



Energy Drink Linked to Teen Death

A wrongful death lawsuit has been brought against the makers of Monster Energy Drinks following the death of a 14-year old girl after consuming two cans of the drink on two consecutive days. The mother reports the girl drank one 24-ounce can, had another 24-ounce can the next day and went into cardiac arrest that night. A 24 ounce can contains 240 milligrams of caffeine.

According to information recently released by the FDA, Monster Energy drinks have been linked to five deaths and one non-fatal heart attack. The reports don't specify if alcohol or other drugs were involved in the incidents, but according to the Department of Health and Human Services, emergency room visits resulting from energy drinks rose tenfold from 2005 to 2008. Half of the patients ages 18 to 25 had used alcohol or other substances with the energy drinks. Additional FDA reports disclosed other adverse events such as abdominal pain, vomiting, tremors and abnormal heart rate. The reports cover a period from 2004 to June of this year, but all of the deaths have occurred since 2009.



An autopsy of the girl concluded the cause of death was "cardiac arrhythmia due to caffeine toxicity" that exacerbated an existing heart problem. The family's attorney said kids drinking these energy drinks that have an underlying condition is like putting gasoline on a fire.

Dr's treating patients with heart rhythm irregularities try and advise patients to limit caffeine, as caffeine can definitely be a trigger; however the girls Dr's had not told her to restrict her physical activities or her caffeine use.

The mother of the teenager charges that Monster failed to warn about the risks of its energy drinks. Makers of energy drinks aren't required to disclose the amount of caffeine in their products because they are considered "dietary supplements," making them dangerous to children that consume them as they don't know how much they're getting. A New York attorney is investigating whether energy drink companies are violating federal law by promoting the beverages as dietary supplements instead of cans of liquid speed.

The family of the girl hopes their lawsuit will force the FDA to regulate these drinks and keep this from happening to anyone else.

Athletes and Energy Drinks

Energy drinks can be even more dangerous for athletes. It's important for them to be educated about what these drinks do and their possible side effects.

Energy Drinks should not be confused with sports drinks, which are intended to re-hydrate the body. Sports drinks such as Gatorade and Powerade provide sugars, which the body burns to create energy, and replenish electrolytes. Energy drinks containing large amounts of caffeine can produce the opposite effect. They can cause dehydration, which can lead to fatigue, and increase body temperature and heart rate. If you consume these beverages before strenuous exercise, understand that their effects may lead to cardiovascular difficulties.

To provide a comparison, 8 ounces of coffee has about 108 mg of caffeine, brewed tea has 50 mg, a 12 oz. coke has 34 mg and an 8 oz. Red Bull has 75 mg. However, very highly caffeinated energy drinks have between 150-500 milligrams in 8 ounces. Consumption of caffeine at these rates can lead to caffeine intoxication, and at these high levels caffeine is a stimulant drug.

Combination of these drinks with other stimulant ingredients such as guarana, green tea, ginseng, etc., is associated with serious cardiovascular issues. Additionally, combination with certain prescription and over-the-counter drugs including anti-depressants, aspirin, Vitamin E, garlic, ginkgo, blood thinners, and blood pressure medication has created serious drug interactions or other serious side effects. Several components of energy drinks have also been known to exacerbate or initiate manic episodes.

(Sources: laist.com; abc2news.com; nytimes.com; stack.com)

We **Welcome** the following new school and behavioral health agency to the SCIP Program.

- Crawford Public Schools; Crawford
- The Right Choice Counseling Center; Plattsburgh

THANK YOU for your caring attitude and commitment to the success of the youth in your community!



Bottoms up? A Disturbing Trend!

Teens continue to invent new ways to consume alcohol that is less detectable by their parents and teachers. Here are two trends that have been receiving a lot of recent attention:

Alcohol Soaked Tampons

Schools are reporting a resurgence in the use of alcohol soaked tampons. Teens are getting drunk by inserting vodka-soaked tampons into their vaginas. But it's not just girls; boys are inserting the alcohol-drenched feminine hygiene products in their rectum.



Each super absorbing tampon holds an entire shot of vodka. When the tampon is inserted in the vagina or rectum it is rapidly absorbed into the system and provides a stronger and quicker intoxication than any normal shot of vodka.

“Butt Chugging”

In another bizarre trend, teens are using beer bongs in a new way that is called “butt chugging.” Beer is replaced with shots of liquor and is poured into a funnel with a tube - the beer bong - that is inserted into the rectum and absorbed instantly in the colon. This method is also referred to as an alcohol enema.



The Dangers

Because teens brains aren't fully developed, they take a lot of risks looking for thrills. These methods provide a quicker high and the effects are more intense than through oral consumption.

Teens also mistakenly believe since there is no smell on their breath it can't be detected and they will pass a breathalyzer test because they didn't actually drink the booze. But this is untrue. A breathalyzer checks what's in your blood-stream not the amount of booze on your breath.

Doctors have warned there are serious risks involved with both methods. Direct insertion can be dangerous because it's a faster process of how much is going into the blood stream and you may not really know how much you're going to absorb. This causes a much higher risk of alcohol poisoning, which can lead to death very quickly, because it removes all of your bodies natural defenses so there is no gag reflex or way for your body to throw up the alcohol you may have over-consumed.

There have been documented cases of people going to the hospital with alcohol poisoning from the alcohol soaked tampons. If a person passes out or loses consciousness, health care professionals won't necessarily know that they have to look in those areas, and that may delay treatment. The alcohol soaked tampons can also cause mucosal irritation, meaning the vaginal wall or rectum can be irritated.

(Sources: digitaljournal.com; z6mag.com)

Support for Children with Deployed or Returning Military Family Members

Do you have students in your classroom with deployed parents or other family members? Studies have shown that the way in which an adult responds after a crisis can significantly affect the outcome of a student's experience. As an educator, you play a critical role in the life of each student.

Schools can be reassuring places for children dealing with deployment. The classroom can provide an anchor of needed stability and normal routine for children when the rest of their daily lives are disrupted, and the sense of security of their world is threatened. This threat can include a fear for their own safety in addition to the overwhelming fear that their deployed parent may return injured or may not return at all.

Lengthy separations can be very stressful on children and adolescents. They may feel isolated, unsupported and anxious. They may feel they are not getting enough attention at home as the remaining parent assumes more responsibilities.

Children can experience a range of emotions and exhibit a wide array of behavioral changes. As educators you will need to be aware of these changes, which may include: crying; irritability; anger; sleeping or eating difficulties; withdrawal from others; physical ailments; lack of interest in school, activities, or hobbies; risky behaviors or substance use. For a variety of reasons, some children may express relief that the family member has left. The deployment may put an end to pre-existing family tension or dysfunction, so it may be their return that triggers distress.

Following are some strategies you can use in your classrooms as appropriate:

During Deployment

- Provide structure, maintain classroom routines and emphasize the importance of learning
- Encourage open and honest expression of worries, feelings, and questions
- Be approachable, attentive and sensitive; acknowledge and validate feelings
- Encourage participation in extracurricular activities
- Consider having children participate in a project associated with their parent's deployment such as a letter writing project or keeping a journal or scrapbook
- Create a school-based support group for these children
- Be prepared for differences of opinion – there can be conflict when talking about political issues; maintain objectivity regardless of personal political beliefs
- Reinforce safety and security – limit discussion of frightening details in front of your students
- Pay extra attention during holidays, which can be especially stressful and sensitive for families
- Allow time for adjustment to changes resulting from the deployment or return
- Be patient and reduce student work load as needed

Post-Deployment

Military deployment can significantly change an individual. They may return suffering from physical injuries or emotional disabilities such as depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide, hyper-vigilance, or full-blown PTSD. They may be withdrawn or expect extra attention. They may also fall victim to substance abuse in order to cope.

All of these issues can take a toll not only on the service member but on their loved ones as well. It's important to understand the potential impact on children and youth, who may not understand why their military parent has changed. They may feel resentment toward the returning parent or experience fears of separation and may need a period of time to warm up. In addition, life has gone on at home and the reunion may cause stress in re-defining family member's roles.

Continue to track children's academic progress and behavior. The return of the military parent can require a lot of adjustments for the child. Children may have fantasies of normalcy once a family member returns, and then may feel disappointed and angry if the fantasy is not a reality. The family may also be dealing with multiple deployments, in which case the homecoming is temporary rather than permanent.

Be aware not all family situations look alike, and circumstances may vary. It's important to keep the lines of communication open and to offer support as needed. Schools should try to be flexible in allowing military students to take time to be with a deploying or returning parent.

As always, for more serious concerns a referral can be made for SCIP services and support.

(Sources: promoteprevent.org; extension.purdue.edu/purplewagon; www2.ed.gov; aacap.org)