

The buzz on energy drinks

By Kristen Baiocchi

Students use energy drinks to pull all nighters before a big test. Athletes guzzle as many as three or four before a big game or race, in hopes of boosting their performance.

This so called energy drink- a new breed of concoctions with extreme doses of sugar, caffiene and other substances-have quickly become teens' number one choice of a pick me up.

Despite the rising concern amongst doctors, many teens continue to use and abuse the reason for energy drinks.

Phil Herout, ACHS senior, has tried several energy drinks including

SOBE No Fear, and the ever popular Rock Star and AMP, created by the same company that makes Mountain Dew. "It's nice to have something that doesn't taste like coffee but still tastes good," said Herout. "I drink [AMP] when I really need that extra energy boost. It works really well, but after a while you pay for those few hours because afterwards you really crash."

According to Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, M.D., the body builds a tolerance



to these drinks, just as someone would to pop or coffee. The amount that worked for a teen previously may have to be doubled or even tripled to achieve the same affect later on.

"At first the body becomes phsycologically dependance. Later on, [as the doeses increase] the dependent becomes physical," said Ahmed.

Ahmed also stated that high amounts of caffine are damaging to

the central nervous system, as well as the liver.

"I don't think that my friends and I have ever really heard about the side affects. It's not something you really think about," said Herout.

Herout and his friends are not alone. This lack of knowledge about what teens are putting into their bodies can have serious affects, including insomnia, anxiety, heart palpitations, or in some rare cases, even death.

"I drink two red bulls a day towake myself up in the morning and get going," said Vanesa Dahan ACHS senior, "I dont think kids will stop drinking energy drinks because, we dont think anything bad is possible to happen to us."

Another common misconception is that energy drinks can be used as sports drinks, like gatorade or powerade. Gatorade and Powerade contain minerals that hydrate the body, which boosts muscle stamina, while energy drinks contain none of these.

What it comes down to is that energy drinks are not healthy. Most of them contain the same amount of sugar and calories as soda, and about twice as much as caffiene.

For example one can of the ever popular red bull energy drink has about as much taurine, an amino acid which is believed to boost athletic performance but has yet to be proven

A real wise guy 10-year-old prodigy attends ACHS

By Mehreen Syed

The 1997 TV series, Smart Guy, may have stopped after two years, but the reality of the show is forever alive.

Antioch Community High School's own Smart Guy, 10-year-old Danny Duncan, has to encounter the struggle through high school a little earlier than most. Intimidating as it might be for a freshman of 14, Danny took it pretty well. "He's so happy there," said Cindy Duncan, Danny's Mother.

"[My classes] are challenging, but they're not super-super hard," said Danny, regarding

Honors' Geometry and Honors' Physics.

Danny spends the first two periods at ACHS and then goes to Millburn School to resume with his other classes. "The reason I like Millburn is I can have friends that are my same age." Said Danny.

At Millburn, Danny takes part in the AIM program. This program offers advanced reading and mathematics classes for gifted students. It was the AIM Director, Nancy Stream, who recommended Danny to take classes at ACHS.

Danny's parents weren't aware of his

higher intelligence until he reached the age of four. "I didn't realize as soon as maybe other people did. He did read early. He was reading when he was three and a half. I didn't realize exactly what that meant at the moment," said Cindy.

According to Carolyn Stanley, ACHS Honors' Geometry Teacher, the other students have a certain respect for Danny. "[Students] were coming up to him before our class started and they were asking him questions and quizzing each other to make sure they were ready [for the test]...They used him as a resource," said Stanley.

"It was the thought to see him think something through... the speed at which he mastered a new concept, he was really quick on the uptake. He could think something through that you wouldn't expect from a child of that age," said Cindy.

When Danny is ready to be a full-time high school student, he hopes to go to IMSA, the Illinois Math and Science Academy. "When I grow up I plan to become an astronaut," said Danny. In addition to his education, Danny, an only child, plays the violin, soccer for his park district, and is an active cub scouts member.

"He's got friends both ages... I think he likes the different ages for different things: the run around and do boy things with the younger kids and the more thoughtful pursuits with the older kids," said Cindy. How ever you


say it, Danny is a lucky child. With the parents to support him, the mind to help him think for himself, and his ongoing achievements in math and science, Danny has skillfully carved himself a pathway to success.

“ [My classes] are challenging, but they're not super-super hard.

-Danny Duncan
ACHS Student



Photo by Kelly Holcomb
Danny Duncan, 10, from Millburn Lower Grade School, attends classes at ACHS. He is now taking Honors Physics taught by Ben Palmberg, and Honors Geometry taught by Carolyn Stanley.

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