

Limits on Lint-Rollers Tighten as Illicit Use Spreads

by Con Chapman

WAUMSFORD, Ill. First it was airplane glue, says Duane Lee Hoskins, manager of the Wal-Mart store here. “Kids would buy that stuff then show up to Friday night football games all demented,” he recalls grimly. “It made for some pretty weak cheering by the pep club.”



2010 Teen Choice Award Winner, Erotic Implement category

Next came aerosol cans of paint, which kids would use to spray lovesick or obscene messages on the town's water tower. “I made the kids sign a ‘no graffiti’ pledge at the check-out counter,” he says. “But then some snot-nosed lawyer for the ACLU sent me a letter sayin' I was infringin' free speech.”



“Veneta Sue Elkins eats like a horse!”

But neither of those two passing crazes prepared Hoskins for the latest teen abuse of an ordinary household item; late-night unsupervised “lint roller” parties at which boys and girls engage in heavy “feel-up” sessions that can lead to unwanted pregnancies, white slavery and in extreme cases, marriage.

“Has Joe Don been lint-rollin' your alpaca sweater agin?”

“A lint-roller party generally breaks out when kids are bored or have run out of Cheetohs,” notes Norbert Hanscomb, guidance counselor at Grain Valley Voke-Tech High School here. “We try to teach them safe lint-rolling, but they're young and foolish and can go weeks without changing the adhesive paper.”

Microscopically-enlarged Cheetohs: Be sure to have plenty on hand.

A lint-roller consists of a tube of one-sided adhesive paper mounted on a spindle, and is used to remove lint and pet hair from clothing. The effectiveness of the device can be recharged with a replacement adhesive roll, but drug stores are permitted by law to refuse sales of refills to minors except for the prevention of disease.



Lonely guy, self-rolling

The spread of lint-roller parties has parents here and elsewhere concerned, with reactions ranging from alarm to disgust. “We didn't need adhesives to have fun when I was growing up,” notes Hoskins as he eyes a young man carrying a two-pack to the express check-out lane in the hope of completing a transaction. “You stuck your hand under a girl's sweater, and if she liked you she'd let it stick.”

Hollywood stars setting bad lint-rolling example.

Authorities blame the example set by lint-rolling Hollywood stars, rappers and rock musicians for the recent surge in illicit grooming activity, and note that the wealthy can afford the consequences of high-risk “petting” sessions that force many high school students to drop out in order to support a two-refill a day habit. “I'll visit some of these kids a couple years after they've experimented with lint rolling and it just breaks your heart,” says guidance counselor Hanscomb. “Instead of having a double-wide trailer, they're still living in a single-wide.”

