your community

Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, [www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx](http://www.drugfree.org/notinmyhouse/steps.aspx)

Safely disposing of expired or unused prescription medications and other household products is a critical step in helping protect your children.

Take an inventory of all of the prescription and OTC medications and household products that could be abused as inhalants in your home. Discard expired or unused medications and products when your kids are not home.

Children may retrieve discarded medications and products from the trash. To prevent this from happening, mix the medication with an undesirable substance such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter. Put the mixture into an empty bag and discard it.

Unless the directions on the packaging say otherwise, do not flush medication and other products down the drain or toilet.

Protect your and your family's privacy by removing any personal and identifiable information from prescription bottles or pill packages before you throw them away.

Some city and county governments offer safe drug disposal programs where you can take your medications and household hazardous wastes to a central location where you can properly and safely dispose them. Contact your city or county government, and ask if there's a safe drug disposal program in your community.



### Get Educated

There is a wide variety of resources that parents and caregivers can use to identify and prevent drug abuse in your families

If you need more information about identifying and preventing drug abuse in your family, there is a wealth of online resources available.

Hidden Dangers in Your Home

www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com

## Resources

Get Smart About Drugs: [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com)

- Visually identify drugs
- Understand the hidden dangers in your home through an interactive home
- Learn the signs of drug abuse
- Protect your family from drug abuse
- Explore ways to talk to your children about drugs
- Find resources for getting help



First, DEA's Get Smart About Drugs website at [www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com) is an educational outreach and awareness website that provides resources and tools you can use to:

- Visually identify drugs
- Understand the hidden dangers in your home through an interactive home
- Learn the signs of drug abuse
- Protect your family from drug abuse
- Explore ways to talk to your children about drugs
- Find resources for getting help

Hidden Dangers in Your Home

www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com

## Resources

Partnership for a Drug-Free America: [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)

- The Parent Toolkit
- Time to Talk
- Time to Act



The screenshot shows the website's main page with a navigation menu at the top. The main content area features a large heading 'SUSPECT (OR KNOW) YOUR TEEN IS DRINKING OR USING DRUGS?' followed by a sub-heading 'Find out what you can do'. Below this are several columns of text and images, including a 'NEWS' section with a 'NEWS' banner and a 'DEA' logo. The website is designed with a clean, professional layout using blue and white colors.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America's website, located at [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org), also provides a variety of tools to help parents keep their kids safe and drug free, including:

- **The Parent Toolkit**—an online toolkit that gives advice by your child's age; provides guidance for connecting with and protecting your kids; helps you learn how to spot drug and alcohol abuse in your home; and provides resources on how to get help if your child is abusing drugs.
- **Time to Talk**—easy to use tools and tips to help you have ongoing conversations with your kids about drugs and staying drug free.
- **Time to Act**—a resource for parents who suspect or know their teen is drinking or abusing drugs.

The site offers many more resources and is updated regularly.



### Conclusion

Staying educated can help you  
keep your home and children safe and drug free

Thank you for taking the time to come here today to learn about the hidden dangers in your home that could put kids at risk of drug abuse. With this new knowledge and online resources, you have the information you need to keep your home and children safe and drug free.