

In The Know

A monthly newsletter keeping you current on topics related to the Prevention of Substance Abuse

Steuben Council on Addictions

A program of Substance Free Living

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Teens and energy drinks: A potentially dangerous combination

US News and World Report feature
By Raychelle Cassada Lohmann, Contributor

Energy drinks are one of the fastest growing beverage products on the global market. The worldwide market is projected to increase to \$84.8 billion by 2025, according to a report from the business consulting firm Grand View Research. It found that teens alone consumed \$16.3 billion worth of energy drinks in 2016, and adolescent consumption is only expected to rise. According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, alongside multivitamins, energy drinks are the most sought-after dietary supplement consumed by teens and young adults, with males between 18 and 34 drinking the most energy drinks and about one-third of kids ages 12 to 17 consuming them regularly.

These drinks offer the promise of boosting mental and physical energy along with increased performance, making them highly appealing to young people. The main ingredient in these drinks is caffeine. Known for increasing mental alertness, this stimulant is



the most widely consumed drug in the U.S. Found in products like chocolate, coffee, teas and many sodas, caffeine is often thought of as a harmless drug. And that may be true if it's consumed in moderation, but these energy drinks contain between 70 to 200 milligrams of caffeine per serving!

Scientists agree that it's OK for a healthy adult to have up to about 400 mg of caffeine per day (equivalent to four cups of coffee), but a teen, on the other hand, is an entirely different story. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, kids between the ages of 12 and 18 should not

consume more than 100 mg (a cup of coffee, a couple of cups of tea or about two sodas) per day. Additionally, the Academy recommends that kids steer clear of energy drinks altogether. Unfortunately, our young people aren't heeding that advice. Adolescents are reportedly the fastest-growing population of caffeine users in America. Research indicates 83 percent of teens drink caffeinated beverages regularly, and nearly 96 percent consume them occasionally.

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The Council, moving forward for prevention

Here at the Council we are working hard to tailor our programming to fit the needs of districts and classrooms for whatever design or format the upcoming school may be. We are transitioning programming so that it can be presented virtually as well as in person. We understand that planning for this upcoming year has to be stressful and exhausting, but we also want to let you know that we are available to discuss keeping social skills and lifeskills learning for your students like we have done past years.

With the pandemic, skills such as peer pressure resistance, social skills, mental health, etc. are vital to reinforce more now than ever. We are available by phone, virtual or email to talk about the upcoming year and what we can do for you and areas that we are ready and willing to

help out. We also will continue to provide interventions for students that show signs of substance abuse risk through our Teen Intervene program.



We also have programming available for staff trainings, parents, community agencies, etc. We are here to help you and navigate this process alongside. Our agency offers parenting programs, information on medication safety, bullying and what families can do, substance abuse trends and teens, and so much more.

For more information, please email Stacey.O'Dell@dor.org or by calling (607) 968-4123 to discuss programming or to learn more. We are all in this together!

Knowledge is Power—Let us help you learn more

Steuben Council on Addictions is available to provide community presentations on a myriad of topics relating to substance abuse, prevention, parent information, information for schools and their employees, churches, youth groups and more within Steuben County. We are capable of customizing presentations to the area of interest, timeframe requested and makeup of the audience. For further information or to schedule a presentation, please contact Prevention Educator Stacey O'Dell at Stacey.O'Dell@dor.org or (607) 776-6441 x205.

Topics include but are not limited to: Current adolescent drug trends, Societal drug trends, Vaping and eCigs, The Opioid Epidemic, Underage Drinking; Gambling and its effect on families and society, Substance abuse and employment, Impact of substance use on children and education, etc.

Time to remember loved ones and end overdose

Local communities in Steuben County and around the world are coming together on August 31, 2020 to remember those who have died or suffered permanent injury due to drug overdose.

Observed on the 31st of August every year, International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) seeks to create better understanding of overdose, reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths, and create change that reduces the harms associated with drug use.

The Opioid Committee, as part of the Steuben Prevention Coalition, will be sharing information regarding overdoses, prevention, statistics and more to help our communities understand the depth of this issue. With the current pandemic situation there has been an increase in substance use, abuse and overdose. According to the recent Sienna Poll, 59% of New Yorkers report knowing someone who has struggled with opioid abuse and during COVID-19, this problem is surging. Around the county you will notice purple awareness ribbons to signify awareness and unity in the fight to end overdose.

By holding an event this year, the people of Steuben are joining themselves to a global movement for understanding, compassion, and change.

In 2019, there were 874 IOAD events of all kinds, held in 39 countries.

People and communities came together to raise awareness of one of the world's most urgent public health crises – one that, unfortunately, is only getting worse.

Connie Terry, Program Assistant Opioid Committee, states “No family should ever have to go through the pain of losing a loved one because of overdose. We encourage members of the community with lived experience to join us in speaking out and to stand



in solidarity with the men and women who have been personally affected by overdose.” According to the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime's](#) most recent World Annual Drug Report, 585,000 people around the world died as a result of drug use in 2017.

“By coming together to remember them, we stand together to say that more needs to be done to end overdose in our community. Overdose can affect anybody and one of the messages of this day is that the people who overdose are our sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters – they are loved and they are missed” says Stacey O’Dell, Opioid Committee Member and Prevention Educator for

Steuben Council on Addictions.

A full list of the IOAD 2020 events currently planned around the world will be displayed at: <https://www.overdoseday.com/activities-2020/>

International Overdose Awareness Day is convened by Penington Institute, an Australian not-for-profit.

Do you know the signs of an overdose?

- Face is clammy and cool to the touch
- Blue lips and fingertips
- Non-responsive to name or sternum rub
- Slow or erratic breathing, or no breathing
- Deep snoring or gurgling sounds
- Heartbeat is slow, shallow or stopped
- Call 9-1-1 and administer Narcan if available.



Caffeine isn't the only substance in energy drinks that give consumers a jolt. If you read the label, you'll also find B vitamins, guarana, ginseng, green tea extracts and taurine, all known energy inducers. Due to the natural bitterness of caffeine, lots of sugar is often added to these drinks to make them taste syrupy sweet. So along with a surge of energy, kids can get a sugar high, which ironically can lead to a sugar crash. As more and more people are watching caloric intake, sugar-free versions of these energy drinks are becoming more popular, including with teens. Many kids report drinking them as a supplemental weight loss product. With all that's in energy drinks, research published last year in the Journal of the American Heart Association warns that there is little known about the safety of some of the ingredients. Now that's something to be concerned about.

With so many of these drinks flooding the market, teens have many to choose from and they don't have to go far to find them. Just one visit to the supermarket, or convenience or health food store is all it takes to purchase one.

The companies producing energy drinks do a fantastic job of marketing their beverages to young people. It doesn't take long to spot logos such as Red Bull or Monster at football games, Formula One races or snowboarding competitions, and at other popular sporting events. Energy drink companies even have sports personalities backing up their products, giving them the facade of being a "healthy" beverage that makes you perform better. Unfortunately, teens are drinking up that message. Adolescents report that they perceive energy drinks as a healthy alternative to soda. It can't be that bad if it contains vitamins, right? Of course, the truth is that these drinks can be extremely dangerous to teens.

Dangers Associated with Energy Drinks

In a study from Chapman University, 40 percent of teens reported an adverse effect while consuming energy drinks.

These included:

- Abdominal pain
- Breathing difficulties
- Chest pains
- Gastrointestinal problems such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Headaches
- Heart palpitations
- Heightened anxiety

- Insomnia
- Feeling jittery or experiencing tremors
- Seizures

Researchers also discovered that about 15 percent of teens mixed their energy drinks with alcohol and about 9 percent consumed energy drinks in conjunction with other drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine. Drinking energy drinks alone has some serious side effects but adding drugs and alcohol to the mix can be a dangerous and potentially deadly combination.

Did you know that one energy drink can pose a danger to a young person, according to a Mayo Clinic study? These drinks not only cause blood pressure to rise but they also increase the release of stress hormones into the system, raising the risk of heart damage. Also, all that caffeine can start messing with a teen's sleep-wake cycles, and according to research, teens are already sleep-deprived, getting on average only about seven hours of rest on a school night and needing around nine.

Without any age restrictions to limit sales of energy drinks to youth, any child or teen can purchase these products without parental knowledge. There is one state pushing to make a change though: South Carolina. This state is looking at requiring those purchasing energy drinks to be at least 18 years. If a proposed bill passes, South Carolina would be the first state in the nation to take a stance against selling energy drinks to minors – and maybe that would spur other states to do the same thing. Over time energy drinks can lead to dependence and withdrawal symptoms; after all, they do contain high concentrations of the drug caffeine.

To join the efforts to increase public awareness, the American College of Sports Medicine earlier this year put forth several recommendations for the sale and consumption of energy drinks. The ACSM advised:

- Energy drinks should not be marketed to kids and adolescents.
- These products not be consumed before, during or after vigorous exercise, since doing so has been linked to deaths.
- We should do more to educate youth about energy drink consumption. It was suggested formal education about energy drinks be a part of school nutrition and covered in health and wellness classes.

Aside from educating youth at school, it's important that we, as parents, take time to speak with our kids about the dangers and health risks associated with consuming energy drinks.



Many teenagers love a good party. Unfortunately, many parents will give alcohol to teens at some of these parties, even though it is unhealthy, unsafe, and unacceptable to give alcohol to anyone under 21.

Giving teens alcohol increases their risk of addiction, injury, and death. It can interact unexpectedly with their medicine, harm their brain's development, and can lead to drinking and driving or other injuries.

Parents: protect yourselves and your kids—don't be a party to teenage drinking. Do your part to make our community safe for everyone.

Parents Who Host Lose The Most is a media campaign created by the Prevention Action Alliance.

Steuben County Underage Party & Drug Information Tip Line

Anyone with information relating to underage drinking such as parties, sales, etc. or information relating to illegal drugs, such as sales, dealers, or other suspicious activities are encouraged to use the tip line.

The tip line is monitored seven days a week, 24 hours a day, all calls are kept anonymous.

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Steuben Council on Addictions (SCA) is a program of Substance Free Living, a service priority for Catholic Charities of Steuben. In The Know is a regular monthly update about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to help in the prevention of substance use and abuse.

For more information please contact Stacey O'Dell, Prevention Educator at sodell@dor.org, (607) 968-4123 or (607) 776-6441, ex. 205, leave a message.



Resource link

In response to the ever changing world around us, we have compiled links and resources to help families and educators address new and changing needs. We want to be sure that students, parents and teachers have plenty of information to help them out when it comes to social skills, substance abuse, conversation starters, mental health and more. Included here you will find links to age appropriate stories, activities, articles and more that can be helpful tools for you

In our elementary section we have included a great collection of social skills story books that children can watch and keep up on important topics. Some areas include mindfulness, resiliency, asking for help, handling emotions and more.

In our middle and high school section, there are opportunities for reflection, discussion and activities that are paired with each Storyteller video when they access the Natural Highs information.

The parent section is full of information to help parents with common struggles from dealing with adolescent emotions to having conversations about tough topics.

There are resources being added, so be sure to bookmark the following link:

<https://www.catholiccharitiessteuben.org/services/substance-free-living/prevention-services/steuben-council-on-addictions/student-resources/>

We are also available to send information via email or even resource packets on a host of topics. Please reach out to use for more information by emailing Stacey.O'Dell@dor.org or calling (607) 968-4123.

We are here to help!



Hosting an Underage Drinking Bash?



We'll SEE You There

