



**Prevention Resource & Media Center**  
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**National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week is March 17-23**  
*Department of Human Services has prevention materials available*

Bismarck, N.D. – Inhalants can be in your house, your child’s school, and you might have picked some up the last time you went to the grocery store. Inhalant abuse among North Dakota middle school students is 7.4 percent (the third most abused substance, next to alcohol and marijuana), and 11.6 percent among high school students (Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2011).

**National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week** is a great time to raise awareness of what can be done to prevent inhalant abuse. The N.D. Department of Human Services’ Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has created an educational inhalant abuse prevention toolkit for community leaders, parents, school officials, and other professionals.

The toolkit contains information on the signs and symptoms of inhalant abuse, a checklist for parents on safeguarding household and other products, tips on talking to teens about inhalant abuse, and links to additional prevention resources. The toolkit is online at <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/mentalhealth/prevention/pdf/inhalant-toolkt.pdf>. It can be shipped to interested individuals at no cost. For a kit, contact the department’s Prevention Resource and Media Center at 701-328-8918, toll-free 800-642-6744, or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888.

“Inhalant Awareness Week provides an opportunity to take action,” said Pamela Sagness, prevention administrator for the division. “It is also a time for all of us to look around our homes, workplaces, and communities to ensure we are creating a safe environment for our children.”

Sagness said it is important to teach youth about the safe use of products and to always stress that some products are dangerous poisons when used inappropriately.

The Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is the leading resource for substance abuse information and prevention efforts in the state. The department’s Prevention Resource and Media Center offers a variety of free brochures and pamphlets as well as other resources including DVDs that can be checked out and used all year long to support prevention efforts in schools and communities.

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