THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK



Overview:

In this experiment, kids may be surprised to learn how much sugar is in popular drinks and how this hidden sugar can damage teeth!

Parents, make sure to help kids with this activity!

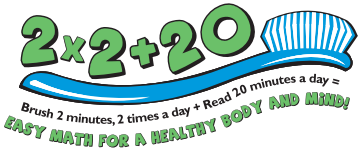
Supplies:

- Six clear disposable plastic cups
- One 12-ounce can of dark soda pop
- One 16-ounce can of a popular energy drink
- One 15-ounce bottle of apple juice
- A teaspoon measuring spoon
- White sugar in a bowl—about 5 cups

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Key takeaway from this activity:

We often don't realize how much sugar is in our drinks, but it harms our teeth just as if we were eating candy! It's important to prevent tooth decay from sugar in drinks. We can choose drinks such as milk or water, brush teeth twice a day for two minutes each time (and read for 20 minutes), see the dentist, and eat fruit instead of drinking fruit juice.

Steps:

1. Use a marker to label three cups with the three different drink names. Use the teaspoon to measure the sugar in the soda pop, energy drink, and apple juice into the three labeled plastic cups. To determine the number of teaspoons of sugar in each drink, divide the total grams of sugar in the container by 4.2 (most dark soda pop will have 42 grams of sugar or 10 teaspoons of sugar, most energy drinks are about 62 grams of sugar or nearly 15 teaspoons of sugar, and the apple juice at 49 grams of sugar will have nearly 12 teaspoons of sugar).
2. Place the cups with the sugar aside.
3. Label the remaining three cups with the drink names and put each cup in front of the corresponding drink containers. Place the large bowl of sugar and the teaspoon beside the drinks.
4. One at a time, have your child use the teaspoon to spoon the amount of sugar they think is in the drink into the corresponding cup.
5. Bring out the three cups with the correct amount of sugar and place them by the cups your child filled with sugar.
6. Discuss together if your child guessed the correct amount of sugar, or more or less sugar than was actually in the drink. Was he/she surprised at the amount of sugar in any of the drinks? Point out the number of servings in each of the containers and ask if they would stop drinking after one serving or if they would drink the whole container.
7. Brainstorm together how he/she can make healthier drink choices and encourage others in the family to make healthier drink choices.

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