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Learning Activity: Drink Advertisements

Age Group: Middle school & high school students

Learning Outcomes

- Students will recognize the impact that advertisements can have on the foods and drinks they choose to buy.
- Students will explore ways to improve their drink choices (such as tap water, bottled water, sparkling water or milk).

Supplies Needed

The “Drink Advertisements” handout (next page) that allows students to record their findings

Directions

1. Give students one week to track how many ads they see or hear (on TV, in magazines, on radio or online) that promote a specific drink—sugary or not. (Note: Ask students to keep track during their usual day-to-day activities. In other words, we are not asking them to watch more TV than they normally do.)
2. Distribute copies of the “Drink Advertisements” handout to all students and ask them to record their findings on this handout.
3. Have students report their findings in class and create a summary of the number of ads your students saw or heard. Divide these ads into two lists (sugary drinks versus non-sugary drinks).
4. Compare the two lists as you lead a brief classroom discussion. Here are some questions to consider asking students:
 - Why do you think sugary drinks were advertised more often than other types of drinks?
 - What patterns did you see in the advertisements?
Probe with these or other questions:
 - How many ads used celebrities or athletes to promote a drink?
 - Do any of these ads mention the health effects of drinking their products?
 - How do you think these advertising tactics affect people’s drink choices?
 - Did you see advertisements for healthy drinks? If so, how were they different from ads for sugary drinks?
5. As an additional activity, consider asking each student to write the text of an ad encouraging teens to choose healthier drinks. Some students may wish to draw cartoons or images for use in their ad. Other students might find good photos or graphics online to use in their ad.

(Students might want to use the ad to promote the RethinkYourDrinkWV.com website—where teens can use the Better Drink Finder on the home page.)

Drink Advertisements

Where did you see the ad? Be specific: what TV channel, magazine, or website?	What drink was advertised? Brand name (Coke) & type of drink (soda, sports drink, juice, water, etc.)	Briefly sum up the ad (What was happening? Who appeared in the ad and what did they say?)