

Abacus Primary School



Newsletter 525 19/4/24

Summer Term

We hope that you all enjoyed the Easter break, it has been great hearing the children talking about their holiday adventures, birthday parties and time with their families.

It was lovely to see the sun make an appearance this week and we look forward to the weather warming up for the summer term. Please keep checking the school calendar to make sure that you do not miss any of the activities and events we have planned.

We are really excited for the term ahead with residential, school trips, summer shows, summer bounce and a mobile swimming pool coming to Abacus. This will be on our top playground after the half term break and will be at school for five weeks providing children with the opportunity to swim as part of their school day. More information will follow soon.

Hopefully the nicer weather is on its way, therefore please can we remind parents and children that the school grounds must be vacated straight after pick up in order to safeguard the children attending after school clubs.



Next week we are on Week 3 of our revised menu. Which you can view on our website:

<https://www.abacusprimaryschool.co.uk/school-meals>

LET'S CELEBRATE!



So many achievements to celebrate this week. Also big well done to Mrs Newman who completed the Brighton marathon over the Easter break. Well done to everyone.

Netball Success Continues

On the 28th March 2024, our 5/6 Netball team took part in the second round of the Wickford School's Netball League Tournament with 2 other Wickford Schools. Despite very heavy rain our team did exceptionally well winning both their games 4-1 and 6-0. They have one more round but with this great start will qualify to represent Wickford in the area final. Well done team.



Wildcats Football Session

On the 17th April 2024, 8 girls from years 3 and 4 took part in a Wildcats Football Session organized by Active Essex to inspire girls to play football.

The event was inspired by Disney's Lion King (hence the face paint) and the girls went around a rotation of 5 different activities to develop ball control and teamwork with coaches from Chelsea Foundation and South Woodham FC.

The girls really enjoyed getting into their Disney characters and all came away saying they'd like to play more football.



3 T's Cricket



On the 18th April 2024, 8 children from Year 2 took part in a 3 T's cricket training session. 3 T's is a striking and fielding game for infant children which has been developed as an introduction to cricket

The children learnt the skills required to play the game: throwing, catching, chasing a moving ball and batting before going on to play some friendly games with children from Grange Primary School. They will now continue to practice what they have learnt in their PE lessons ready for a competition in June.



On the 28th March 2024, our Sports Ambassadors planned an Easter Egg Hunt for children to take part in.



The Sports Ambassadors placed eggs around the playground with letters on and gave picture clues to where they were.



Unfortunately, only the Foundation children got to take part as rain stopped the lunchtime hunt.



Children then had to use the letters to find a word associated with Easter.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ENERGY DRINKS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Energy drinks are highly caffeinated beverages often consumed for a quick energy boost. However, excessive intake can lead to health risks like increased heart rate and sleep disturbances. Statistics underline these products' popularity among young people – many of whom consume them regularly. Here's our expert's advice on addressing the concerns surrounding energy drink consumption in adolescents.

HIGH CAFFEINE CONTENT



Most energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine: often much more than a typical cup of coffee or fizzy drink. Excessive caffeine consumption can lead to increased heart rate, high blood pressure, anxiety, insomnia, digestive issues and – in extreme cases – even more severe conditions. For children and adolescents, whose bodies are still developing, excessive caffeine intake can be particularly harmful.

INCREASED RISK OF HEART PROBLEMS



The combination of high caffeine levels and the other stimulants found in energy drinks can put extra strain on the cardiovascular system. Potentially, this could lead to irregular heart rhythms, palpitations and increased future risk of heart attack – especially in individuals who have an underlying heart condition.

IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH



The significant levels of caffeine and sugar in energy drinks can exacerbate anxiety, nervousness and even – in susceptible individuals – contribute to panic attacks. Additionally, the crash that often follows the initial energy boost can actually make mood swings worse and possibly lead to feelings of depression and irritability.

DISRUPTED SLEEP PATTERNS



Consuming energy drinks, especially during the afternoon or evening, can disrupt normal sleep patterns. The stimulating effects of caffeine can make it difficult for children and young adults to fall asleep – leading to insufficient rest and its associated health risks, including impaired cognitive function, mood disturbances and decreased academic performance.

LINKS TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE



Some research has suggested a correlation between energy drink consumption and higher rates of alcohol and drug use among young adults. Young people may mix energy drinks with alcohol, mistakenly believing that the energy drinks' stimulant effects will counteract the sedative nature of alcohol. This combination, however, can be dangerous and increase the risk of accidents, injuries and alcohol poisoning.

POTENTIAL FOR DEPENDENCY



Frequent consumption of energy drinks can lead to tolerance – meaning that individuals may need to consume increasing amounts to continue achieving the desired effects. This can potentially lead to dependency and addiction, especially in younger individuals who may be more vulnerable to addictive behaviours.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LIMIT CONSUMPTION



It's wise to educate young people about the potential risks related to energy drinks, emphasising the consequences of excessive caffeine consumption. Encourage healthier alternatives like water, herbal teas or natural fruit juices. You can model healthy behaviours by restricting your own consumption of energy drinks and creating a supportive environment for informed choices.

PROMOTE HEALTHIER HABITS



Schools can help with this issue by including discussions about the possible dangers of energy drink consumption into their health education curriculum. Encourage children and young adults to critically evaluate the marketing messages they see and make informed choices about their health. Teachers could also provide resources and support for children to identify healthier alternatives.

ADVOCATE FOR REGULATION



If this is something you're particularly passionate about, you could work with local health organisations and policymakers to advocate for regulations on energy drink sales to children and young people. Raise awareness among parents, educators and community members about the potential health risks associated with energy drinks and support initiatives promoting healthier options in schools and communities.

SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE



Adults can model healthy behaviours by visibly choosing alternative beverages instead of energy drinks. Maintain open communication with children and young adults about the reasons for limiting energy drink consumption – underlining the importance of balanced nutrition, adequate hydration and sufficient sleep for overall wellbeing and academic success.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Jason O'Rourke, Headteacher of Washingborough Academy, champions food education and sustainability – and his school holds the Soil Association's prestigious Gold Catering Mark. Jason has spoken about food education at Westminster briefings and overseas. A member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food, he co-founded TastEd, a sensory food education charity.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/energy-drinks

#WakeUpWednesday

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