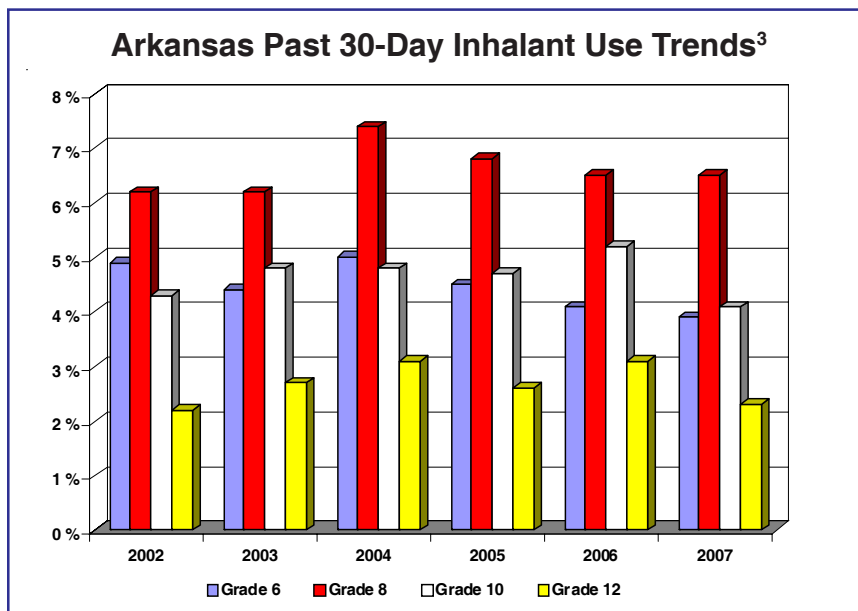


# Inhalant Use by Arkansas Adolescents

INHALANT USE IS MOST PREVALENT IN YOUNGER TEENS. Data collected in 2006 by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) indicated that for adolescents aged 12 to 17, inhalant use was higher for each successive age group, peaking at age 15 and declining in successive age groups. Inhalants were the most frequently reported class of illicit drugs used in the past year for adolescents aged 12 and 13.<sup>2</sup>



In the 30 days prior to participating in the 2007 Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) Student Survey, the following inhalant use rates were reported: 3.9% for grade 6, 6.5% for grade 8, 4.1% for grade 10 and 2.3% for grade 12.

Consistent with national use trends, Arkansas lifetime inhalant use rates were 9.3% for grade 6, 16.0% for grade 8, 14.9% for grade 10, and 12.0% for grade 12. Lifetime inhalant use was 0.4% to 1.5% greater in Arkansas for grades 8, 10 and 12 than nationally.<sup>3</sup> In 2007, 25% of Arkansas substance abuse treatment admissions identifying

inhalants as the primary substance of abuse were adolescents aged 12 to 17 years.<sup>4</sup>

## Health Consequences of Inhalant Abuse

Inhalant abuse can result in central nervous system damage, a variety of renal disorders, asphyxiation, permanent damage to pulmonary tissues, toxic hepa-

## What are Inhalants?

INHALANTS ARE A DIVERSE group of volatile substances whose chemical vapors can be inhaled to produce psychoactive (mind-altering) effects. Unlike other abused substances that can be inhaled, the term "inhalants" refers to substances that are very rarely, if ever, administered by any other means.

The four general categories of inhalants are volatile solvents, aerosols, gases and nitrites. Commonly abused inhalants are found in a variety of household, school and workplace products such as paint thinners, gasoline, glue, spray paints, hair or deodorant sprays, butane lighters and refrigerant units.<sup>1</sup>

titis and sudden sniffing death syndrome. Inhalant abuse deaths have been reported from suffocation while "bagging" and from fires as a result of combustion of inhalants. Other abusers have died from drowning and major trauma attributed to engaging in high-risk behavior while "high" on inhalants.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the June 2008 NIDA InfoFacts, National Institute on Drug Abuse, [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

<sup>2</sup> From the March 13, 2008 NSDUH Report, Inhalant Use across the Adolescent Year. More NSDUH information can be found at <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> From the Arkansas Prevention Needs Assessment (APNA) Survey, State Report 2007, <http://arkansas.pridesurveys.com/>

<sup>4</sup> From the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration Office of Applied Studies, Treatment Episode Data Sets: AR, 2007: <http://www.dasis.samhsa.gov/webt/quicklink/AR07.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Kurtzman, T.L. et al (2001). Inhalant abuse by adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 28, 170-180.

*Coming next month: More on adolescent inhalant use*