

School that banned Red Bull sees detention plunge by a third

- Haydock High School banned energy drinks such as Red Bull and Monster
- Headteacher said there had been a marked change in behaviour since ban
- The number of detentions issued to pupils have been reduced by a third

By James Tozer for Daily Mail

A school that banned Red Bull and other energy drinks has seen the number of pupils being given detentions plunge by a third.

In the latest piece of evidence that the drinks can cause poor behaviour in the classroom, staff said standards were transformed after just two terms.

Drinks such as Monster, Red Bull and Relentless combine so much sugar and caffeine that Government advisers warn they make children hyperactive and difficult to control.



Some 500ml cans contain the equivalent of more than 13 teaspoons of sugar and 160mg of caffeine – about the same as in four cans of cola.

The ban was suggested by Year 8 pupils at Haydock High School in Merseyside. Head teacher Dee Griffiths said: 'Research would suggest that levels of concentration among some young people are negatively affected by highly-sugared energy drinks.'

'Some students who use these cannot learn at their best. The consumption of vast quantities of "empty calories" can lead to health concerns, including obesity and dental issues.'

Dee Griffiths, headteacher at Haydock High School in Haydock, Merseyside (pictured with a group of Year 9 pupils), said there had been a marked change in pupils' behaviour since the school banned energy drinks

To help encourage fellow pupils to ditch energy drinks, members of the school's student council designed a water bottle with the Friends of Haydock fundraising group.

These bottles were offered to pupils in return for a pledge to go further than the ban and steer clear of all fizzy, sugary drinks in exchange for water. In Years 7, 8 and 9, more than 95 per cent of pupils signed up, along with more than 70 per cent in Years 10 and 11.

'ANOTHER FORM OF DRUGS': ADVISER CALLS FOR DRINKS BAN

Earlier this year, Government adviser and restaurateur John Vincent called for energy drinks to be banned in schools - saying the beverages were as harmful as drugs.

He said drinks such as Monster, Red Bull and Relentless make children difficult to control.

Mr Vincent said: 'Energy drinks are effectively another form of drugs. The amount of sugar and caffeine in these drinks is in our view effectively allowing drugs into schools.'

'It has a hugely damaging effect on their ability to concentrate, how they feel and it is having health effects.'

As well as the fall in the number of detentions, achievement and general behaviour levels rose – a trend Mrs Griffiths put down to the ban. Councillor Andy Bowden, of St Helens council in Merseyside, said: 'It is good to see it was the students themselves that recognised the effects high- caffeine drinks were having and the benefits drinking water as an alternative can have.'

Earlier this year, restaurateur John Vincent – who founded the Leon fast-food chain and advised ministers on improving youngsters' nutrition – said: 'The amount of sugar and caffeine in these drinks is effectively allowing drugs into schools.'

'We don't do that and neither do we think that should be part of school life. It has a hugely damaging effect on their ability to concentrate, how they feel and it is having health effects.'

Another school that reported improved behaviour after banning energy drinks is Chatsmore Catholic High School in Worthing, West Sussex, which in 2008 blamed them for pupils being noisy, late for lessons and failing to follow instructions.

Energy drinks have been widely criticised. A survey last year found that one in 20 teenagers goes to school on a can of energy drink rather than eating a healthy breakfast.



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Former X Factor judge Sharon Osbourne blamed them for the seizure her daughter Kelly had last year.

Manufacturers and retailers have a voluntary ban on the sale of the drinks to under-16s, but there is no law to stop children buying them.

A spokesman for the British Soft Drinks Association said that while most energy drinks contain no more caffeine than a typical cup of coffee, 'We are clear that energy drinks are not recommended for children, and we want to get that message across to young people and

their parents'.

Haydock High School in Haydock, Merseyside, banned leading energy drinks such as Red Bull and Monster

CAFFEINE TO SUGAR: DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S IN YOUR ENERGY DRINK?

For comparison, a 150ml can of Coca-Cola contains 8mg caffeine and 15.0g of sugar. According to NewHealthGuide.org, a teaspoon is roughly 4 grams of white granulated sugar.

RED BULL ENERGY DRINK (250ml)

CAFFEINE: 80mg

SUGAR: 27.5g (11g per 100ML)

RED BULL SUGARFREE ENERGY DRINK (250ml)

CAFFEINE: 80MG

Contains sweeteners aspartame and acesulfame K instead of sugar

MONSTER ENERGY DRINK (230ml/ 8 fl oz)

CAFFEINE: 80mg

SUGAR: 27g

MONSTER MEGA ENERGY DRINK (680ml/ 680 fl oz)

CAFFEINE: 240mg

SUGAR: 81g

RELENTLESS ORIGINAL ENERGY DRINK (250ml)

CAFFEINE: 80mg

SUGAR: 25g

The Food Standards Agency advises that children limit their intake of drinks that are high in caffeine - saying the drinks 'could potentially lead to short-term effects such as increased excitability, irritability, nervousness or anxiety'.

A study by the Energy Drink Consumption in Europe found that large amounts of caffeine can cause heart palpitations, fits and even death, as well as raising the risk of Type 2 diabetes.

Heavy consumption has also been linked to a greater risk of depression, addiction and alcohol dependency.

Energy drinks could be more likely to cause a caffeine overdose because they can be drunk quickly, unlike hot drinks like tea or coffee, the study found.

The British Soft Drinks Association code of conduct states that energy drinks should not be sold in schools.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2861039/School-slashes-number-detentions-issued-banning-energy-drinks.html#ixzz3LR1hImxe>

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