



# ACTion

Summer 2000

Taking Action to Reduce Substance Abuse

## News

### ACT Missouri's Newest Publication

Welcome to ACT Missouri's newest publication, *ACTion News*, a quarterly information publication designed to provide Missourians with the latest trends and issues in the field of substance abuse.

We hope you will think of *ACTion News* not only as an information piece, but also as a reference tool; it's meant to slip into a three-ring binder for easy referral.

With each issue we will focus on a different but timely substance abuse topic. We chose the subject of club drugs for this inaugural issue because of rising use—and abuse—among young people. All Missourians, whether in big cities or small communities, need to be aware of the dangers of club drugs. We hope this issue will dispel

myths, answer questions and provide solid tools to help in taking action to reduce the use of club drugs in your communities.

For those of you who enjoy our oversized newsletter, *ACT Missouri*, stay tuned. We'll still continue to showcase Community 2000 teams; however, we've changed the publication schedule to September and February. So watch your mailboxes!

Our goal is to be the statewide resource for prevention and substance abuse issues. Please enjoy our new publication. As always, your comments and feedback are encouraged and appreciated.

### Enforcement Officials Scramble to Identify Club Drugs

The use of club drugs is rising at an alarming rate among teens, college students and young adults. In fact, the CBS news program, *60 Minutes* reports that one out of 12 high school seniors has tried the club drug, Ecstasy (see related story on page 6).

Club drugs refer to a variety of substances taken by partygoers at all-night dance clubs, bars and raves. Research supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse has shown that these drugs can cause serious health problems as well as death, particularly when combined with alcohol.

In addition to Ecstasy, the most popular club drugs are GHB, Ketamine, Rohypnol, Methamphetamine and LSD. Youth are attracted to these drugs because of availability, relative low cost (as low as \$12 per pill) and a long lasting high. However, the side effects, as well as the after-effects can be severe. In addition, many young people simply don't know what the drugs contain. Toxicity is difficult to determine due to uncertainties about the drug sources, pharmacological agents and possible contaminants.

Many club drugs are colorless, tasteless, odorless and completely indistinguishable from over-the-counter medications. Some drugs can easily be slipped into the drinks of unsuspecting dancers and are being increasingly used to commit sexual assaults.

Police officers, emergency room attendants and drug enforcement agencies are scrambling to quickly learn how to identify the drugs and how they interact with each other in hopes of curtailing the rate of overdose. Cmdr. Dennis Jensen, who oversees the narcotics unit in St. Paul, Minn., says, "You feel great, you feel great, and then, boom, you overdose."

"You feel great,  
you feel great,  
and then,  
boom,

you overdose."

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# Acceptance Sought at Raves

An article found in a recent issue of *U.S. News & World Report* states that “kids of all kinds are looking to raves to find a 21<sup>st</sup>-century community.”

Many young people in other recent reports emphatically say raves are about music and being a part of a large peer group sharing the same experience. Youth reportedly want to escape the pressures and stresses of life. They say they want to experience the unconditional acceptance that raves offer. They want to believe in the rave creed of “peace, love, unity and respect.”

One young man said a rave scene was the first time he felt he could be himself. Many young people say they feel a sense of community, even family. Some even report that raves are a part of creating universal social change by positively affecting everyone involved in a rave.

Middle school-aged kids can be a part of the rave scene without actually attending. Their fashion—baggy pants, Elmo-wear and fluorescent-colored shirts often mimic their older siblings’ style and set them up for anticipating their first rave.

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## RAVE!!

Approaching “the spot”, walking so fast you might be floating.

The thumping of the music in tune with the beat of your heart.

The excitement of knowing, the thumping is growing, louder and louder, and...

You’re going to a rave!

Like a child with your mischievous grin,

Pig tails flowing in the wind.

Toys in pocket,

sure that you have waited long enough,

Like when you were eight,

Holding your mother’s hand

On your way to Disneyland.

Prepared to sweat, prepared to dance,

Whatever else is just by chance.

Now you’re in and people everywhere.

Distorted visions and laser lights, Smiling faces, amazing sights.

The music lifts you off the ground, Who are these faces from different places?

You never, ever, want to leave.

What if it was like this everywhere, What if...

You never went to a rave?

I say, you may as well just dig your grave!

:) keep smilin!!!!

Cary ‘95

\*from hyperreal.org

## RAVE CHARACTERISTICS

- A venue which may be a warehouse, open field, dance club or other exotic location
- At least one large amplified stereo sound system
- Skilled disc jockeys who provide a continuous mix of dance oriented electronic music
- Colorful moving lights, lasers and/or strobes
- Nighttime hours, usually from 10 p.m. or 11 p.m. until sunrise
- Attendance of at least 50 people  
(American raves average 500 to 1,500 while European raves host as many as 10,000 people)
- Use of recreational drugs among a percentage of the participants
- Non-use of alcohol
- Vending of non-alcoholic “smart drinks,” t-shirts and DJ mix tapes
- Retro and “little kid” fashions
- “Chill out” areas or rooms

\* From “Frequently Asked Questions About Raves and Techno Music” on the hyperreal.org web site





across the country. *Time Magazine* reports, “these handouts are to raves what graffiti art is to hip-hop and psychedelic posters were to the acid rock of the ‘70s.”

In the Midwest, the typical raver is 18-22 years old, although some are as young as 13 and as old as 50. Ravers are generally into alternative cultural aspects. Many want to escape reality and some even want to be a part of a world considered “untouched” by adults.

Ironically, alcohol is not typically a component of raves, but drugs are often present. Historically, drugs have been a part of many music and party scenarios, “there is an undeniable connection between recreational

## Raves Are More Than A Party

**W**hile it’s true that a rave is a party, raves have several dominant elements that most parties do not. Among rave followers, a rave is a social event, a “phenomenon of modern youth culture,” according to the web site, hyperreal.org.

The site reports, “Good raves have what is referred to as a “vibe,” a shared feeling of togetherness and excitement that takes us beyond simple hedonism. The party becomes a spiritual ritual in which the music’s machine-driven beats and transcendental sound timbres synchronize our bodies and souls to the rhythm of the universe. We feel connected not just to each other, but also to the forces of nature that revolve around us and pulsate within us. Some see music and dance as a means for spreading to the entire planet feelings of Love and Unity with everything that exists.”

1990s, having been a part of Britain’s dance club setting for several years. There are vast regional differences in terms of rave characteristics. For example, in Los Angeles, teens wear fluorescent-colored clothes and sport Mickey Mouse mascot gloves, while in the Midwest, the trend is for dark, black clothing.

Today’s raves don’t just exist in the country’s culture centers. Raves are occurring in small towns and rural areas as well as “deep in the woods, out in the desert, on rooftops, under bridges, in parking garages, in caves, on the beach, anywhere where people want to dance,” states hyperreal.org.

Early on, raves were mostly underground, invitation-only parties that existed only on the fringes of society. Often, they were held illegally in

warehouses and other venues. Today, however, raves are more public and can be

found via the many brightly colored, artfully designed announcement

flyers that adorn the walls of coffee-houses and cafes in major cities



...ravers who want to dance all night

might feel the need for the

energy drugs provide.

drugs and raves,” states the hyperreal.org web site.

Every rave does not have a drug element, but the conditions are certainly enhanced to accept the presence of drugs. Rave locations are dark, noisy, crowded and filled with young people; many are experiencing their first rave. Music played at raves lends itself to stimulation and ravers who want to dance all night might feel the need for the extra energy drugs provide.

Rave organizers are the party promoters and the ones who are at least partially responsible for the success or failure of a rave. Wise parents should check out rave web sites and in general learn as much about the culture as possible. Many promoters actually encourage drug use at their raves, while others are only interested in providing a safe environment for people to dance.

Bottom line: Go where young people go if you want to know what young people do.

Every rave does not have a drug element, but the conditions are certainly enhanced to accept the presence of drugs.

Raves began creeping into the American party scene in the early

## Ketamine

**Street names:** Special K, K, Vitamin K, Cat Valiums, Super K, New Ecstasy, Psychedelic Heroin



**Uses:** Ketamine is an injectable anesthetic used for both human and animals since 1970. About 90% of Ketamine is sold legally for veterinary use. On the illegal scene, Ketamine is found in liquid form or as a white powder that is snorted or smoked with marijuana or tobacco products. A combination of Ketamine and cocaine is called CK.

**Effects:** Users may experience a loss of senses, sense of time and identity that can last from 30 minutes to two hours. Ketamine gained popularity for abuse in the 1980s when it was discovered that large doses produced a dream-like state and hallucinations, much like PCP.

**Physical reactions** can include: Delirium, amnesia, impaired motor function, high blood pressure, depression, recurrent flashbacks and potentially fatal respiratory problems.



## Methamphetamine

**Street names:** Speed, Ice, Chalk, Meth, Crystal, Crank, Fire, Glass

**Uses:** Methamphetamine is a toxic, addictive stimulant that affects many areas of the central nervous system. The drug can be snorted, smoked, injected or orally ingested. Methamphetamine is a white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder easily dissolved in beverages. Meth is often made in local, clandestine labs from inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients. It is typically not sold on the streets, but through a network.

**Effects:** Abusers often display signs of agitation, excited speech, decreased appetite and increased physical activity levels.

**Physical reactions** can include: Memory loss, aggression, violence, psychotic behavior and neurological damage. Drug usage can also contribute to higher rates of transmission of infectious diseases, especially hepatitis and HIV/AIDS.

## Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB)



**Street names:** Grievous Bodily Harm, G, Liquid Ecstasy, Georgia Home Boy, Easy Lay, Gamma 10, Soap, Scoop, Salty Water, G-riffick, Cherry Meth, Fantasy, Organic Quaalude, Zonked

**Uses:** Consumed orally in capsule form or as a grainy white powder. The powder is sometimes dissolved in liquids like water or alcohol and then consumed. However, most frequently sold as a slightly salty, clear liquid in small bottles where users pay by the capful or by the teaspoon. Capfuls generally cost \$3-\$5. GHB is also used as a sedative to come down from stimulants like epinephrine, Ecstasy, speed or cocaine.

**Effects:** Produces intoxication followed by deep sedation. Effects begin 10 to 20 minutes after the drug is taken and typically last up to four hours depending on the dosage.

**Physical reactions** can include: Nausea, vomiting, delusions, depression, vertigo, visual disturbances, seizures, respiratory distress, loss of consciousness, amnesia and coma. Overdose can happen quickly and warning signs are similar to those of other sedatives.

## Modified Legal Products

One of the many legal devices--turned drug--available at raves are canisters of nitrous oxide used to fire homemade whipped cream makers. Called "whippets," the canisters are found in many coffee shops and are easily stolen. The blue device is called a "cracker." A pin inside the balloon punctures the canister and fills the balloon with gas.

## Flunitrazepam

**Street names:** Roofies, Roche (ro-shay), Forget-me Pill, Run-Trip-and-Fall, R-2, Mexican Valium, Rib and Roach. In Texas, to be under the influence of Rohypnol is “to get roached.”



**Uses:** There is no prescription use in the United States, although it is classified in the same category as Valium and Xanax. Flunitrazepam (Rohypnol is a brandname) is approved in Europe and in more than 60 countries for treatment for insomnia and is used as a presurgery anesthetic. The drug is manufactured as small, white tablets with “Roche” inscribed on one side with an encircled “1” or “2” for one or two mg. dosage. Some reports indicate the pill is being ground up and snorted. It has been reportedly used in sexual assaults. The price range is \$1 to \$5 per pill.

**Effects:** The user may feel intoxicated, then sleepy—a feeling that may last eight to 12 hours. Users may exhibit slurred speech, impaired judgment and difficulty walking. Rohypnol is tasteless and odorless and it dissolves easily in carbonated beverages.

**Physical reactions** can include: Profound “anterograde amnesia,” i.e., individuals may not remember events they experienced while under the effects of the drug. Other adverse effects are decreased blood pressure, dizziness, confusion, gastrointestinal disturbances and urinary retention.

## Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)

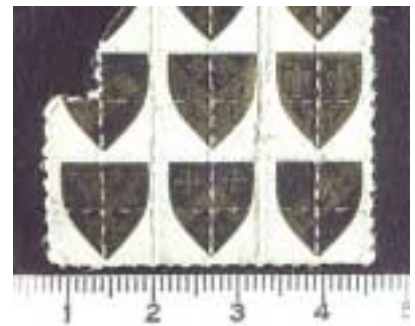
**Street names:** Acid, Boomers, Yellow Sunshines, Microdot, White Lightning, Blue Heaven, Windowpane and Sugar Cubes.

**Uses:** LSD is a hallucinogen that induces abnormalities in sensory perceptions. LSD is taken orally in tablet, capsule and liquid forms and in pieces of blotter paper that have absorbed the drug. LSD is commonly referred to as “acid” on the club scene. Although colorless and odorless, LSD has a slightly bitter taste. Pieces of square blotter paper can be purchased for \$4 to \$5 for a high that lasts three to 12 hours. Users typically feel the effects 30 to

90 minutes after taking it. LSD is a Schedule 1 Controlled Substance.

**Effects:** Behavior of users is wildly unpredictable depending on the amount taken, the surroundings in which the drug is used and on the user’s personality, mood and expectations.

**Physical reactions** can include: dilated pupils, increased body temperature, increased heart and blood pressure rates, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth, numbness, nausea, tremors and increased perspiration. In addition, users can experience a “bad trip” that could



include terrifying thoughts and feelings, fear of losing control, fear of insanity and death, and flashbacks. Also, LSD use can produce long-lasting psychological problems including schizophrenia and severe depression.

## Modified Legal Products

Also popular at raves are tanks of nitrous oxide, or laughing gas. The largest tanks are often stolen from dentist’s offices or medical supply houses. Many mid-sized tanks, such as these, come from high performance vehicle shops where “adrenaline” is used for racing cars.



Photos on pages 4-6 courtesy of: Trinka Porrata Drug Consultant Retired Narcotics Detective.





Methylenedioxyamphetamine stamped with an Omega design. This is one of the many colors and shapes of the drug commonly called Ecstasy.



A common side effect of ecstasy is involuntary clenching of the jaw. Pacifiers are often used at Raves, to prevent teeth grinding.



Taking "X" or Ecstasy, is called "doing rolls" and describes one of the ways the pills are hidden.



The eucalyptus in mentholated ointment heightens the effects of Ecstasy and as one user says, is "like having Styrofoam all over your body."

## Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDMA)

**Street names:** Ecstasy, XTC, X, Adam, Clarity, Lover's Speed

**Uses:** Taken orally usually in a tablet or capsule or sometimes injected in powder form. Average "trip" lasts approximately 3-6 hours, although high can last up to 24 hours. Confusion, depression, sleep problems, anxiety and paranoia have been reported weeks later. Cost is \$7 to \$30 per pill. MDMA is a Schedule 1 Controlled Substance.

**Effects:** Euphoria, feelings of well being, enhanced mental or emotional clarity. Heavier doses can cause hallucinations, sensations of lightness and floating, depression, paranoid thinking and violent, irrational behavior.

**Physical reactions** can include: loss of appetite, dehydration, nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, increased heart rate and blood pressure, muscle tension, faintness, chills, sweating, tremors, insomnia, convulsions and loss of control over voluntary body movements. Use can lead to muscle breakdown and kidney and cardiovascular system failure as well as heart attacks, strokes and seizures.

## More About Ecstasy

1. Ecstasy primarily affects nerve cells that release serotonin, a chemical responsible for feelings of empathy, bliss and perceived insight. The drug-induced rush of serotonin may cause irreparable nerve damage.
2. Paramethoxyamphetamine, or PMA is a designer drug sometimes substituted for Ecstasy. It gives users a less-intense high, tempting them to take a higher dosage. This dosage is often fatal because one of PMA's side effects is a dangerously high body temperature.
3. DanceSafe is an organization that lab-tests Ecstasy pills. Among some adulterants found are aspirin, caffeine and other over-the-counter medications. By far the most dangerous, however, is DXM (dextromethorphan), a cough suppressant that can cause hallucinations when taken in the high dosages found in Ecstasy pills (130 mg, more than 13 times the amount found in a dose of Robitussin).
4. Prolonged use of Ecstasy can cause cracked teeth and other dental damage. Jaw-clenching and teeth grinding usually accompany use of the drug. In addition, users' decay is more than five times that of non-users. Most users dance with adult-sized, colorful pacifiers.
5. San Francisco officials have proposed requiring area nightclubs holding more than 500 people to give out cool drinking water free to patrons. The city wants to cater to the needs of dancers who may be using Ecstasy, known to cause heightened body temperatures and dehydration.
6. Check out [mo-raves@hyperreal.org](mailto:mo-raves@hyperreal.org) for an e-mail list and calendar listings of raves scheduled in Missouri.

# Ecstasy The Drug of the Millennium

As a club drug, Ecstasy isn't new to many of today's teens, nor is it new to the marketplace. Little white pills carrying familiar brand names like the Nike swoosh or cartoon characters are popping up in dance clubs, bars and raves (see related story on page 3).

...it costs about 50 cents  
to manufacture one pill  
that is sold for \$12-\$25.



Originally synthesized in 1914 as an appetite suppressant and later used by psychiatrists to help patients reveal their repressed feelings, methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) can now lead to brain damage and sometimes death.

Nationwide, U.S. Customs seized 5.7 million tablets so far this year—up from 500,000 in 1997. Officials say 84% of the drug is imported from Western Europe and nearly 90% of the Ecstasy distributed worldwide is from Belgium and the Netherlands.

On the east and west coasts—and in every major city and high school in the country—Ecstasy and other club drugs (see related article) are to this decade what crack was to the 1980s and heroin was to the 1990s.

Users are primarily young, white, upper middle-class and in search of frenzied energy. According to one treatment center program director, “It seems to be kind of an accepted drug to use at this point in time among teens. There are other drugs that are seen as, if you use them, you're out of control. But Ecstasy has that cachet to it: that it's okay to use as long as it's at a rave.”

Young people are increasingly playing a dangerous game. Eight

percent of U.S. high school seniors say they have tried Ecstasy at least once; up from 5.8% in 1997.

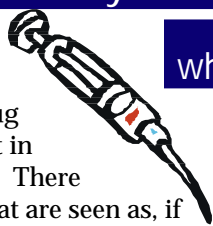
Across the country autopsies are indicating that young people are dying from overdosing on Ecstasy. In Florida, at least 72 people have died from taking Ecstasy and other club drugs.

Organized crime has become involved in the “E-trade” as well. Profits are huge—it costs about 50 cents to manufacture one pill that is sold for \$12-\$25. Penalties are relatively light (see related story). A dealer with 1,000 pills may only face 15-21 months in prison.

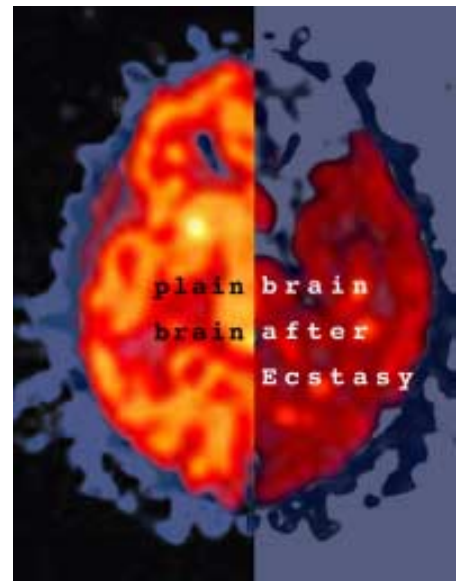
Apparently the money is worth the risks. Earlier this year, federal officials arrested former Mafia hitman Sammy “The Bull” Gravano for running an Ecstasy ring in Arizona. He was distributing 25,000 pills a week, worth half a million dollars on the street.

“It's truly a global business, and it has completely erased all the old routes law enforcement had mapped out for the smuggling of traditional drugs like heroin, cocaine and marijuana,” according to U.S. Customs Commissioner Raymond Kelly.

Ecstasy and other club drugs are to this decade  
what crack was to the 1980s and  
heroin was to the 1990s.



Kelly says parents should take heed of the dangers of Ecstasy. “It has the ‘love-drug, hug-drug’ label to it,” he explains. “Kids and their parents don't realize it has long-term implications. It is a killer, category one, dangerous drug.”



## Ecstasy. A Not So Bright Idea

The brain scans shown above show the sharp difference in brain activity for an individual who has never used drugs and one who used the club drug Ecstasy (XTC, MDMA, Adam, etc.) heavily for an extended period, but was off of drugs for at least 3 weeks before having the scan. The left, bright reddish half shows active serotonin sites in the brain. Serotonin is a critical neurochemical that regulates mood, emotion, learning, memory, sleep, pain, and heart rate. The dark sections in the right half are serotonin sites that are not functioning, even after 3 weeks without any drugs. In addition to these changes in serotonin sites, scientists have found that Ecstasy injures serotonin neurons. Although these can regrow, they don't grow back normally and might not grow back in the right location.

Source:  
National Institute on Drug Abuse  
[www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)

# Education Campaign Discourages Club Drug Use

**L**ate last year, federal officials and community groups launched an education campaign aimed at discouraging young people from using club drugs.

“There is no such thing as recreational drug use,” according to Alan Leshner, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). “This kind of thing has serious consequences.”

There is **NO** such thing as  
**recreational**  
**drug use.**

NIDA launched a club drug web site—[www.clubdrugs.org](http://www.clubdrugs.org)—to spread information about club drugs and has also been distributing thousands of information cards and warning brochures to community organizations, schools and colleges throughout the United States.

In addition to the education campaign, Leshner said NIDA has increased funding to research these drugs by 40% to \$54 million in 2000.

## Additional Resources

### Locally:

Your region's nearest Community 2000 Support Center or call 573-751-4942 for the center closest to you

Your local police department

Your local public library

Other sources listed in your local phone book under “drug abuse”

### Nationally:

Partnership for a Drug-Free America  
[www.drugfreeamerica.org](http://www.drugfreeamerica.org)  
1-212-922-1560

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information  
[www.health.org](http://www.health.org)  
1-800-729-6686

The National Institute on Drug Abuse  
[www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)  
or  
[www.clubdrugs.org](http://www.clubdrugs.org)  
1-888-644-6432

Join Together Online  
[www.jointogether.org](http://www.jointogether.org)

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence  
[www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org)  
1-212-206-6770



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