Fuse Podcast: Public Health Research and Me

#### [Should we be concerned about energy drinks and young people’s health?](http://fuse.ac.uk/publicinvolvement/fusepodcast/shouldwebeconcernedaboutenergydrinksandyoungpeopleshealth.html)

# Speaker information

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[Start of recording]

[upbeat electronic music]

00:00:03 Cheryl Hello and welcome to our podcast, *Public Health Research and Me*. This podcast is led by public partners from Fuse, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, and brings together the five Northeast universities of Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland, and Teesside, in a unique collaboration to deliver world-class research to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities. Fuse is also a founding member of the NIHR School for Public Health Research. My name is Cheryl Blake and I’m a public partner collaborating with Fuse. My interests and specialist subjects are around mental and sexual health, domestic abuse, coercive and violent behaviour, and family court and social work as within that system. I support the survivors of sexual abuse to help find female empowerment through art, poetry and meditation. In this episode, I will be talking with Amelia Lake, professor of Public Health Nutrition at Teesside University, and Shelina Visram, senior lecturer in public health at Newcastle University. We will be chatting about energy drinks and their impact on health. So, I would like to welcome you both to our podcast today. Hello Shelina and hello Amelia.

00:01:13 Shelina Hello Cheryl.

00:01:14 Amelia Hi Cheryl.

00:01:16 Cheryl Hi there. It’s lovely to have you here and our questions for today are—if you would like to explain just before we start, just so everyone has a good understanding of what the difference is between an energy, a sports drink and a soft drink, and do you think that this can cause confusion often?

00:01:33 Amelia Thank you, Cheryl. That’s a really good question to start off with, because I think this does cause a lot of confusion. What is an energy drink, what is a sports drink and what’s a regular soft drink? And the main difference is caffeine. So, if we think about a sports drink, they can contain things like carbohydrates, minerals, electrolytes, nutrients, vitamins. Things that are supposed to help with the recovery from physical exertion. So energy drinks could have lots of those things, but what they will have unique to them is caffeine. And if we look at a soft drink—so we’re all familiar with very many brands of soft drinks. And they can either be sugar free versions or sugared versions, and they tend to contain very small amounts of caffeine. So—if they contain any at all. 00:02:30 So for example, a regular can of cola—so a five hundred ml can of cola might contain about thirty-four milligrams of caffeine, whereas energy drinks can contain anything from fifty milligrams right up to five hundred or so. And just in comparison, the cup of tea that I’ve got in front of me here might only have fifty milligrams, and a coffee might also have only around ninety milligrams. So—Shelina’s also sipping on a hot drink. But just to put that in context, generally, if we think about energy drinks it’s a good way of thinking about how much caffeine’s in them. If you think about a can, they can sometimes contain two espressos in a can. So thinking about it that way helps to think about how much caffeine is in them.

00:03:22 Cheryl There’s also a lot of unregulated ingredients that aren’t necessarily contained on the label as well. So that caffeine amount could actually be higher as well, which a lot of people don’t realise.

00:03:32 Amelia There’s a lot of ingredients which are classed as stimulants, and—yeah, we don’t know an awful lot about these stimulants and their effects, particularly on smaller bodies in terms of children and young people.

00:03:46 Cheryl So how did you get into the research and why was that started?

00:03:51 Shelina Really, it all comes down to a conversation that I had with a fantastic practitioner working in Durham called Jo Boyd, who’s a drug and alcohol outreach worker who is doing a lot of work in schools. And I came across her in the context of a completely unrelated project and she just pulled me aside for a chat and said, “You know, you are a researcher. I keep coming across this issue.” I mean, this was probably close to ten years ago now, if not more. She said that, “I keep going into schools and teachers are asking about, ‘What’s the evidence on energy drinks?’ I’m hearing—you know, I’m talking about drugs and alcohol in classrooms and young people are talking about getting hyper on energy drinks. Parents are raising it as a concern.” So, really, it came from the community via this practitioner, Jo, and it just so happened that I then went back to the office and had a chat with Amelia. We were working together at Durham University at the time. We were thinking that, “You know, this is an area ripe for research. What is the evidence base?” We just didn’t know. 00:04:49 You know, are these things safe for children and young people to drink? Has anybody actually gone and spoken to children, young people, parents, teachers about, you know, what effects these drinks could be having on young people? Why they drink them? Where they’re getting them from? And it just so happened that through Fuse, a funding opportunity was circulated. So a local charity, The Children’s Foundation, was offering relatively small pots of money. We put a bid together and we were successful and we decided we would do a scoping review of the evidence just to see what’s already been published. So what have other researchers all around the world found about children’s use of energy drinks? And we found there was very little there, particularly in terms of what we call qualitative research. You know, actually going and talking to people about their views. So there was a real gap there. And there was some of the quantitative evidence where you go and measure the effects things have on people and look for patterns. 00:05:40 So we published that work in terms of there being evidence showing that consuming energy drinks is associated with a lot of harmful effects and harmful behaviours in children and young people. So we’re particularly interested in school age, so, like, kind of four to eighteen or nineteen years old. We found there’s evidence of negative effects and this gap in terms of what the young people themselves think. So we then went and did focus groups with children in primary and secondary schools. We did some interviews on focus groups with parents, and we talked to some teachers. And really, we’re still one of very few groups of researchers who’ve done that work. People don’t tend to go and ask children why they drink these drinks and it’s really interesting. Amelia’s right that there is a lot of confusion around what’s an energy drink, what’s a sports drink, what’s a soft drink? But actually the children in our focus groups were telling us that they knew more than their teachers did. That, you know, energy drinks were banned across all of the schools, but sometimes they could sneak them in because teachers weren’t quite sure, “Are they really drinking an energy drink or is it something else?” So they were making the most of that confusion in some ways.

00:06:44 Cheryl Well, that’s a children for you, isn’t it? [chuckles]

00:06:47 Shelina Yeah. [laughs]

00:06:47 Cheryl Yeah. So I remember that when I was working at my school, they would try all sorts of ways for sneaking in soft drinks instead of water. [laughs] So that actually goes quite well into our next question, actually. So, can you tell me how you’ve worked with the public throughout your research? For example, with the young people and the parents?

00:07:05 Shelina Yeah. So it started off really that the young people and parents were just involved as participants, which I know isn’t the same as actual, you know, involvement. But, as I said, this is quite a rare thing to have actually gone and, you know, listened to the voices of those really important stakeholders in this work. So—and particularly the fact that we went to primary school children. That’s not done very often, in terms of going to ask them about health issues that affect them. And they had plenty to say, which was fantastic. The next steps after that small piece of charity-funded research was that we got a little pot of money from Durham County Council to take what we’d found and to work with Jo from the Drug and Alcohol Service and get a group of local parents together to co-produce a resource that would be actually useful for them. What they decided was they wanted a leaflet that could go out in the school bag of children across Durham. They decided on the design, so it’s shaped like a can. It’s got pictures on the bubbles from the soft drink that look like emojis, so it’s really eye catching. [00:08:04] It’s got ‘HYPER’ written on the front, which was the acronym we use for the study. So all of it was led by them, but using the evidence-based information and kind of myth-busting from our research. So things like saying, “Do energy drinks really give you energy?” “Well, yes, in the short term, but you might have a slump afterwards.” “You know, what are the effects on teeth?” Getting across—you know, so we’ve already talked about how many milligrams of caffeine are in some of these drinks. That doesn’t mean anything to a lot of people out there. So converting it into the equivalent cups of coffee, like Amelia did. Talking about the amount of sugar. So again, if we say grams of sugar, what does that exactly mean? But so—the bigger cans of energy drinks are the equivalent of six doughnuts. I think on the leaflet we use sugar cubes because that’s what the parents’ group requested. But yeah, just getting the information out there in a really accessible format that then, like I say, went out and—we’d printed copies. Had enough funding to do—I can’t remember if it was like ten thousand copies. So they went out in children’s school bags. But also the PDF version is available to anybody who wants it. 00:09:05 So I’ve had requests from people all across the world working with school children, dieticians working in the Middle East. You know, people who have somehow found it on social media and thought, “This is a fantastic resource that doesn’t really exist anywhere else in terms of that kind of myth busting and giving parents the facts that they need.” And then another strand of that work funded by Durham County Council, was that we worked with students from Bishop Auckland College who were doing kind of an art and design course. And they came up with a nice little animation based on the tortoise and the hare fable, where it kind of shows that the hare is drinking lots of energy drink and winning the race until he has a big crash towards the end and the tortoise actually wins the race. Trying to get across the point that, “Yes, you might get a short-term energy boost from energy drinks but they’re not great for you in the long term.”

00:09:52 Amelia There’s the other way we involved the children, was as researchers, where as part of the project, they went out and looked at the availability of energy drinks in their local area. Which was eye-opening, especially when a shopkeeper tried to give them free samples [laughs] while we were data collecting. But it just showed how accessible these drinks were to, for example, primary school children in corner shops. So this wasn’t looking at big supermarkets, this was looking at the corner shops in and around their local area and around their school.

00:10:37 Cheryl So it’s actually accessible to them with the pocket money and things?

00:10:42 Amelia Yes. So this data was all collected pre the 2018 Jamie Oliver campaign, which started after we had published both our review of the evidence and after we’d published our qualitative work, which was our talking with the children and young people. And then Jamie started their campaign 2018, which was called Not For Kids. And I think that raised a lot of awareness around these drinks and what they are, but as time has gone on, there has been a lot more drinks come into the market. And I think that confusion is back again as opposed to it being clear cut. And in a lot of larger shops, there’ll be labels saying, you know, “Not for under twenty-fives” on perhaps displays, but mostly displays don’t have any restrictions on them. And there are—you know, there are no actual restrictions on these drinks. Apart from the cans themselves will say, in very small writing, that they are not suitable for children or for pregnant or breastfeeding women. So that is on the actual cans.

00:12:05 Cheryl But it’s not particularly wildly well-known definitely to—for the children. Did you find the children were more receptive to the information you were giving them, rather than you just talking to them? Because you were actually involving them within the research, did you find the children were more receptive to what you were telling them?

00:12:20 Shelina I think, yeah. That point that Amelia makes about the text on the back of the can being in small print. The children themselves hadn’t actually, you know, spent time looking at the packaging until we’d done those focus groups and we’d taken examples of packaging in energy drinks, soft drinks, and sports drinks, just so we could do a bit of an exercise at the start to see, you know, if they could tell us the difference between them. And so throughout the focus groups, it was a really good tool that, you know, they kept picking up the cans, kept looking and they themselves were saying, “Hey, this does say ‘not for kids’ and yet I can buy this at the local shop, but I have it all the time and no one’s ever told me this isn’t for kids. And how can that be allowed?” And they were actually quite switched on to thinking about, you know, why isn’t the government—why isn’t someone doing something to stop us having a product that isn’t for kids? You know, if it’s there and it’s easily accessible and all their friends are drinking it, then the temptation is there to have it. And like Amelia says, we did this exercise where we went out to the shops, and I think there’s still a bit of a general perception that the drinks are expensive. 00:13:19 And obviously some of the bigger brands can be. They can be more than a pound per can. But some of the smaller kind of own-brand products, you could get them for four for a pound, or I think there were some that were two for sixty pence. So children were coming together and, you know, putting twenty five pence in each and getting four amongst a little group of friends. So they did mention in the focus groups that if they want to get a bottle of water, that can often be a lot more expensive than some of these cheaper brands of energy drink. So they’re going to go for the cheapest option that to them is quite tasty. It appeals, you know, to children, who often have a sweet tooth. And yet they were asking us in the focus groups, “But why does it say on this ‘not for children’ and yet if I’ve only got fifty pence in my pocket and the shop will sell it to me, that’s what I’m going to go and get?”

00:14:09 Cheryl You can see why that’s—you know, that’s something that they’re going to look towards, aren’t you? It always means they’ve also got a bit of money for a mix-up. [laughs]

00:14:16 Shelina Yeah. [chuckles]

00:14:18 Cheryl Right. So, would you say that you’re researchers or advocates or both, and does this come across in your work? And by advocate we mean ‘a person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy?

00:14:30 Amelia So we started this research very much as researchers, with our ‘researcher’ hat on, and we will always be researchers. We look at the data, we analyse the data analytically. We are looking at it from a clear perspective. But I guess when the lines cross over, when you are looking at something where the evidence is clear that there is a lot of health and mental health outcomes that are negatively associated with children and young people consuming these drinks, and as a researcher it is your role to communicate that and to make that clear that, “Here is the evidence. 00:15:22 There is an association which is harming our children and our young people. And yet there is nothing happening to try and restrict the sale of these or restrict the marketing of these drinks. And it’s a very wide spectrum of drinks to our children and young people, and they’re being marketed to them at very many levels. So from merchandise through to computer games, through to online via social media, as well as the actual physical advertising that you see out and about.” So we are analytical, we are clear headed, we can see the evidence and our role as an advocate is around this translational element of, “Here’s the evidence and let’s see some policy action that can actually impact how these drinks are both sold and advertised to our children and young people.”

00:16:28 Cheryl So does evidence suggest that children or young people under sixteen to eighteen shouldn’t have access to these energy drinks?

00:16:36 Amelia The evidence is quite clear that when children and young people consume these drinks, there are associations of harm. So Shelina and I keep using the word ‘association’ because we can’t use the word causation. Because in the evidence that we’ve reviewed—so Shelina mentioned we did a scoping review a number of years ago and then have recently repeated that review, which might have come out at the point of this podcast being released. And the association is because you can’t put children in a locked room, feed them caffeine and observe what happens over time, because that would be quite unethical. Because for a start, the products themselves say they’re not suitable for children. Some of the health outcomes that are rather negative and are associated with drinking these include mental health issues. 00:17:31 And that ranges from suicide, psychological distress, attention deficit, hyperactivity disorders, depressive and panic behaviours. But then there’s also some quite physical reactions. So allergic reactions, insulin resistance, dental health and dental erosion, as well as cardiovascular effects. There are also effects around sleep, headaches, stomach pains, and then there’s also this association with risk-taking behaviours. So children and young people who consume energy drinks are also more likely to engage with smoking, drink alcohol, binge drink, as well as engage with dangerous driving. So there are a massive list of rather undesirable effects that are associated with the consumption of these drinks. So your question was—I’ve gone a long way round, Cheryl. 00:18:33 Is there enough evidence to say that they shouldn’t have access? It says on the can that it’s not suitable for children and young people. We got, so far, in terms of it appearing on a government paper on an obesity strategy, that they would like to see the restriction of sale. It—the Department of Health put out a public consultation where more than ninety percent of respondents to that consultation said that there should be a restriction on sales. And then it has gone into a government void. So we are seeing very little action from the Westminster government. Wales are currently working on it. A little action with Scotland and no action with Northern Ireland. Around the world, other countries have looked at restricting the sales of these drinks, and I think that there could be a lot more being done to curb the growth. 00:19:35 This is the fastest growing sector of the soft drink market. So there are a lot of commercial interests at risk here. And those commercial interests are being put above the health of our children and young people.

00:19:50 Cheryl That’s quite a statement.

00:19:52 Amelia I suppose that is how it would appear.

00:19:56 Cheryl Yeah. Well, it definitely seems like that. And so, I mean, I’ve got three kids myself and it’s something I’ve noticed and had many conversations with. [chuckles] About, you know, the dangers and my thoughts and then their thoughts, and quite often there’s a bit of a debate between them. You know, and it is that thing, and I think a lot of parents and guardians are going to have that issue. You know, like, you might say something but the children are going to think something else. And is it down to you as a parent or is it down to the producers of the energy drinks?

00:20:28 Amelia Well, they are everywhere, aren’t they? You know, they’re literally everywhere. And that’s something that the children and young people told us in the focus groups. Anything that is cool: extreme sports, music, motor racing—Shelina, what else is there?

00:20:45 Shelina Computer games.

00:20:44 Amelia Computer games. You know, computer gaming culture. It’s not just the energy drinks. There’s energy powders, there’s energy shots. There’s a whole different kind of set of…

00:20:58 Cheryl There’s a lot of merch as well, I’ve noticed. You know, it’s fun and they can see it’s cool and it’s part of a club to be in, you know? And it does look fun. Like you can understand why the kids are looking into it. And if you are there saying something different and they’re just like, “Oh, but it looks cool,” you know, it’s very hard for you to say to your children, “Yes, but I would rather you didn’t do it because, because, because,” [laughs] when it looks so fun and cool and accessible. And I think that is one of the biggest problems that a lot of—certainly within my friend circle, that they’ve had with their children, you know? So it is hard. And it goes back to that thing of whatever the latest fad may be to, “Well, this is what everyone’s doing right now and this is what we do when we’re hanging out at the shops. And it looks cool and I want to be part of the gang.” And I think that’s where—certainly from my experience, where a lot of the pressure comes into it as a parent, you know? Like how do you tell your kids, “Well, I’d rather you didn’t consume energy drinks,” you know? So it’s a very hard question, really.

00:22:02 Amelia I think that’s a good question. Is, you know, well, is it down to the individual families? Or actually, should we be seeing some way where, similar to cigarettes or alcohol, that a product that says it’s not suitable for children should not be being sold to children? And you know, it would be good to see more action. Actually doing that on the ground in terms of, you know, what sixteen—what ID does a sixteen-year-old have, for example? Is, you know—the implementing it might be tricky, but actually getting that message out, that it is not suitable, I think is part of that wider awareness-raising.

00:22:51 Cheryl Definitely. So it’s like a layered plan really, isn’t it? Going forward. It’s not just a case of having one thing. There’s this other—there’s, like, lots of different layers to it. Like sort of being able to have ID. Like, to be able to advertise what’s actually in it rather than not knowing. It’s not just as simple as saying, “Don’t.” [laughs]

00:23:08 Amelia Yes.

00:23:08 Cheryl To these children. [laughs] So, what are your recommendations then when it comes to energy drinks? For example, how they are advertised and marketed. And most of all, do you think they should be banned?

00:23:20 Shelina Yeah, I’ll go first. [chuckles] So, you know, Amelia’s mentioned—well, we’ve mentioned it a number of times that it says on the cans ‘not for children’. That the soft drinks industry itself actually has a code of practice that says, “These drinks are not for children. We won’t market them towards children. We won’t target them at children.” And we know that it—the industry breaks that code of practice all of the time. So I think it would just be good for that to not be voluntary. For that to be enforced in some way, for there to be just a general agreement. Following on from what Amelia said about the—there was a government consultation and more than ninety percent of people who responded agreed with the idea that these products are not for children and therefore should not be sold to, you know, under sixteens. Then that should be enforced. What we saw around the time of the Jaime Oliver campaign is that lots of supermarkets put a voluntary ban in place within their stores, but time’s moved on. I don’t know whether that’s—you know, we would hear stories at the time about people being frustrated that they were being stopped and ID’d and all of that. 00:24:20 You don’t hear those stories so much anymore so I don’t think it’s enforced. Or at least not as much. And it didn’t reach the local convenience stores, so children could get around it. They could still go and buy those products elsewhere. So I think it just needs to be a really clear message. I think once something is—you know, there’s that clear legislation around, “This is an age restricted product,” then everyone knows where they stand. Where at the minute when it’s voluntary, parents think, “Well, I can make a decision for my child and ignore that voluntary, you know, rule.” Children can just ignore it and buy products that they think are cool, because like you say, why wouldn’t they? But I think you just need that clear message, “These drinks should not be sold to children. They shouldn’t be advertised to children.” And it is tricky. You know, it’s—it’s maybe a bit more clear-cut for Amelia who’s got a nutrition background, that it’s really clear nutritionally, “These are not good for you, so we shouldn’t be giving them our children.” 00:25:17 Most of my research is around health inequalities and working with people in more deprived areas where, you know, there’s not a lot of pleasure sometimes and we don’t want to be the fun police. And if you’ve only got fifty pence in your pocket and this is a drink that tastes good, makes you feel good, who are we to stop you having that? But I think the issue is that for children, when they’re at a critical stage, their brains and their bodies are developing. And in this new updated review we’ve got—coming out shows that there’s a lot of potential harm in terms of physical and mental health. For me it’s just a no brainer. You know, it’s up there with—we don’t allow children to go and buy fireworks or knives or glue. You know, there’s a whole range of products. And people just don’t question it because we don’t need to go and do a big study where we give one group of children some knives and the other group not and see what happens to them. You know, we don’t need that evidence that shows that a knife could cause harm. I think with energy drinks, we’ve got enough evidence there to employ what we call the precautionary principle. 00:26:17 That we think there’s enough evidence to suggest, “These are not good for children. They could actually be harmful so let’s just make them an age restricted product.”

00:26:26 Amelia That’s it. But what we don’t have, for example, with fireworks or knives, are the vast amount of commercial interests that are at risk, and that is the difference. And going back to Shelina’s point about inequalities: we also know there is enough evidence to tell us that the intake of these drinks are higher in children and young people from more deprived backgrounds who are already at significant inequalities around their health. And then layer on, you know, harming their educational attainment. Affecting their sleep. And just to repeat that: sleep at this crucial stage. We all know how important sleep is. And to that growing brain, and those growing children, sleep is so important. And there are already so many things, you know, affecting their sleep and caffeine does not need to be another one. So that clear message that, “These are not for children,” you know, and make it fair and across the board. It’s not just supermarkets not selling them, convenience stores, right across even online sales. And just make the messaging super clear. And protect the health of our children and young people.

00:27:50 Cheryl Well, that’s it, isn’t it? I mean that’s the biggest thing that, you know, you want to take away from this, really. Is we’re not—like you say, we’re not trying to be fun spoilers. It’s just about protecting their future until they’re maybe wise enough to realise that mother knows best. [laughs] So if you had one message for us now to take away, what would it be?

00:28:12 Amelia Well, my message is they’re not for children. They’re not for kids. It says it on the can. It’s under the manufacturer’s code of conduct, they’re not for children. Let’s see some responsibility from our policy makers and also let’s see responsibility from the industry in terms of how they’re advertised; the colours used, the marketing, the associations with all the cool things which are clearly being targeted at a younger population. And let’s get our sensible heads on and think about the precautionary principle and these are not for kids. Let’s see some action.

00:28:57 Cheryl So, as a fun little note to go out on, what would be your favourite drink then?

00:29:04 Shelina Gosh! I’m so boring. Honestly my favourite drink is water. Tap water [laughs] And we were just talking before about how I never—touch wood, I never get sick and my husband’s convinced it’s because I’m just constantly drinking—I’m so thirsty now because I haven’t had a drink of water the whole time we’ve been talking. I’m just constantly drinking water and flushing the germs out of my body. So I’m hoping to live to a hundred and twenty because I just drink water all the time. [chuckles] In a close second I do like a diet cola. We’re not allowed to name brands, but I do love water, so.

00:29:32 Amelia [chuckles] So, you know, I’m in the same fun police category as Shelina. So I am a bit of a water fiend, but also I do have a bit of a black tea thing going on. Which does contain caffeine. So I think that’s important. You know, it’s—we’re not anti-caffeine and we’re not anti-people having their teas or coffees. It’s about this concoction of ingredients within a can, which, unlike a hot tea, can—you know, it—that can can be consumed quickly. And when it’s a child’s body size, that can have quite immediate effects. So that effect of the stimulants that we talked about right at the start of this, Cheryl, as well as the caffeine, as well as all the other ingredients. And there’s sugar. So Shelina has talked about six doughnuts of sugar, plus two espressos. Just think about that. And I’m thinking now about that in my small people that I have at home and it’s not a concoction I would like. And you know, we just need to put this in perspective around the smaller size of children. And, you know, it’s not about not having your teas or coffees, but just thinking about how quickly these can be consumed, and the effect that can have.

00:30:55 Cheryl I must admit, I found this incredibly interesting. I mean I did know—obviously with having my own kids and their wants, I did at the time look into that. Because fortunately they’re a bit older now. Although that means I have slightly less control. [chuckles] You know, and I did look into it. But I didn’t know, for instance, about the policy thing. I didn’t know about that. That there was that policy out there. That’s actually really stuck out to me and I think going forward that’s something that I might make aware towards my children, but also other parents. You know, and it’s—gives you slightly that sort of—that argument to back yourself up. You’re not just saying no, it actually says it on the can, which is the most important thing really, isn’t it? That we’re saying we’re not against energy drinks per se, it’s for the children, and that’s what the point is here. Is that it should—it does say on the can ‘not for children’ but it’s not that well known.

00:31:46 Amelia It’s not. And Cheryl, you never told us your favourite drink.

00:31:50 Cheryl Well, water, actually. [laughs] I’m sorry. But, yeah, it’s water. I’m well known for drinking water. Just lots and lots of water. But I do like my tea. I adore my tea. And I remember when I was pregnant being absolutely past myself because they told me I had to limit it to just six cups a day, which I have way more than that. But, you know, I’ve—[laughs] yeah, I do. I love my water. I love my water. And, you know, so do the kids, to a point. So it is quite good. But I mean, I have seen like a lot of their mates, you know, they would come round and they’d all be standing there with a—I mean, in my day, you know, you’d be standing there with a can of lager. [laughs] But everyone seems—everyone seems to have energy drinks in their hands these days. It’s—it is. It’s the cool thing to do. And then that is the—as a parent, was where my worry was coming into it. Because I don’t want to be the one who’s saying, “Don’t do this and don’t do that,” you know? I don’t want to be spoiling the fun. But drink some water. [laughs] It’s good. I mean, it’s good for your skin. [laughs]

00:32:53 Shelina Basically we’d want the marketing budget of the energy drink companies to be put into water, telling everyone that water is great. [chuckles]

00:33:00 Cheryl [laughs] That’s it, that’s it. Alright. Well, thank you both of you. It’s been really informative and really—very interesting actually. And I do hope that our listeners have gained some information from it. And go and look for the little notice on the cans, people. [laughs]

00:33:19 Shelina Thank you, Cheryl.

00:33:20 Amelia Thanks Cheryl.

00:33:22 Cheryl So if you’re a fan of our *Public Health Research and Me* podcast, please subscribe on your preferred streaming platforms and let us know how we’re doing with a rating or a review, and please share with your friends, family, colleagues and networks. It would be much appreciated. Thank you very much for joining us today.

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