

Advocacy Alert

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“Dusting” Equals Huffing

Recently, some thrill-seeking children and teenagers have died participating in a life-threatening activity that they thought was completely safe. You may already be aware that inhaling propellant gases from aerosol cans can kill. These tragic deaths were among young people who knew the dangers of “huffing” but thought that the cans of compressed air marketed for cleaning computers contain only air. The behavior is calling “dusting,” in reference to a popular brand name for this product. A check of an office supply chain found several brands, all of which included a warning on the label, but who reads labels?

Please help get the word to students that all aerosol cans should be used only as they were intended to be used and only in well-ventilated areas. If they know someone who is huffing, they should tell an adult.

Parents should watch in their homes for aerosol cans such as whipped topping or paint that they can tell by weight still contain product but will not spray or that are in inappropriate places. They should watch their children for symptoms of inhalant use such as unusual odor on breath or clothing, slurred or slow speech, drunken behavior, paint on face or fingers, red or runny eyes or nose, spots or sores around the mouth, and/or nausea or loss of appetite.

More information is available at: www.snopes.com/toxins/dustoff.asp and www.theantidrug.com/drug_info/drug_info_inhalants.asp.