

11-1867

MOTION

Sodas are laden with sugar and caffeine and have proven to be the least healthy beverage for young children and teenagers. Sugar and caffeine could impact behavior, and teens drinking lots of soda could be missing important nutrients in their diet. Not only do sodas provide absolutely no nutritional value, but the lack of nutrition and damaging ingredients affect young people both mentally and physically.

Unfortunately, many young children consume sodas on a daily basis. A recent study featured on the online site "Injury Prevention" has found a correlation between violence by teenagers and the amount of soda they drink. The study reviewed the behavior of Boston high school students, and provided evidence proving that teens who consumed more than five non-diet sodas per week were 9-15% more likely to be violent against peers and in dating relationships. The study reflected an association, though not necessarily a cause and effect relationship between drinking soda and violence.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's RENEW LA County initiative launched a sugar-loaded drink awareness campaign aimed at addressing a major contributor to the county's obesity epidemic, in October. Fueled by the release of local data on obesity and sugar-loaded drink consumption, the campaign will inform the public of the amount of sugar in popular drinks such as sodas, sports drinks and energy drinks, and the direct impact that excessive consumption of sugar-loaded drinks has on obesity, especially for the county's children.

In 2002, the Los Angeles Unified School District banned the selling of sodas in all school cafeterias and campus vending machines. The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) oversees hundreds of vending machines located on City-owned land in or around RAP facilities. Although most of these machines are maintained by private contractors, RAP as the facility operators should have the authority to disallow the selling of sodas in these machines.

As a City, we need to lead by example by making soda unavailable in our recreation and library facilities. Children cannot be blamed for poor nutritional choices, but as adults, we must limit those choices in City facilities known for children and teenage recreation. Therefore, we should ban soda in City Library and Park vending machines. The elimination of sodas in RAP vending machines will not put an end to childhood obesity, but it is a small step in educating the public about healthier food and beverage choices.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Library Department and the Department of Recreation and Parks be instructed to report with recommendations for phasing out and eliminating the sale of sodas in all vending machines at their facilities.

PRESENTED BY

Mitchell Englander
MITCHELL ENGLANDER
Councilmember, 12th District

SECONDED BY

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