

Energy Drinks A Threat To Kids

Proposed legislation restricting the sale of energy drinks in Maryland is necessary because the energy drink industry targets their marketing at teenagers and does not warn consumers of the dangers of energy drinks ("No one cards at Starbucks," Feb. 27). There is growing consensus in the medical community that energy drinks can be deadly to anyone with an underlying heart condition and that children should not consume energy drinks. Many energy drink companies such as Monster and Rockstar target their marketing at teenagers under age 18. Many of these children have underlying heart conditions that have not yet been diagnosed because of their youth. There are also a growing number of teenagers who are on stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall for conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and asthma. For these individuals to then consume energy drinks is a recipe for disaster.

The problem with energy drinks is not just the caffeine. It is the synergistic effect of the caffeine combined with other ingredients including taurine, guarana and panax ginseng.

A 14-year-old Hagerstown resident named Anais Fournier died after consuming Monster Energy Drink, and her autopsy indicated that her death was due to "cardiac arrhythmia due to caffeine toxicity." The ban on the sale of energy drinks to Maryland children is necessary to protect our children.

Kevin I. Goldberg, Silver Spring