

## Conference hears how the US is tackling Volatile Substance Abuse

“There is a real problem when more than 1 in 5 children in the United States of America will abuse inhalants by the eighth grade,” says Colleen Creighton, Executive Director of the Alliance for Consumer Education based in the USA.

Ms Creighton will highlight some of the ways that the Alliance is tackling lack of parental awareness and the significant rise of inhalant abuse, as one of the keynote speakers at Aerosols 2007 to be held in the UK in September. Inhalant abuse is the deliberate inhalation by ‘sniffing’ or ‘huffing’ fumes, vapours or gases from common household and commercial products for the purpose of ‘getting high’.

Aerosols 2007 is the FEA International Aerosol Congress and Exhibition hosted by BAMA (British Aerosol Manufacturers’ Association) to be held at Manchester Central from 18-20 September.

It is a subject that those involved in the industry treat seriously, and rightly so. “Inhalants are the fourth most abused substances after alcohol, tobacco and marijuana,” explains Ms Creighton. “And yet this is likely one of the last things that occurs to parents when they think about drug abuse.”

Common health effects of inhalant abuse may include: sudden sniffing death syndrome; nervous system and brain damage; irreversible damage to the liver and kidneys; and hearing loss. Inhalant abuse occurs in the home, in schools and in places where children play. It is as common in cities as in suburbs and rural locations.

Tony Wardell, Chairman of the Aerosols 2007 Steering Group says: “The Congress covers the three inter-related pillars of sustainable development – environment, social and economic issues. Education is vital within our sector and we look forward with great anticipation to Colleen Creighton’s presentation which falls within the ‘social’ section of the congress.” Apart from in the UK, understanding and awareness of VSA in Europe has generally been very low and the Congress aims to help share the extensive learning gained in the UK and the USA. In addition to the presentation from the USA, a member of BAMA’s VSA committee will be outlining its 30 years of work with government, charities, education, and VSA experts and the positive actions it has taken to prevent VSA.

One of BAMA’s key partners, Mr John Ramsey from St George’s University of London, who is acknowledged worldwide for his expertise in this subject will also be talking about his work with VSA in the same section of the Congress.

To see the three day Congress provisional programme and to register visit

[www.aerosols2007.co.uk](http://www.aerosols2007.co.uk)

Ends

### NOTES TO EDITORS

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