

# 'Bleach still leading poison agent'

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Michael Tucker (centre), chairman of the management committee, Caribbean Poison Information Network (CARPIN), and executive director, National Council on Drug Abuse, chats with Yvonne Johnson-Reid (left), project manager, CARPIN and Dr. Jean Williams-Johnson, head of the emergency medicine division, University Hospital of the West Indies, during a press conference at the Knutsford [Court hotel](#) yesterday. CARPIN gave an update on the effects of poison on children in Jamaica. - Rudolph Brown/Chief Photographer

**THE CARIBBEAN Poison Information Network (CARPIN) has reported that household bleach continues to be the number one source of poisoning among Jamaicans, especially children.**

Speaking at a press briefing yesterday, hosted by the association, chairman of CARPIN's management committee, Michael Tucker, said the chemical accounted for 31 per cent of all cases, which shows a decrease when compared with previous years.

"In 2006, when we look at the 484 cases which occurred, we see that the figures for bleach has gone down, this means that people are a little more careful with how they store bleach and the kind of containers they put it in," he said.

On the rise, however, is the number of poison cases involving pesticides and pharmaceuticals among children.

For 2006, pesticides accounted for 15 per cent, while pharmaceuticals accounted for 21 per cent of poisoning among children.

This, Mr. Tucker said, calls for greater vigilance in how pesticides and pharmaceuticals are dealt with and stored. CARPIN is also reporting more good news in that there has been a reduction in the number of children under five years old being poisoned in Jamaica.

The figures indicate a downward trend, with 2004 having recorded 80 per cent, 2005 had 85 per cent, while 2007 has dropped to 77 per cent.

Despite the decline, CARPIN said the number of children being poisoned is still a cause for concern.

CARPIN will host its third annual Poison Prevention Week to be observed from May 26 to June 2.

A conference, a public forum and school competitions will be part of the activities to observe that week.

### **Substances that cause poisoning**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2006</b>
Bleach	49%	31%
Kerosene	13%	11%
Pesticides	13%	15%
Phamaceuticals	12%	