

DRUG UPDATE 2010

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“Hello Kitty” Now Markets Wine

Popular children’s clothing and toy brand Hello Kitty has branched into the alcohol industry. Hello Kitty Wine will be marketed by Innovation Spirits for the U.S. market. There are four varieties to choose from; three of which are 750 ml bottles, the other is 375 ml. The varieties which feature Sparkling Brut Rose and Sparkling “Sweet Pink” raise concern for parents. Kids may mistakenly think the wine is a soft drink or fruit juice.



Synthetic Marijuana: A Growing Trend Among Teens

An herb-based product known as K2, Spice, Genie, and Zohai can give users a marijuana-like high when smoked, according to drug authorities. Produced in China and Korea, the blend of herbs and spices is sprayed with a synthetic compound chemically similar to THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. Users roll it up in joints or inhale it from pipes, the same methods used to smoke marijuana. Although it is currently legal (sold in head shops labeled as incense), the military has banned possession of K2. The FDA has classified it a “drug or chemical of concern” and bills are proposed in Missouri and Kansas to punish those found in possession of K2 the same as those who are caught with real marijuana.

For more information visit cnn.com and keyword search “synthetic marijuana”

ShotPaks

Some call it “party in a pouch” but critics say it’s more like an alcoholic candy bar. These small alcoholic beverages come in laminated-foil plastic pouches. At first glance, these ShotPaks resemble the popular children’s Capri-Sun juices. The pouches are 50 ML and 34 proof alcohol level.

Flavored Cigarettes Banned in Hopes of Deterring Young Smokers

Federal health officials banned the sale of flavored cigarettes September 2009. The ban is intended to end the sale of tobacco products with chocolate, vanilla, clove and other flavorings that lure children and teenagers into smoking. Reportedly in 2004, 17-year-old smokers were more than three times as likely as those over the age of 25 to smoke flavored cigarettes—a statistic that supports the idea of flavored cigarettes being a gateway for many youth to become regular smokers.

New High From Old Weed

In order to get high, kids are eating the seeds of a common weed found in the Treasure Valley known as “Moon Flower.” The pretty flower grows in ditch/irrigation areas and often kills off other flowers and weeds. After the flower blooms and the petals fall off, there is a prickly pod left with hundreds of seeds in it. Kids eat the seeds and get delirium-like effects. Following the hallucinations are headaches, blurred vision, nausea, dizziness, fever, short term memory loss, violent behavior and liver damage.

Smokeless Camel Products

Camel Orbs—Dissolvable nicotine-enriched “mints” packaged in colorful candy boxes. Legally Orbs cannot be sold to anyone under the age of 18, but critics argue the product is clearly marketed to youth. The small size and minty flavor may encourage young users to take several at once—dangerously increasing their heart rate. Use of Orbs may also lead to smoking through nicotine addiction.

Camel Snus—A form of smokeless tobacco which is being marketed as a good alternative to “being forced outside for a smoke”. The cute tin boxes with names like “frost” and “spice” seem harmless but have been outlawed in the European Union Nation since 2004. More info: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27888789/>

Camel Sticks and Strips—Another first for smokeless tobacco: dissolvable tobacco strips. Similar to recently popular dissolvable breath-strips, consumers simply pop the small stick or tongue strip in their mouths and let it dissolve. Extremely addictive and dangerous, they are also potentially easy for kids to use in secret because there is no smoking or spitting involved.

(<http://tobaccoproducts.org>)

Teen Drinking May Cause Irreversible Brain Damage

Key areas of the brain still under construction during the adolescent years are more sensitive to the toxic effects of drugs and alcohol. A recent study led by neuroscientist Susan Tapert of the University of California, San Diego, compared the brain scans of teens who drink heavily with the scans of teens who don't. The researchers found damaged nerve tissue in the brains of the teens who drank. They believe the damage is especially harmful to attention span in boys and the ability to comprehend and interpret visual information in girls. Girls who engage in heavy drinking (4 or 5 drinks per occasion) performed poorly on tests of spatial functioning which links to mathematics and engineering kinds of functions. Boys who engaged in binge drinking during adolescence had a deficit in attention span of 10 percent—what may be the difference between an A and a B.

Source: npr.org

Energy Drinks & Alcohol

Energy drinks are beverages like Red Bull, Rockstar, Monster, Full Throttle, Amp, and NOS. Most are carbonated and contain large amounts of caffeine and sugar with additional ingredients such as B vitamins, amino acids, and herbal stimulants such as guarana and ginseng. Energy drinks are often used as mixers with alcohol. This combination carries a number of dangers:

- Since energy drinks are stimulants and alcohol is a depressant, the combination of effects can be dangerous. The stimulant effects can mask how intoxicated you are and prevent you from realizing how much alcohol you have consumed. Fatigue is one of the ways the body normally tells someone that they have had enough to drink.
- The stimulant effect can give the person the impression they are not impaired. No matter how alert you feel, your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the same as it would be without the energy drink. Once the stimulant effect wears off, the depressant effects of the alcohol will remain and could cause vomiting in your sleep or respiratory depression.
- Both energy drinks and alcohol are very dehydrating (the caffeine in energy drinks is a diuretic). Dehydration can hinder your body's ability to metabolize alcohol and will increase toxicity and therefore the hangover experienced the next day.

Source: Brown University;
More info at: <http://www.marininstitute.org/>

Ecstasy...It's Back!

MDMA (3, 4 methylenedioxy-N-methylamphetamine), or ecstasy, is a synthetic drug with both stimulant and hallucinogenic qualities. The drug, once popular within the rave culture and in dance clubs, had been on the decline, but recent studies show that as of 2006 use of this drug is on the rise. Because of MDMA's popularity, not only is the production increasing around the world, but tablets and capsules being sold as "Ecstasy" are often not pure MDMA. The growing number of pills and capsules being marketed as MDMA but containing drugs like methamphetamine, PCP, amphetamine, ketamine, and PMA—with or without MDMA—has increased the dangers associated with MDMA use.

Source: <http://www.streetdrugs.org/mdma.htm>

PURPLE DRANK??

- Purple Drank is an illegal recreational drink whose main ingredients originally consisted of prescription strength cough syrup and either a carbonated soft drink (generally Sprite) or fruit juice. The purple-ish hue of Purple Drank comes from the dyes in the cough syrup. Recently, the term has expanded to cover mixtures including over-the-counter cough syrup and vodka in place of prescription cough syrup. Other terms for Purple Drank include Barre, Oil, Purple Tonic, Lean (or Southern Lean), Drank, and Syrup (which is sometimes slangy pronounced as Sizzurp.) www.urbandictionary.com
- The active ingredient of Purple Drank is codeine, an opiate medication contained in prescription strength cough syrups due to its antitussive properties. Some prescription cough syrups also contain antihistamine medications, such as promethazine, which have a mild sedative effect. When taken in large quantities, both medications can lead to sedation and altered levels of consciousness.
- The cough-suppressing ingredient found in over-the-counter (OTC) cough syrup is dextromethorphan (DXM). It is also found in more than 125 OTC products and comes in various forms, most commonly in cough suppressants in caplet or liquid form. Depending on the dose, DXM's effects vary. Misuse of the drug creates both depressant and mild hallucinogenic effects. Users report a set of distinct dose-dependent "plateaus" ranging from a mild stimulant effect with distorted visual perceptions at low doses to a sense of complete dissociation from one's body at higher doses. If a child consumes large doses of a product containing dextromethorphan, it may cause a number of adverse effects, including impaired judgment and mental performance, loss of coordination, dizziness, nausea, hot flashes, dissociation, and hallucinations.

You're wearing what???

- Available now on eBay for approximately \$45, flip flop sandals can be purchased that have a built-in flask in each heel to hold alcohol. The sandals can hold three ounces in each container. They come with a little funnel to make filling the flask easy and a church key that is used to open the flask.
- A new company, Seedless Clothing, is marketing clothing and stickers with pro-marijuana messages. Using bright colors, catchy designs, and such wordplay as "ONLY USERS LOSE DRUGS" and "LONG LIVE THE GREEN," Seedless appeals to young marijuana users. Products are available online or at their San Diego outlet store.