

# Energy Drinks and Youth:

## A Dangerous Combination



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# ***What is the perfect energy drink?***



- The single most important benefit we can provide our bodies is to drink sufficient quantities of water.

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# Earlier “Energy” Drinks

- Coffee/Tea
- Coke/Mountain Dew
- Gatorade/PowerAde





# Newer "Energy" Drinks



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# What's In These Drinks?

**These prepackaged beverages may contain:**

- **Caffeine and other stimulants**
- **Carbs (sugar)**
- **Vitamins and Minerals**
- **Protein**
- **Electrolytes**
- **Amino acids**
- **Alcohol**
- **Branched-chain amino acids**
- **Medium-chain triglycerides**
- **Guarana, Kola nut, Yerba extracts**
- **Glucose, sucrose, fructose, galactose**
- **"Fat burners" such as Ciwujia, hydroxycitrate, ephedra**
- **Kava-kava and St. John's Wort**
- **Royal jelly/bee pollen**
- **Hornet's saliva**
- **Ginseng**
- **Oxygen dissolved in beverage**
- **Taurine**
- **Pyruvate**
- **Glutamine**
- **Arginine**
- **Creatine**
- **Carnitine**
- **Yohimbe**
- **Vinpocetine**

# **Why Is It So Dangerous?**

## **Health Concerns**

- **false or exaggerated health claims**
- **dental caries**
- **obesity, diabetes**
  - **gastrointestinal upset**
  - **dehydration**
  - **allergic reactions**
  - **nervousness, anxiety, insomnia**
  - **psychomotor agitation (restlessness and pacing)**
  - **tremors, tachycardia (rapid heartbeats)**
  - **withdrawal symptoms can include headaches, mood swings and trouble concentrating**
  - **detrimental effect on developing brain**
  - **some ingredients when combined with prescription medicines may have toxic effects**
  - **even death**

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# Why Is It So Dangerous?

## **Child hood Obesity:** **2009-2010 Pinellas County Schools** **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

	<i>At Risk</i>	<i>Overweight</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>14%</i>
<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>20%</i>

**Source: Rita Becchetti, MHS, RN, BC**  
**Supervisor, School Health Services**  
**Pinellas County Schools**

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# Classified as Dietary Supplements!

- Energy drinks may contain as much as 500 milligrams (or more) of caffeine in a single can.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) limits caffeine to 65 to 81 milligrams per serving of a food or beverage, but this does not apply to energy drinks that are termed "dietary supplements".



1.55 oz chocolate bar	9 mg
8 oz chocolate milk	4 mg
12 oz cola drink	35 mg
8 oz brewed tea	53 mg
1 caffeine tablet	100 mg
8 oz brewed coffee	133 mg

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# Young Driver – “Joosed”



- **And then add alcohol to ALL that caffeine?** At 23½ ounces and 9.9 percent alcohol, a single can of Joose is the equivalent of three beers and eight cups of coffee.
- Effects of stimulants (caffeine) may alter the drinker's perceptions about level of impairment – feel OK to drive

# Alcohol

How much alcohol do these products contain?

The alcohol content varies from  
6.0%- 12.5 % per container.

How does this compare to regular beer?

Alcoholic energy drinks contain more  
alcohol than a can of beer.

Budweiser	4.82%
Miller High Life	4.78%
Corona	4.84%

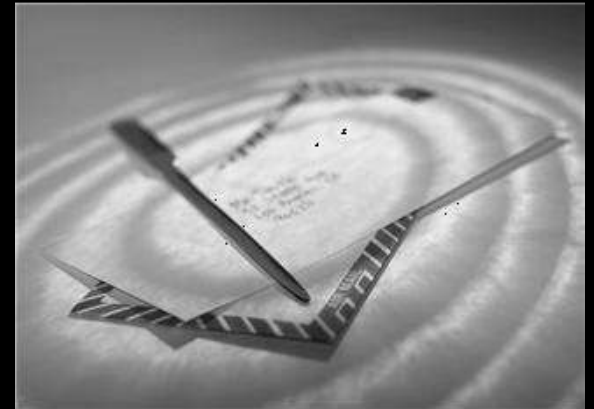


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# **Finally... some action**

- November 2009 – FDA sent a letter to about 30 manufacturers of these drinks, stating that the addition of caffeine to alcoholic drinks had not been approved and that it would evaluate its safety. It asked the drink makers to submit information on the safety of caffeine as a food additive.
- November 2010 – FDA issued warning letters to four manufacturers of the drinks that the caffeine in the high-alcohol drinks is an "unsafe food additive".
- **FDA letter did not constitute an outright ban**
- Four states and a number of college campuses have banned the sale of the alcoholic energy drinks



# Similarities Create Confusion

- **Alcoholic energy drinks look similar to non-alcoholic energy drinks. Containers have sizes, shapes, and graphics similar to their nonalcoholic cousins.**
- **Creates potential for confusion among consumers, retailers, parents, law enforcement officers, and others regarding which products contain alcohol and which do not.**



# ***Kids Are Drinking These Everywhere***



- **At One San Diego Middle School...**

...Jovita Juarez, a Prevention Specialist, made a presentation to staff at the school about energy drinks. After the presentation, teachers checked the campus during lunch to see how popular the drinks were.

- **They found that 12 of the 43 students with energy drinks were drinking alcohol. (Oct 2007)**

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# Targeting Youth



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# Targeting Youth

## Energy Drinks are a Multi-Billion \$\$\$ Business

- **Cyberspace advertising - “grassroots” consumer strategies**
- **Images and messages that promote their association with partying and other high energy activities**
- **Manufacturers often sponsor concerts and extreme sporting events that appeal to youth**
- **Product websites show party scenes with teenagers drinking energy drinks**
- **Teens have pictures posted on myspace.com drinking energy drinks and videos on youtube.com – creating street credibility**





# \$\$\$ Cost

Compare costs per 16 oz. serving

## "Energy Drinks:"

**Red Bull**      **\$4.00+**

**Full Throttle**      **\$2.18**

**Rockstar Juiced**      **\$2.03**

## Energy Drinks

*without the caffeine :*

**V8 Fusion**      **\$.87**

**Orange Juice**      **\$.66**

**Milk**      **\$.62**

**Tastes Great, Costs Less!**

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# \$\$\$ Cost

**Alcoholic energy drinks are a cheap alternative to purchasing alcoholic beverages and energy drinks separately. For example:**

## ***Alcoholic:***

***Rockstar 21***    ***\$1.59***

***Sparks***    ***\$1.53***

***Tilt***    ***\$1.53***

## ***Non-Alcoholic:***

***Rockstar***    ***\$2.47***

***Monster***    ***\$2.35***

***Red Bull (8.3 oz)***    ***\$2.75***

**These strategies strongly suggest that alcohol companies are marketing alcoholic energy drinks to young people.**

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# **Why Is It So Dangerous?**

## **Social, Legal Concerns**

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- **costly way to acquire carbohydrate and fluid**
- **underage consumption of alcohol is illegal; school suspensions, DCF, jail**
- **alcohol-related traffic accidents**
- **increased risk-taking**
- **increased risks for violence, sexual assault, and suicide**
- **NCAA violations – many contain banned substances**

# “Vitamin” Water



**Student-Athlete Warning on vitaminwater:** The NCAA warns that some flavors of the product contain impermissible or banned substances and that consuming some flavors of the drink could result in a positive drug test and the consequences that follow, including lost eligibility.

NCAA  
**BANNED  
INGREDIENTS**



power-c

banned



energy

banned



b-relaxed

banned



rescue

banned



vital-t

banned



balance

banned

NCAA **OK**



revive



essential



xxx



focus



formula-50



multi-v



charge



endurance



defense

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# ***National PTA Resolution Alcoholic Energy Drinks (2009)***

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- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations educate parents, students, administrators, teachers and community members about the dangers of consuming alcoholic energy drinks; and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations seek legislation requiring that alcoholic energy drink manufacturers provide prominent alcohol content percentage on the label, as well as health and safety warnings indicating the dangers of combining alcohol with caffeinated beverages.

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***What can you do?***

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# ***What can you do?***



- ***Raise Awareness. Take Action.***
- ***Check the label. Think before you drink!***
- ***Spread the word to other adults involved with youth.***
- ***Partner with SADD, MADD, LiveFree!, Booster Clubs, Coaches, Children's Hospitals, Law Enforcement, to host programs.***
- ***Write letters to your representatives to require better labeling and to ban alcoholic energy drinks.***
- ***Ask retailers to be vigilant; check where energy drinks are shelved.***

# ***More information***



- **[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)**
- **[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)**
- **[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)**
- **[www.marininstitute.org](http://www.marininstitute.org)**
- **[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)**

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