

# Energy drinks are giving wings to **our ruin**

## Energy drinks are draining

By Rachel Boyd, Staff Reporter

Energy drinks are single-handedly keeping teens awake across the nation, not just in class, but also at night. While energy drinks may help students stay focused and awake, the effects users feel later might not be worth the temporary jolt.

Energy drinks can not only damage one's physical health, but also one's mental well-being. With prolonged caffeine highs, teenagers often are subject to some very serious side-effects. Dr. Clare Coda, who practices Internal Medicine and Pediatrics in Lakewood, NJ, warns, "Energy drinks can increase anxiety, depression, panic behaviors, sleep disturbances, and risk of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms."

Once students start feeling these effects, many times, they are beyond the point of no return: they struggle to stop consuming energy drinks even when they know these drinks are causing them harm.

This is likely due to a substantial caffeine addiction.

| Nutrition Facts           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 16 servings per container |                      |
| <b>Serving size</b>       | <b>1 Tbsp. (21g)</b> |
| <b>Amount per serving</b> |                      |
| <b>Calories</b>           | <b>60</b>            |
| <hr/>                     |                      |
| <b>Total Addiction</b>    | <b>100%</b>          |
| <hr/>                     |                      |
| <b>Anxiety</b>            | <b>Likely</b>        |
| <b>Depression</b>         | <b>Possible</b>      |
| <b>Insomnia</b>           | <b>Nightly</b>       |

Ultimately, students are less productive in school, are chronically exhausted, and find themselves slaves to a crippling caffeine addiction. And addictions like these, developed in adolescence, can lead to higher rates of substance abuse later in life.



By Aphia Boyd, Staff Reporter

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During the first class of the day, almost every desk has an energy drink on the corner.

A 2025 CDC report found that more than 50% of adolescents have reported trying an energy drink, and close to 30% of all adolescents consume them regularly.

But do they know that these drinks that are high in sugar and caffeine can have detrimental effects on their physical health and wellbeing?

The National Institute of Health has written extensively on the dangers and long-lasting effects that energy drinks can have on teenagers. Dangers can include cardiovascular disease and heart damage.

One such case included 16 year old David Cripe who passed away from a caffeine-induced heart attack nearly a decade ago. A May 17, 2006 NBC News article recounts that Cripe had "downed a large latte, a large Mountain Dew, then an energy drink," all in a two-hour period. This excessive amount of caffeine caused Cripe's heart to stop, and, by the time he arrived at the ER, doctors could not save him.

Risk for this type of medical emergency increases when students consume multiple energy drinks in a short period of time, and it increases exponentially when drinking an energy drink is followed up with physical activity that forces the heart to work harder.

The next major risk from energy drinks is nervous system disorders.

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David Cripe (R) and his father (L) a year before David's death.



Addie Batt starts her morning in Honors English with a V8 energy drink.



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Because of the high concentration of stimulants in them, energy drinks wreak havoc on the body's nervous system. Once the nervous system falls under constant assault from caffeine, high blood pressure, high heart rates, increased stress, elevated levels of anxiety, or, in the worst cases, even seizures can result.

These health risks can be life-long and potentially even fatal, but they will not be caused by one or two energy drinks. The real danger with energy drinks lies in the fact that so many teenagers are developing long-lasting addictions to the caffeine-induced high they feel while consuming these super-charged swills.

This addiction leads many teenagers to consume energy drinks daily, which then leads to the aforementioned health risks, which we are only now beginning to fully understand.

While an energy drink on the corner every desk in the morning might seem like a simple new trend, in reality, it is a downward spiral thousands of teens are riding right now. The only questions is: will they have the good sense to get off before it is too late?

# Fixing our energy drink fascination

**By Zach Connot, Staff Reporter**

Energy drinks can have detrimental effects on the mind and body. When teenagers and adolescents are in trouble, it is up to the adults in their lives to help them. There are some tangible solutions that concerned adults can employ to help their teen-aged loved ones from continuing or developing new addictions to these exploitative drinks.

Energy drink companies often take up very manipulative advertising campaigns that are designed to catch the eye of children and teenagers, rather than adults. This type of advertising needs to be stopped, especially for products that are so dangerous to the wellbeing of adolescents. Energy drinks have often been paired with online video games or the videos of prominent Youtubers, who are predominantly watched by teenagers. The cans and advertisements often use bright colors and bold designs that take a more cartoon-like branding that is often liked by young people, rather than older adults. Energy drinks also have many partnerships with influencers whose millions of viewers are usually under the age of 18.

While these companies certainly need to be stopped, so does the sale of these drinks to minors. Politicians worldwide have already started to try and limit the sales of energy drinks to minors. This needs to be done in the US to see any tangible decline in the consumption of energy drinks. When teenagers are addicted to a cheap and easy-to-get product, the chances of them quitting simply because it is bad for their health are pretty slim. So, American politicians need to write new laws that voters approve that prevent teenagers from falling into a cycle of addiction and bad health.

Like with any legal action, making a new law as sweeping as banning the sale of energy drinks to minors would be long, hard work. In the mean time, schools need to step up and ban unhealthy drinks from classrooms. Most students have an energy drink in the morning or later in the day. If schools were to enact bans, it would drastically lower the time a teenager has available to consume one of these dangerous drinks.

Schools engaging in a pointed information campaign seeking to educate teenagers on the dangers of energy drinks could also discourage students from even trying them, and, while it will not magically stop teens from drinking these canned conundrums, any decrease in energy drink consumption is a net positive.

Ultimately, it is imperative for teenagers to lower their consumption of energy drinks, in the process benefiting their overall well-being, but to do this, our communities need the help of school administrators, politicians, even companies. Because a healthy future is worth fighting for.

