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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEWIDE INHALANT ABUSE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN MARYLAND SCHOOLS

*Student, Teacher and Parent Education Critical as
1 in 5 Children in U.S. will have used Inhalant by 8th grade*

Annapolis, MD – October 2, 2007 – The Alliance for Consumer Education (ACE), in partnership with the Maryland Department of Education and the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene launched the *Maryland Inhalant Abuse Prevention Program* today at a statehouse press conference. The program is the result of the passage of Mackenzie's Law in the last legislative session that called for awareness training on inhalant abuse. The law was named for Avin Mackenzie Glamp, who died at the age of 15 due to inhalant use. Mackenzie is the daughter of Pamela Powers, Legislative Aid for Delegate Tawana Gaines (D-Prince George's County).

The *ACE Inhalant Abuse Prevention Program* will provide education officials with specially developed kits containing guidelines and handouts for use in education sessions with parents of school aged children. The program, which emphasizes parental awareness and school involvement, will serve as a tool to educate parents and school officials about the dangers of inhalants and help them identify warning signs indicative of inhalant use.

1 in 5 children in the United States will have used an inhalant by the 8th grade. In Maryland, inhalant use is second to marijuana for 8th, 10th, and 12th grade, and for 6th graders inhalants are the drug of choice, with use rates over twice the rate of marijuana and other substances.

"These numbers show that our children do know about Inhalants but they do not understand the risks associated with them. The numbers also show that while children are familiar with inhalants, their parents are not," says Colleen Creighton, Executive Director of the Alliance for Consumer Education.

"The threat of inhalant abuse to the welfare of our children continues to be very real," said Pamela Powers whose daughter Mackenzie died from inhalants. "As in the past, education is the key to reducing inhalant abuse: kids who learn about the risks of alcohol and drug abuse from their parents or caregivers are 50% less likely to use inhalants."

Maryland State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Nancy Grasmick and Secretary of Health & Mental Hygiene John Colmers joined Delegate Tawanna Gaines in launching the *Maryland Inhalant Abuse Prevention Program*.

Inhalant Abuse Program Launched

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Among those attending the press conference were **Christopher Cathcart**, President of the Consumer Specialty Products Association and Secretary of the ACE Board of Directors, **Kwok-Sze Richard Wong**, Executive Director of the American School Counselor Association, **Rose Ann G. Soloway**, RN, MSED, DABAT Clinical Toxicologist National Capital Poison Center, **Angel Bivens**, Public Education Coordinator Maryland Poison Center, and **Kelly Coston**, Specialist, Safe and Drug Free Schools MD State Dept of Education.

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The Alliance for Consumer Education (ACE) is a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit foundation dedicated to advancing community health and well-being where ever household and commercial products are used. Inhalant Abuse Prevention Programs have been successful in Alabama, Alaska, Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia to date.