

Safeguarding Bulletin

ISSUE 26

Mount Kelly's Safeguarding Bulletin aims to provide parents and carers with the information needed to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with their children about potential risks and issues in the wider world and online. This week's bulletin is on the topic of energy drinks.

While the short-term benefits of energy drinks can be attractive, it's not wise to ignore the potential health risks. Consuming these beverages regularly can have negative effects on the heart and blood pressure, and even cause dependency on these products to keep users' energy at a 'normal' level. Factoring in that many shops have issued a voluntary ban on selling these drinks to under-16s, the rise in children and young people using energy drinks is a cause for concern.

This marked increase in young people using highly caffeinated drinks to supplement their energy has heightened the risk of these health issues arising in children – at a time in their lives where such impacts can have greater, longer-lasting consequences. This week's **#WakeUpWednesday** guide addresses these possible hazards, letting you know how to minimise them for children and young people who like the occasional can.

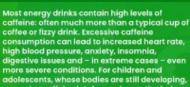


What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

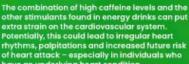
ENERCY DRIN

WHAT ARE THE RISKS? Energy drinks are highly caffeinated beverages often consumed for a quick energy boost. However, excessive intake can lead to health risks like increased heart rate and sleep disturbances. Statistics underline these products' popularity among young people - many of whom consume them regularly. Here's our expert's advice on addressing the concerns surrounding energy drink consumption in adolescents.

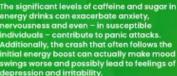
HIGH CAFFEINE CONTENT



INCREASED RISK OF **HEART PROBLEMS**



IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH





DISRUPTED SLEEP PATTERNS



LINKS TO SUBSTANCE

Some research has suggested a correlation between energy drink consumption and higher rates of alcohol and drug use among young adults. Young people may mix energy drinks with alcohol, mistakenty believing that the energy drinks' stimulant effects will counteract the sedative nature of alcohol. This combination, however, can be dangerous and increase the risk of accidents, injuries and alcohol poisoning.

POTENTIAL FOR DEPENDENCY



request consumption or energy arms can pro-to tolerance – meaning that individuals may need to consume increasing amounts to continue achieving the desired effects. This can potentially lead to dependency and addiction, especially in younger individuals who may be more vulnerable to addictive behaviours.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LIMIT CONSUMPTION

It's wise to educate young people about the potential risks related to energy drinks, emphasising the consequences of excessive caffeine consumption. Encourage healthier alternatives like water, herbal teas or natural fruit juices You can model healthy behaviours by restricting your own consumption of energy drinks and creating a supportive environment for informed choices.

PROMOTE HEALTHIER HABITS

dangers of energy drink consumption into their health education curriculum. Encourage children and young adults to critically evaluate the marketing message they see and make informed choices about their health. Teachers could also provide

Meet Our Expert

Dr Jason O'Rourke, Headteacher of Washingborough Academy, champions food education and sustainability – and his school holds the Soil Association's prestigious Gold Catering Mark. Jason has spoken about food education at Westminster briefings and overseas. A member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food, he co-founded TastEd, a sensory food education charity.

ADVOCATE FOR REGULATION

If this is something you're particularly passionate about, you could work with local health organisations and policymakers to advocate for regulations on energy drin sales to children and young people. Raise awareness among parents, educators and community members about the potential health risks associated with energy drinks

SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE

Adults can model healthy behaviours by visibly choosing alternative beverages instead of energy drinks. Maintain open communication with children and young adults about the reasons for limiting energy drink consumption – underlining the importance of balanced nutrition, adequate dration and sufficient sleep for overall wellbeing and academic succes



Source: See full reference liston guide page at national college.com/guides/energy-drinks

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