



DANGEROUS DRUGS BOARD (DDB)

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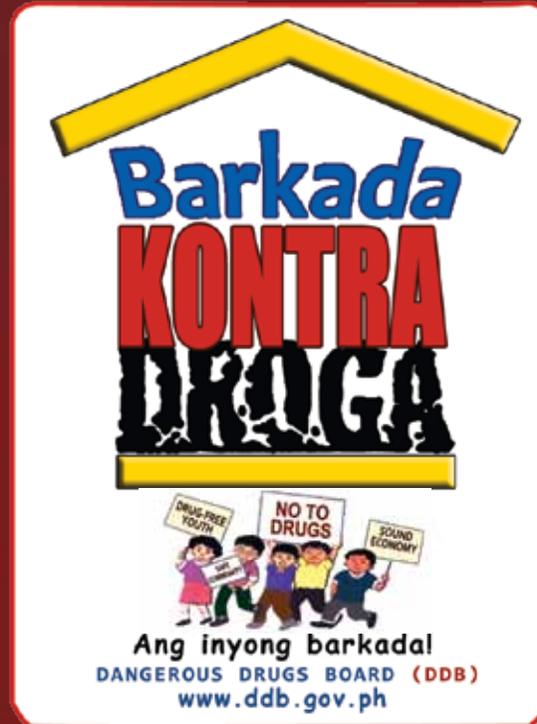
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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

INHALANT ABUSE



WHAT IS INHALANT ABUSE?

Inhalant abuse is the deliberate inhalation of volatile chemical substances that contain psychoactive (mind or mood altering) vapors to produce a state of intoxication.

WHY IS INHALANT ABUSE DANGEROUS?

- It can cause permanent damage to the brain and may result to "Sudden Sniffing Death."



- Abusers under the influence of inhalants are prone to accidents, drowning, and falling from building among others. Abusers can also become violent
- Inhalant abuse produces psychological dependence. Once the habit is formed, the dose has to increase gradually to produce the same effect.

IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

- Confusion and disorientation
- Distorted perception of time and distance
- Aggressive behavior and violence
- Hallucinations
- Delusions
- Nausea and vomiting
- Drowsiness and weight loss

DELAYED EFFECTS

- Loss of memory
- Inability to think
- Muscle cramps and weakness
- Numbness in limbs
- Abdominal pains
- Damage to the central nervous system, kidneys, liver and bone marrow

WHY DO YOUNG PEOPLE ABUSE INHALANTS?

- Curiosity
- Boredom
- Frustration (from personal issues and problems in the family, in school or at work)
- Poor self-image
- Weak personality (inability to cope with stress and conflict)
- Lack of parental guidance

HOW TO DEAL WITH "PEER PRESSURE"

We all care what other people will think about us. We want to be accepted and be part of the crowd.

When you are young, the influence of the people your own age is especially powerful and affects the way you feel, dress and behave.

However, the same pressures can influence people to do the other things, like using drugs. If your friends or someone you know pressures you to use drugs, saying "no" can be hard because you want them to like you and accept you as part of the group.

But peer pressure can also be a positive thing. Peers can be a powerful influence in preventing drug abuse by helping one another to say "no" to drugs.

The influence of people on others can help them to do useful and healthy things.



HOW CAN I AVOID INHALANT ABUSE

Learn to say "NO" and ask for help. Close friends are important but you don't have to do everything your friends do to remain friends. Real friends will accept you whether you take drugs or not.

Learn to talk to people about your problems. Don't bottle things up inside. It's okay to cry, shout, laugh, feel sad about your problem.

Learn to relax. Give time for:

- Physical exercise and sports for relaxation
- Meditation
- Using music to relax
- Bodily relaxation techniques like yoga
- Learn to find a new interest. Find out what you like doing, what other people like doing. Meet new people. Go to new places, put yourself in new situations.

