

## NEW POLL SHOWS PARENTS AFRAID OF TALKING TO THEIR TEENS

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) is urging parents to sharpen their conversation skills and monitor their teen's activities, after a new poll shows that most parents have difficulty getting through to their teens about important subjects, especially drug use. According to a new survey by VitalSmarts, most parents of teens indicate that they are even afraid to talk to their teens about everyday issues.

The survey shows that a majority of parents (57%) admit to having some degree of difficulty in getting their teens involved in meaningful conversations about their concerns, such as who their friends are, how they dress, and how school is going. An even greater number of parents (74%) have difficulty getting their teens to respond to these concerns and are not sure their teens are even listening when they do talk.

And when it comes to tough topics, like drug use, most parents (52%) admit to some degree of difficulty with those conversations. Even more troubling is that parents know drugs are part of a teen's world today. More than half of parents surveyed (56%) believe their teen goes to parties where drugs are available and nearly half of parents (48%) believe their teen has friends who use drugs. Despite that, few parents are doing anything about it.

"This poll reinforces a disconcerting trend we're seeing with parents today. Too many parents are avoiding tough conversations—or tough stances—because they're afraid of jeopardizing their relationship with their teen," said John P. Walters, Director of National Drug Control Policy. "Parents must follow through on their responsibilities and set clear rules against drug use."

According to the VitalSmarts survey, the strategy most often used by parents to monitor their teen's activities is to keep the fridge stocked with food so teens and their friends will be more likely to hang out at home under parental supervision (52%). Few parents are checking up on their teen (7%), asking questions to try to find out what's going on when it comes to drugs (21%), or going through their teens' belongings (29%), even though research shows that teens who are not regularly monitored by the parents are four times more likely to use drugs.

And when parents have wondered if their teen might be exposed to drugs, 26 percent of them did not speak up because they did not believe their teen would be influenced by drugs. Others did not speak up because they had already discussed drugs with their teen in the past (20%), they worried that their teen would deny there was a problem (17%), or that initiating the conversation would communicate a lack of trust to their teen (13%).

*Continued on page 2*



Cap-

### Special Points of Interest:

- Community Awareness
- Education
- Prevention
- Intervention
- Treatment
- Recovery

### Inside this issue:

Inhalant Videos on YouTube	2
ONCDP Urging Parents to Talk to Kids	2
Online Registries of Drug Offenders	3
Toad's Place Closing	4

## National Drunk Driving Prevention Month

The holiday season between Christmas and New Year's Eve is one of the busiest on the nation's roadways and also one of the most dangerous, due to a high incidence of drug and alcohol-related traffic crashes.

That's why the South

Central Connecticut Regional Action Council is joining with other national, state and local highway safety and law enforcement officials to remind everyone this holiday season to always designate a sober driver before each holiday party or event involving

alcohol.

The holiday season is supposed to be a time for family, friends, and festive celebrations, but it is unfortunately also a time when we see a tragic jump in the number of drug and alcohol-related highway fatalities each year between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve.



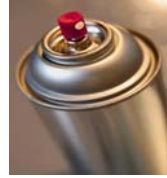
## Advocates Concerned About 'How-to' Inhalant Videos on YouTube

Inhalants have always been easy to find—in fact, curious teens only have to venture as far as their linen closet or pantry. But now videos posted on the popular Web site, YouTube, have made it easy to learn how to use them. The videos have raised red flags among the substance abuse prevention community and many are calling for the removal of these graphic videos.

The videos are a graphic “how-to” manual for huffing—providing demonstrations of teens inhaling products, such as computer keyboard cleaner, paint, Freon and helium, to get high. In the videos, the teens are visibly intoxicated, laughing, falling down and seemingly having a good time. The National Inhalant Prevention Coalition (NIPC), along with various national prevention advocacy groups, are concerned that the videos glorify inhalant abuse and can potentially lure young people into using inhalants who might otherwise not use them.

“If kids aren’t aware of what inhalants are and they just see kids having fun on YouTube, laughing and talking goofy, it can be an attraction for them,” ex-

plained Harvey Weiss, the NIPC’s Executive Director. “It glorifies inhalant use without demonstrating the potential consequences.”



Today, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, about one in six students in the United States has used an inhalant to get high by the time they reach the 8th grade. Recent media reports have highlighted the tragedies that can result from inhalant use, such as the death of Idaho-native Danielle Dunbar, whose heart stopped after huffing computer cleaner. Indeed, inhalants are among the most deadly of drugs because they can cause death even with a single episode. While sudden cardiac arrest is the most common, huffing can also cause motor vehicle accidents, falls, and other traumatic injuries, as well as suffocation, burns and even suicide.

Weiss said the YouTube videos can only exacerbate the problem. “Without the appropriate caveat explaining that inhalants are deadly and dangerous, this could be a potential recipe for death,” he said.

In partnership with other national prevention advocacy groups, the NIPC contacted YouTube to request the removal of the videos. Last week, the group also issued an action alert urging the community to write to YouTube and Google, who now owns the Web site, expressing their concerns. The NIPC is also asking people to visit YouTube, search for the videos and mark them as inappropriate. “Thanks to the efforts of our partners some of the videos have been removed – but new ones keep cropping up,” Weiss said. “Just doing a search for duster, air duster, huffing, sniffing, canned air or inhalants can result in several videos. One person even told me that they found 30 videos up there.”

The NIPC and its partners have developed new Public Service Announcements and Video News Releases to help concerned citizens alert the community about the YouTube videos.

To get more involved in inhalant prevention, visit the NIPC’s Web site at [www.inhalants.org](http://www.inhalants.org)

## White House Urges Parents to Sharpen Conversation Skills Cont.

*Continued from page 1*

“There isn’t a more crucial parenting conversation than talking to a teenager about drugs. And most parents feel entirely inadequate, so they procrastinate it or speak up badly,” said Joseph Grenny, co-founder, VitalSmarts and author of *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*. “Our research offers good news to millions of parents—we’ve found the difference between success and failure in these crucial conversations is a few powerful and learnable skills. Many parents feel like they have to choose between peace and parenting, but

“Too many parents are avoiding tough conversations—or tough stances—because they’re afraid of jeopardizing their relationship with their teen,” said John P. Walters, Director of National Drug Control Policy.

that’s not true.”

Grenny has some tips to help parents improve their conversation skills about drug use:

1. Keep your best motives in mind by asking yourself what you really want;
2. Make it safe for your teen to talk; state

what you *don't* intend and what you *do* intend;

3. Confront with facts about what’s happening, not judgments;
4. Discuss, agree on, and stick with boundaries; and
5. Evaluate the dialogue to make sure it’s a two-way conversation.

Parents can visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com) for additional advice and information from VitalSmarts and the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, including sample conversation starters and a tip card that parents can download or order for free.



## ONLINE REGISTRIES OF DRUG OFFENDERS

Internet registries of rapists or pedophiles are available in every state, but a new breed of criminal now is experiencing the notoriety of beingouted online — people convicted of making or selling methamphetamine. "It lets the community know that there's someone like this in their community, because the likelihood of them going back and doing it again is high," said Georgia state Rep. Mike Coan, who is spearheading meth registry legislation. "It's no different, really, from the sex offender (registry). If there's one living near me, I want to know it."

The idea of posting the names of meth offenders online is gaining momentum. Four states have put in place laws to create Internet meth offender registries, two are putting final touches on similar laws, and several other proposed bills are in limbo until the state legislatures start the new session.

But critics say the registries raise legal questions, do little to protect the public and may have unintended consequences.

"The problem with these registries is that we're creating a class of untouchables within our society who cannot rent apartments or secure employment," said Jonathan Turley, a criminal defense attorney and law professor at George Washington University. "When you diminish the likelihood that ex-felons can live and work in society, you increase the chances that they will return to criminal behavior."

Tennessee, which set up the first meth offenders registry in March 2005, has one of the highest rates of methamphetamine use in the country, as well as the personal tragedy and crime associated with it. The drug's impact has been especially shocking in otherwise peaceful rural areas, where addiction problems are compounded by the danger posed by people "cooking" meth in their homes. The use of toxic chemicals and the risk of explosion imperil not just the producer but family, neighbors and law enforcers, and the cost of cleaning up a production site ranges from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

"Unlike other drugs where it is really harmful to you and your family, meth is hazardous to all around you," said Jennifer Johnson, public affairs officer at the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, which maintains the state's database. "... That's why we don't foresee a heroin or cocaine registry."

To date, Tennessee lists the names of about 400 offenders. As in other states creating similar laws, it includes only people convicted of producing or trafficking in the highly addictive stimulant, not those convicted of simple possession. In the methamphetamine landscape, however, that often means that even people who are cooking meth in their kitchen sink for personal use could be ensnared in the registries.

Property owners were the most forceful backers of legislation to

create the meth registry, viewing it as a tool to screen prospective tenants.

But since the list does not include photographs, lists offenders by the location of their offense rather than their current addresses, and doesn't require them to notify authorities when they move, critics say it is little use to the general public.

Georgia is contemplating a tougher registry law, which would require meth makers or sellers to be listed on the Internet for seven years. As set out in the pending legislation, the registry would include photos and current addresses of the offenders and require them to update their address with each change of residence.

Similar bills have been introduced in Oklahoma, Washington, Kentucky and West Virginia; Illinois and Minnesota are in the process of implementing meth registries.

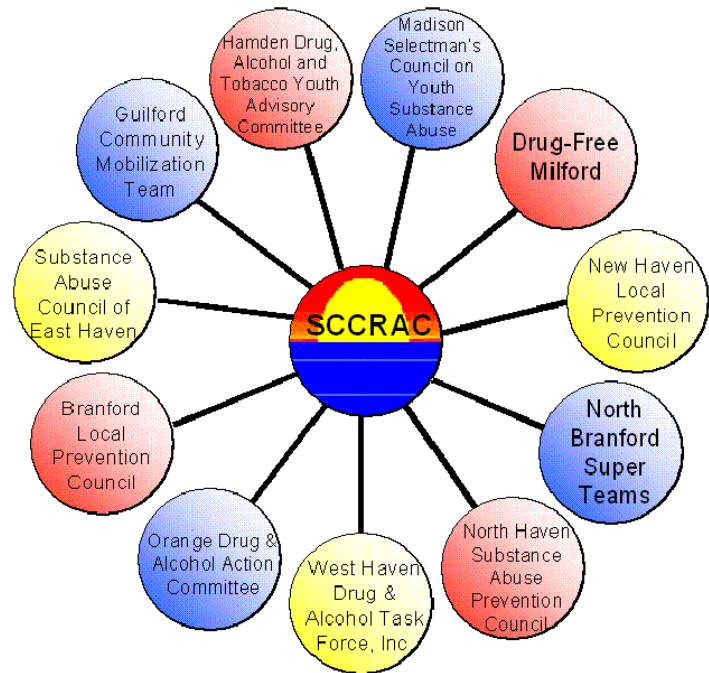


## South Central Connecticut Regional Action Council

Michael Jefferson  
*Executive Director*  
Tyisha Barnes  
*Prevention Specialist*

230 Ashmun Street  
New Haven, CT 06511

Phone: (203) 776-1981  
Fax: (203) 776-1982  
E-mail: sccrac@yahoo.com



## Shining a Light on Prevention that works

### ***Toad's Place Closing as Penalty for Serving Underage Patrons***

The Yale Daily News reported that Toad's Place will close for most of the summer and pay thousands of dollars to the state as a penalty for serving alcohol to underage patrons.

In an agreement reached between the Connecticut Liquor Control Commission and Toad's Place, the popular New Haven nightclub will be fined \$90,000 and be forced to close for 90 days beginning May 6. Toad's was raided last November by police who found 87 underage patrons in possession of alcohol.

The compromise deal followed several months of negotiations between the nightclub's lawyer and the Liquor Control Commission, or LCC, Toad's owner Brian Phelps said. Late this September, the LCC rejected an earlier proposal by Toad's to close for 70 days and pay a \$70,000 fine for its violations. Phelps said while the penalty will cost him about \$200,000 in lost profits and

fines, he thinks the deal was fair.

As a result of the 90-day closure, Phelps said, he will be forced to cancel concerts, but he said he is relieved his club was able to schedule the majority of the closing period during the summer, when local universities would not be in session.

"Hopefully the students will be relieved to know that we will be open during the semester," he said.

To combat underage drinking at his nightclub, Phelps said he has retrained his door-staff to more effectively recognize fake identification cards.

On busy nights, especially those that are heavily student-populated, he said his nightclub now employs two guards at the door to check identification, to take a picture of the identification together with the patron, and to issue wristbands at the door so that no customers sneaking in side doors can be

served drinks at the bar.

Under state law, Phelps said, he has no choice but to close the New Haven nightclub for the 90-day suspension period because he has a cafe license. Had the club possessed a restaurant license, he said, the club could have remained open and just suspended the service of alcohol.

This is not the first time that the nightclub, a venue that hosts popular musical artists and holds dance parties several nights a week, has been raided following reports of underage drinking. In September 2001, Toad's suffered a similar inspection and the nightclub was cited for multiple instances of serving alcohol to minors. The club was fined \$25,000 and was forced to shut down for one week after being cited by the commission for 12 specific violations of Connecticut liquor statutes.