



the parents jury

Your voice on food and activity

www.parentsjury.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

Under embargo until Monday 22 March 2010

Fruit juices 'worst offenders' in children's drinks investigation

A new breed of sparkling fruit juices that contain more sugar than Coca-Cola have been labelled 'Worst Offenders' in a review of 40 popular drinks by Dr Rosemary Stanton and children's health lobby group The Parents Jury.

Dr Stanton and The Parents Jury have once again teamed up as the Food Detectives to investigate the truth behind the marketing spin on children's food and drinks.

The results of their investigation reveal that carbonated fruit juices are the new Worst Offenders for being heavy on marketing spin, but light on good nutrition, after comparing the on-pack claims with nutrition content.

This emerging range of sparkling fruit juices, such as Golden Circle's LOL and P&N Beverage's Fuze are made from around 99 per cent fruit juice, and are made to appear as a healthier alternative to soft drinks.

However a quick look at the fine print will reveal that these drinks contain more kilojoules and sugar per glass than regular soft drinks, yet they retain little, if any, of the fruit's original vitamins and nutrients.

Manager of The Parents Jury and mother of two, Karen Sims urges parents to be sceptical when it comes to food and drink packaging and to learn how to read the nutrition information to avoid being duped by misleading claims.

"It's sad but true that you can't necessarily trust what food and drink manufacturers claim about their products, and you have to take the time to read the fine print if you want to make healthy purchases," she said.

Fuze claims that it's the "soft drink alternative that the whole family can enjoy", however just one glass of Fuze contains the equivalent of over six teaspoons of sugar, which is more than what's found in a glass of Coca-Cola.

Similarly, a can of LOL describes it as the equivalent of "1 serve of fruit" and that it contains "no bad stuff". But like Fuze, LOL lacks any of the fibre or many of the nutrients found in the original piece of fruit.

"This is a perfect example of how food manufacturers want to appear like they're producing healthier products, but instead they just dress up a soft drink as a nutritious fruit juice," said Karen.

Dr Stanton suggests that parents must also be wary about excess energy sneaking into their children's diets through fruit juices and soft drinks.

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For further information or to arrange an interview please contact:

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“Studies show that the body does not compensate for 'liquid calories' by reducing the consumption of other foods, so children and teens need to be particularly careful to avoid sweet drinks if they want to maintain good health,” she said.

Carbonated fruit juices also pose a dental risk, as the sugar and food acids can damage children’s teeth enamel.

“With dental cavities starting to increase in Australia, we need fewer products on the market that are so potentially damaging,” said Dr Stanton.

The Parents Jury will continue to lobby the federal government to implement a front-of-pack traffic light food labelling system that colour codes levels of fat, saturated fat, sugar and sodium on packaged foods, enabling consumers to make informed choices at a glance.

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To arrange an interview please contact:

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For more information on the Food Detectives campaign, visit:

http://www.parentsjury.org.au/tpj_browse.asp?ContainerID=fddrinks

The Food Detectives campaign:

Members of The Parents Jury were asked to ‘dob in’ drinks that are popular with children and teens that are heavy on spin and light on nutrition.

The Parents Jury staff and Dr Rosemary Stanton compared the on-pack claims and marketing slogans of the nominated products with their actual ingredients and Nutrition Information Panels.

The Worst Offenders were chosen for having the greatest discord between their nutritional value and their promotional claims.

The Parents Jury:

The Parents Jury is a free online forum of over 4,300 parents who collectively advocate for the improvement of children's food and physical activity environments in Australia. The Parents Jury is supported by Cancer Council Australia, Diabetes Australia Vic, QLD and WA, the Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society, VicHealth and YMCA Victoria.

For more information visit www.parentsjury.org.au

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