

Government Stumbles on School Drink Restrictions

By Richard Kirkpatrick, MD

Remember how the State of Washington and various Federal Agencies and Advisories were going to save our children from obesity by banning sales of soda pop in schools (SB 5436)?

The idea was that kids were not only getting fat because of all the sugar, but also that they were getting hyped up by that same sugar.

Instead, the regulations force school vending machines to offer juices, Gatorade, and plain water. Take a look at the chart below to compare these options:

As you can plainly see, Gatorade, juices, and sodas all contain sugar and similar calories.

Only water is significantly different. Water from the tap is free. Water taken in a thermos or exercise bottle is free. Bottled water from the vending machine costs 75¢ to \$1.00.

Beverage 12 oz.	Calories	Caffeine (mg)	Sugar (g)
Coca Cola	143	35	40
Pepsi Cola	150	38	42
Sprite	142	0	38.5
Root Beer	150	0	42
Mountain Dew	165	54	46.5
Gatorade	75	0	21
Powerade	95	0	22
G-2	43	0	10
Sunny Delight	195	0	45
Welch's Grape Juice	264	0	60
Minute Maid Lemonade	165	0	43
Water	0	0	0

So, common sense (particularly in tough economic times) argues for drinking tap water.* All of the other products below are heavily advertised. You can tell a lot about our kids and our society by their choice of liquid refreshment.

** In addition to it being a smart financial choice to drink tap water, dentists point out another advantage most people don't think about. Tap water contains fluoride to promote strong teeth and prevent tooth decay. Bottled water does not typically have fluoride added to it.*

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