

Sample Action Plan for Inhalant Abuse Prevention

ADULTS ONLY

The Maine Inhalant Abuse Prevention Task Force encourages schools to take the following steps to prevent inhalant abuse in school and during school-sponsored activities. For more information about inhalants and prevention strategies, please contact the Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services.

		Projected Completion Date	Who is responsible for step implementation	Date step is completed
1. Education for parents, staff, and community	A. Inhalant in-service training and/or printed materials provided to faculty, staff, and school nurses, etc. Schools could also invite community-based youth-serving professionals.			
	B. Educate parents about the dangers of inhalant abuse. Many parents' busy schedules make it difficult to attend evening programs. Mailing written information to parents can be a good alternative. Inhalant information can be added to school, parent teacher organization or report card mailings. Camera ready copies of parent flyers are available from the National Inhalant Prevention Coalition at 1-800-269-4237 or by email at nipc@io.com			
2. Environmental Safety	A. Screen supplies for safety. Consider supplies currently used in offices, classrooms, art, and shop. Strong smelling supplies may be an indicator that the item contains solvents. An "AP Non-Toxic" label on art supplies from the Art and Creative Material Institute <i>does not indicate an absence of solvents</i> , since the Institute does not evaluate products for their potential to be abused as inhalants. If you have questions about a particular product, contact the manufacturer or the Northern New England Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.			
	B. Review school supplies purchases. When available, substitute water-based products for solvent-based products. For example, water-based correction fluid, glue (white glues or glue sticks) and paints. As well as <i>low odor</i> dry erase markers are safer alternatives.			
	C. In instances when water-based products are not available, the use of solvent-based products and gases should be closely monitored. A helpful strategy in monitoring these products is to <i>check out</i> and <i>check in</i> solvent-based products while noting the frequency and amount used. Teachers should be mindful of rags, handkerchiefs, small bottles, soda cans, and sleeves as they may be used for the delivery of solvents.			
3. Policy	A. Ban non-essential solvent-based products (such as solvent-based correction fluid and dry erase and magic markers) in schools. Rationale: The school is looking for ways to reduce indoor air pollution and poisons in the schools. Labeling products as inhalants or drugs can arouse the curiosity of students and encourage use.			

Created by the **Maine Inhalant Abuse Prevention Work Group**

For more information about inhalants please contact:

Maine Office of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services
Information and Resource Center

Phone: 1-800-499-0027 TTY – 711 (Maine Relay) Email: samhs.irc@maine.gov

Web Address: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/osa/irc>

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	B. Because solvents and gasses are commonly used in shops, vocational programs, and science and art classes, safety lessons associated with the use of these products should be reviewed to stress the correct use and the consequences of misuse in these particular classrooms.			
4. Curriculum Review	A. Many schools are already teaching health lessons that could incorporate inhalant abuse prevention messages. These topics include poisons, product safety, first aid, and fire safety. Review and revise lessons to add or strengthen inhalant abuse prevention messages. Prevention messages should promote awareness that these products contain <i>poisons, toxins, pollutants</i> , and/or highly flammable liquids and gases. Procedures for appropriate and safe use of these products should be emphasized. Using this approach associates these products with <i>product safety</i> concerns and <i>poisons</i> instead of <i>drugs</i> .			
	B. Because solvents and gasses are commonly used in shops, vocational programs, and science and art classes, safety lessons associated with the use of these products should be reviewed to stress the correct use and the consequences of misuse. Samples of science based programs that decrease inhalant abuse: All Stars, Life Skills Training.			
5. Intervention	A. Is there a procedure in place for a student who is suspected or known to have used inhalants (or any other drug)? Because of the potential for sudden death associated with inhalant use, it is recommended that the school nurse and a school administrator be involved.			
	B. Is there a procedure in place for alcohol and other drug abuse screenings and/or assessments? Resources are available to assist when there is concern that a student may have used an inhalant, but is not in immediate danger. The Office of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services, Information and Resource Center at 1-800-499-0027 can connect you to the closest community outpatient substance abuse counseling program.			

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