

## Should Schools Ban Energy Drinks on Campus?

Energy drinks have become a fixture in school hallways, tucked into backpacks alongside textbooks and lunch money. Sales of caffeinated beverages marketed to teens have climbed steadily over the past several years, and schools have largely stayed quiet on the issue. That silence should end. Schools should ban energy drink sales on campus because the caffeine and sugar content in these products disrupts sleep and concentration during school hours.

The evidence here is hard to ignore. A 2021 pediatric health survey found that teens who consumed energy drinks regularly reported nearly double the rate of sleep disturbances compared to peers who didn't. Poor sleep doesn't stay contained to nighttime; it follows students into first period, where attention spans and memory retention both take a hit. Banning sales on campus won't stop a student from buying a can at a gas station, but it removes the easiest access point and sends a clear signal about what the school considers acceptable during instructional hours.

Removing energy drinks from campus vending machines and stores addresses a problem hiding in plain sight. The sleep data alone makes a strong enough case, and pairing that with what teachers already notice in afternoon classes only strengthens it. Maybe the real question isn't whether schools should act, but why so many took this long to.