

Teachers Call for Energy Drink Ban in Schools

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Category : Education/Family

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **pence** / **pɛns** / (n) – the plural form of the UK’s monetary unit penny
Example: Energy drinks cost 25 **pence** per can.
- 2. **oblivious** / **əˈblɪv i əs** / (adj) – unaware
Example: Most children eat junk food because they are **oblivious** to its long-term effects on health.
- 3. **all the rage** / **ɔl ðə reɪdʒ** / (idiom) – extremely popular
Example: Sports drinks are **all the rage** nowadays because a lot of people are into fitness.
- 4. **devour** / **dɪˈvaʊ ə** / (v) – to consume hungrily
Example: The child **devoured** an entire pint of ice cream within five minutes.
- 5. **steer clear of (something)** / **stɪər klɪər ʌv** / (idiom) – to avoid
Example: My doctor advised me to **steer clear of** sweets because I am at risk of diabetes.

Article

Read the text below.

Teachers in the UK are urging schools to ban the sales of energy drinks to students under 16 years old.

The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers has raised concerns about children’s energy drink consumption, which can lead to poor behavior such as anxiety, irritability, and reduced concentration.

A report by the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health (Fuse) revealed that children who are at least 10 years old consume energy drinks because these beverages can cost as low as **25 pence**. In addition, these children feel that they would look tougher and fit in with their peers better if they take energy drinks.

It has been found that a 500ml can of energy drink usually contains around 160mg of caffeine, which exceeds the European Food Safety Authority’s (EFSA) recommendation of no more than 105mg of daily caffeine intake for an 11-year-old. Nevertheless, children remain **oblivious** to the added stimulants these beverages contain and energy drinks remain **all the rage** for this market.

In 2016, a school in Scotland also put an energy drink ban into effect. Headteacher Melvyn Lynch said that some students were **devouring** energy drinks as early as breakfast. He added that based on past instances, students who consumed energy drinks were more likely to be involved in unfavorable situations at school.

Apart from poor behavior, energy drink consumption also has implications on children’s health. A female student from the UK, who started consuming around seven 500ml cans of energy drinks per day when she was 16, said that she lost weight, slept better, and actually gained more energy after she **steered clear of** energy drinks.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- Aside from banning energy drink sales, how else can schools discourage students from consuming these drinks?

- What other products or activities do you think need to be regulated in schools? Why?

Discussion B

- In what situations is banning the best solution to an issue? Explain.

- How can banning sometimes work against its purpose (e.g. rebellion)?