

# ALCOHOL ENERGY DRINKS

A Dangerous Mix



**Washington State  
Liquor Control Board**

# Formula for getting youth hooked

Start with  
A Sweetened, Flavored  
Malt Beverage



Add  
Caffeine and  
Other Stimulants



**Alcohol Energy Drinks**



# Common additives

Caffeine

Sugar

Guarana

(Rich source of caffeine,  
stronger than coffee  
beans)

Taurine

Ginseng

Creatine

Inositol

Carnitine

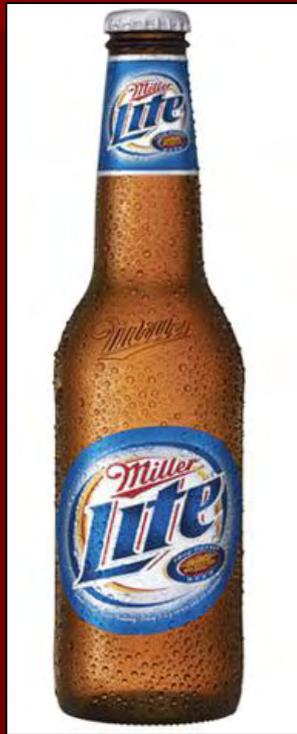
Ephedrine

# Guarana



- Climbing shrub native to So. America
- Black seeds - rich source of caffeine
- Reputed to increase mental alertness, stamina, physical endurance
- Use only under direction of MD if. . .  
*heart condition, anxiety, insomnia, kidney disease, diabetes, epilepsy, high blood pressure, etc.*

# This is not “just a beer.”



**4.2% Alcohol  
By Volume  
12 ounces**



**12% Alcohol By  
Volume  
23.5 ounces**

**Plus**

- Guarana
- Taurine
- Caffeine

# Contents

*Alcohol energy drinks are not required to list the amounts of their ingredients.*

4.2% Alcohol  
by Volume



12 ounces



12% Alcohol  
by Volume

23.5 ounces



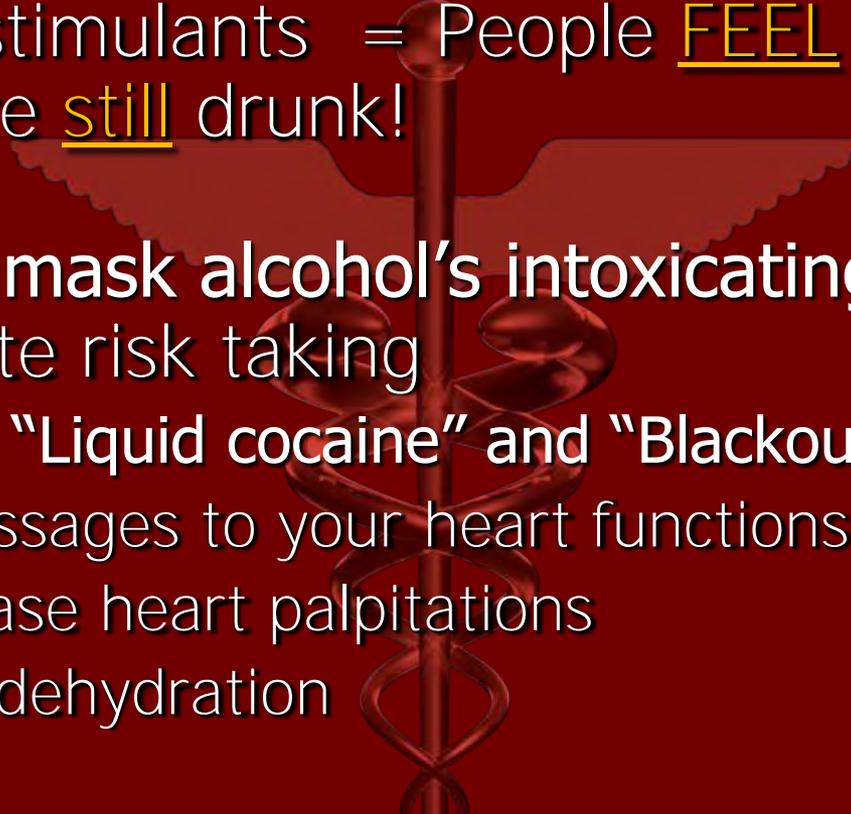
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# Public health implications

- Alcohol + stimulants = People FEEL less drunk, but they are still drunk!
  - **Stimulants mask alcohol's intoxicating effects and promote risk taking**
    - Known as "Liquid cocaine" and "Blackout in a can"
    - Mixed messages to your heart functions
    - Can increase heart palpitations
    - Quickens dehydration
  - Young people most likely to take risks
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# Research

- Wake Forest University School of Medicine
  - 10 NC universities; 4,271 students
  - Drank more per typical session
  - More likely to:
    - Take advantage of or be taken advantage of sexually
    - Ride with a drunk driver
    - Be hurt or injured
    - Require medical treatment as a result of their drinking

# More research

- University of Florida
  - 800 randomly selected bar patrons
  - Patrons who reported drinking alcohol & energy drinks. . .
    - 3 times more likely to be intoxicated
    - Left bars later at night
    - Drank for longer periods of time
    - Ingested more grams of ethanol
    - Were four times more likely to express an intention to drive within the hour

# One common factor: Four Loko

- Central Washington University, 9 students hospitalized, one near death.
- Ramapo College, NJ, 23 students hospitalized
- Cornell University, two separate incidents within one month in which students were hospitalized in serious condition.
- Philadelphia, 19-year-old man with chest pains and shortness of breath, having the kind of heart attack usually associated with a cocaine overdose.
- Lancaster, PA, in one weekend emergency crews respond to 9 calls

# How the market targets youth and promotes overconsumption

- 1) Creates brand confusion with similar, youth-friendly packaging
- 2) Provides a cheap alternative to mixing energy drinks with alcohol
- 3) Deploys youth-friendly grassroots and social marketing



# 1) Brand confusion: Which contain alcohol?



## 2) Cost comparison

### Alcohol Energy Drinks

Four Loko	24 oz can	\$2.49 – \$2.99	12% ABV
Joose	24 oz can	\$2.49 – \$2.99	9.9-12% ABV

(ABV=Alcohol By Volume)

### Non-Alcoholic Energy Drinks

Amp	16 oz can	\$2.29
Red Bull	16 oz can	\$3.69
Monster	24 oz can	\$2.99
Rockstar	24 oz can	\$2.79
Amp	24 oz can	\$3.49

### 3) Youth friendly and grass roots marketing

#### **Themes popular with youth:**

- Risk-taking and rebellion
- More energy, more partying
- Sexual success
- Extreme sports



# On-line social media marketing

- Company websites
- Fan sites
- Facebook
- MySpace
- YouTube
- Fan-developed sites

# Sites Offer:



- Contests
- Cell phone wallpapers
- Fan feedback
- Popular slang
- Modern designs
- Music players
- Youth-friendly graphics



# Joose website

**JOOSE PLAYE**  
JOOSE DANCEHALL ANTHEM  
Tommy Infamous and Da

**PRODUCTS** **EVENTS** **FANS** **STORE** **JOOSE** **DOWNLOADS** **CONTESTS**



**JOOSE FAN FEEDBACK:**

Bettina, Texas 2/17/09  
In January I drank my first Joose, and it was soooo great that now I can't live without JOOSE!

Candice, Long Beach CA 2/15/09  
JOOSE is the the best! I will drink it till I die

Alex, Austin TX 2/15/09  
In the past few months I have seen Joose grow in popularity. I have seen people using the phrase "getting Joosed up." I have consumed Joose many times and find it to be the best "bang for the buck"

Franco, State College PA 2/15/09  
Yo. JOOSE is the greatest.. whenever I drank that JOOSE it was great nights...Im like your biggest fan, love, the JOOSE!

Candice, Long Beach CA 2/15/09  
JOOSE is the the best! I will drink it till I die

THE INFAMOUS "BIG BRAIN" EL CAJON CA 2/14/09  
JOOSE is sic with it! trust and believe when you want to saucy or get your buzz on like most of us east county be this alcohol!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! See Dinosaur first home best of

**JOOSE IT UP!**

# Four Loko's photo contest

"Here at Four we like it when you guys and girls flip out, get weird and go all crazy. We like it even more if you have a camera around to capture your most ridiculous, out of control, sexy, fun, cuddly, zany, spicy, demented, screwball moments while drinking Four. If you're daring enough to submit a photo so provocative, absurd, uncivilized, titillating, uninhibited or fierce that we deem it the "Photo Contest Winner," we'll send you your pick of one of our hot new T-Shirts!"



# Actual fan postings

- “I’ve been nursing this 24oz can for almost an hour and I am buzzing like a crackhead locked in a evidence room. This stuff is definitely worth the \$2.50 a can price.”

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- “Four Loko got its name because it sends the person who consumed it into FOUR STAGES OF CRAZY:

Stage 1: Tipsy (loud, might stumble, laugh)

Stage 2: Drunk (embarrassing, stumbling, slight slur)

Stage 3: Wasted (heavy slur, falling, ... )

Stage 4: Black Out (no ability to speak, vomiting, ... memory loss)”

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- “This s\*\*t is a blackout in a can. (HS Class of '13)

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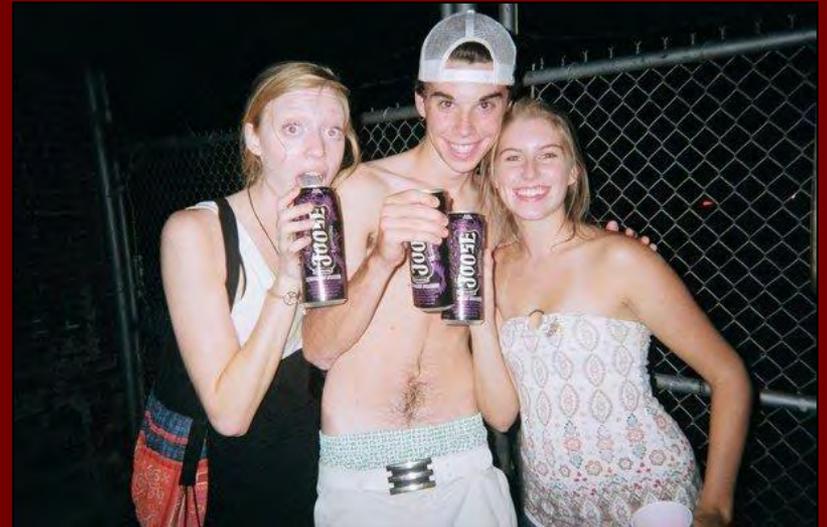
- “THIS S\*\*T WILL KILL YOU IF YOU AINT CAREFUL THE NEW VERSION OF LIQUID CRACK INA CAN AND ALL THE HOODRATSAND HOOD DRUNKS WILL DRINK IT TODAY CAUSE ITS THE 1ST OF THE MONTH GET UP GET UP



# Actual fan photos



From the "fan photos" section of the Four Loko Facebook page



From the "fan photos" section of the Joose Facebook page

The people that posted these photos are, according to their Facebook profiles, underage.

# How we can respond

- Ban pre-mixed alcohol energy drinks
- Discourage consumption of energy drinks with alcohol through education efforts
- Continue to work with our statewide partners to address the social issues of underage drinking and overconsumption



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