



# Parent Newsletter

SPRING 2010

Grade 9

## Energy Drinks & Snack Bars

Energy drinks and nutrition bars often make big promises. Some say they'll increase energy and alertness.

Others offer extra nutrition, and some even claim to boost your athletic performance or powers of concentration.

But once you cut through the hype and look past the flashy packaging on energy products, chances are what you're mostly getting is a stiff dose of sugar and caffeine.

As with everything, they're OK in moderation. The occasional energy drink is fine and a protein bar in the morning is a better choice than not getting any breakfast at all. But multiple energy drinks in a day is overdoing it.

### Make Smart Choices

With so much going on in our lives, lots of people feel tired and run down.

And many of us find ourselves skipping a meal sometimes. So it's not surprising that nutrition, protein and energy drinks and food bars have flooded the market, offering us the convenience of energy on-the-go.

Food bars will never beat a well-balanced meal or snack when it comes to meeting our nutrition needs. But many of them do contain more nutrients than candy and some of the sports or energy drinks on the market today may contain some vitamins and minerals.

### Facts about energy drinks and food bars to keep in mind:



#### Drink Your Way to Super Bowl Stardom?

No matter what the label might say, no energy drink or food bar can make you a better athlete. There's no substitute for hard work, good training, a healthy diet, and plenty of rest. Don't let marketing hype lure you into thinking you'll always need something "extra" to perform your best.

**They contain excessive sugar and calories.**

**Energy drinks are often full of caffeine.**

Caffeine may be legal, but it is a stimulant drug. It can cause side effects like jitteriness, upset stomach, headaches,



and sleep problems — all of which drag you down, not power you up! Plus, taking certain medications or supplements can make caffeine's side effects seem even worse.

**They may contain mysterious ingredients.**

**They're expensive.**

You can get a better (and cheaper) energy boost by eating & drinking healthy foods.

*They're not the healthy choices the advertising hype makes them out to be.*

**The truth is, the best energy boost comes from healthy living. People who eat well, drink water, and get enough physical activity and rest will have plenty of energy — the natural way.**

## Teen Driving

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among teens ages 15-17.

### Seatbelts save lives.

It's the law and a proven fact. But why do people still not use them?

Fox 9 News aired a story called "Room to Live" showing cars that were involved in fatal crashes, where, if seatbelts had been used, the people in the car would have survived. You can watch the story on this website: <http://www.myfoxtwincities.com> and search for "Room to Live".

### Distracted driving.

Driving itself is a challenging and multi-tasking activity — steering, checking mirrors and traffic, signaling, maintaining safe speed, reading road signs and more. Adding non-driving tasks

behind the wheel increases the risk of a crash

### COMMON DISTRACTIONS

### ARE THE REASONS INATTENTIVE DRIVING ACCOUNTS FOR ONE IN

### FOUR CRASHES IN MN.

#### Cell Phones:

Phone conversations pull your focus off the road, whether hands free or not. Put cell phones out of reach to avoid the urge. It is illegal for drivers with learners permits or provisional licenses to use a cell phone while driving.

#### Texting:

It is illegal to read or compose texts or emails or access the Web while driving. Violations are up to \$300.

#### Eating:



Avoid eating or reaching for food or drink while driving.

#### Managing Controls:

Set air, music, seat position and mirrors before driving.

#### Reading:

GPS, newspapers, maps and books are all serious distractions and take your eyes from the road.

#### Drowsy Driving:

Drive well-rested. If you feel tired, find a place to exit and rest. Open windows and loud music don't help.

- MN Office of Traffic Safety

## Minnesota Student Survey

Do you ever wonder what teens are really doing and thinking?

There is a survey conducted every 4 years for students in grades 6, 9 & 12 in Minnesota that helps understand MN teens.

The Minnesota Student Survey is conducted to collect data relating to:

school, activities, families and relationships, health and safety, risky behaviors, mental health, substance use and sexual behaviors.

There is data available on Minnesota as a whole and by county, so you can see how kids in your county compare with the state.



You may be surprised by some of the results.

You may be able to access your counties results by going to:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/index.cfm>.

You can also access the results for Minnesota on this website.

## Immunizations

**Tdap**—Double check that your child received the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis.) for 7th grade. The pertussis in this shot is VERY important.

**Menactra**- Is another vaccine to talk about with your child's health care provider. Meningococcal disease is a potentially fatal

bacterial infection that can cause meningitis (severe swelling of the brain and spinal cord).

**Pneumococcal (PCV)**- If your child has a chronic health condition remember to discuss this vaccine with your doctor.

**HPV**- Is important because it can prevent most cases of cervical

cancer in females if given prior to exposure to the virus. It also can prevent genital warts in both males and females.

**Influenza vaccine**— In the fall this vaccine is recommended for all school students to help reduce the risk of seasonal influenza infection.

## Child and Teen Checkups

### What is the Child and Teen Checkup Program and how do I get this service for my child?

It's a comprehensive child health program .

### Who Qualifies?

- Children and teens age newborn through 20 .
- income eligible people enrolled in Medical Assistance (MA) or MN Care.

*Get information on these health plans from the Family Services agency in your county.*

### What type of services do I receive for my child when they are part of the Child and Teen Checkup program?

- Reminders to parents when their child is due for a checkup.
- Regular health checkups (so health problems can be found and treated early).
- Children are tested for lead

and tuberculosis.



- Parents get information about healthy lifestyles and normal growth and development.

- Families can receive assistance with transportation to medical and dental appointments.

- Interpreters if needed.

### What benefits can I receive for having checkups?

- Some of the Health plans provide incentives for families to take their child for a Child and Teen checkup ( i.e. vouchers or chamber bucks for completing immunizations, lead tests).

- C&TC staff in Countryside Public Health offices make phone calls to families who are on Mn. Health Care Plans insurance to assure that:

- they have a medical home,
- that their children are up-to-date with immunizations
- that they are connected to resources such as WIC, Head-start and community resources available.

### Dental checkups ?

Dental visits are recommended every year starting at age 3 or earlier if there are problems .

Call the 800# on your health plan card for assistance finding a dentist if you do not have a current dentist that will provide care. The CTC outreach staff can assist also with finding a dentist.

### A CTC exam includes:

Information about: good health habits & thoughts, feelings & relationships with others.

Time to ask questions and get answers about your child's health and development.

Complete physical exam

Shots

Hearing & Vision checks

Lab tests- UA- lead test

Checks of development & growth

Referral to the dentist

**Call your child's medical provider to schedule their appointment today !**

**Countryside  
Public Health**

Swift County  
201 13th Street South  
Benson, MN 56215  
1-800-657-3291

Big Stone County  
47 Northwest 2nd Street  
Suite 104  
Ortonville, MN 56278  
1-866-277-5587

Chippewa County  
719 North 7th Street  
Suite 308  
Montevideo, MN 56265  
1-800-894-0192

Lac Qui Parle  
422 5th Avenue-Suite 305  
Madison, MN 56256  
1-800-255-0736

Yellow Medicine County  
415 9th Avenue  
Granite Falls, MN 56241  
1-800-407-3628

-<http://www.dps.state.mn.us>

*Countryside Public Health is a five county Community Health service agency serving the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine in western Minnesota.*

*The Philosophy of Countryside Public Health is to support all individuals to reach and/or to maintain an optimal level of well being in their place in society. Such support shall be available to all members of the area. The service will strive to promote, plan, cooperate, and coordinate with other agencies and institutions to develop that optimal level, and to become a leader in the development of a comprehensive community health program.*

We're on the Web!  
<http://www.countrysidepublichealth.org>

GRADE 9 SPRING



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.