

YOUNG CONSUMER

SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

COMPLETE NEWS LETTER FOR CONSUMER CLUBS MEMBER

Take a Look!

Have a look at the wrapper on a Coca-Cola or Pepsi 1.5 litre bottle and in the ingredients label you will find phosphoric acid in it. Minute quantities of ethylene glycol are also used (which is acknowledged in the soft drink world for making it really chill"). This is popularly known as anti-freeze which prevents water from



freezing at 0 degree C and instead drops it by 4-5 degrees with minute quantities. This chemical is a known slow poison in the caliber of arsenic. So, if you manage to drink about 4 liters of Coke within an hour or so, you can die. Read along and maybe you'll give up these dangerous things. Be natural; have flavoured milks, tender coconuts, butter milk and plain water instead of these "soft" drinks. Guess what the pH for soft drinks.

Pesticide Risk

How safe are kids from pesticides in schools? These Blues aren't associated with going to schools on a Monday morning, or with the star of exams, or admissions. These are about how children may be exposed to dangerous pesticides while in schools without even knowing about it.

A recent study tells us how we inadvertently poison children. The study is actually based on an analysis of 2,593 reported pesticide poisonings in American schools in four years, from 1982 to 2002, but it is greatly instructive for India as well.

What the study found was that 31 per cent, or nearly a third of children, were poisoned from the drift of pesticides, mostly insecticides and disinfectants, applied beyond the boundaries of schools but carried into the school perimeter by the breeze. Children were the victims in 76 percent of the cases. One aspect of the study actually suggests that pesticide poisoning in schools could be lower than reflected in this study due to many incidents going unreported. For one, not everyone goes to a doctor. Secondly, many symptoms are confusing. Thirdly, doctors themselves aren't trained to recognize cases of pesticides poisoning.

One reason why this information is useful for children, parents and school administrators in India is the frequency with which pesticides are applied here.

Exposure before birth

Even if your child doesn't go to school or even if he isn't born yet, other chemicals still get to him. Another study, this time by the WWF-UK and Greenpeace, shows that chemicals found in perfumes, detergents, deodorants and some plastics can cross the placenta and reach the foetus. For some health experts say this shouldn't worry pregnant women and there is no evidence of actual harm of the foetus. However the chemicals a child receives from the moment it is conceived are vital in determining many aspects of metabolism, reproduction, learning skills and resistance to cancer.

Usually, it takes a few generations to demonstrate the impacts of chemicals, because they are slow poisons and the impact may show up only later in life. Of course, it is impossible to cut out many of these products from our lives, but it is possible to reduce exposure and to control the use of insecticides and pesticides within hour.

- List the pesticides/insecticides/chemical changes used in your home and school in gardens, kitchens, bathroom or in floor cleaners etc.
- Did you know that excessive use of detergents is harmful to water bodies and the soil.

Source: Sep 26'05 Hindustan Times

EDITORIAL

Your IInd newsletter is here! We prepared a CD on consumer awareness issues and sent it to you all via your teachers. We also organised a workshop with your teacher. The newsletter however is for you all. All these activities undertaken by us are aimed for you to learn from and enjoy being a consumer club member. We hope you are doing that. Do give us your reactions, responses and reports of your activities for the newsletter. Remember however not to overshoot the limit of 50 to 100 words. We send you one copy of the newsletter,- photocopy it and distribute it to your fellow students. The next newsletter is going to bring you a changed format of the newsletter. Hope you'll like it.

Join Our Network

You can be a part of us by subscribing to our magazine. 'Consumer VOICE'. We want your whole school involve

Use Us

We are an advocacy organisation. Be ready to use our experiences- to empower yourself as a consumer.

Support Us

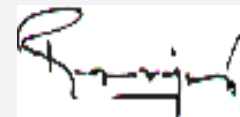
We are a non-profit organization that welcomes donations and subscription to our magazine

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Survey Finds Tweens have free reign over Mobile

"In a recent survey of tween parents, nearly two thirds said they had concerns about giving a mobile phone to their under-12 children. For the mobile operators to successfully market mobile services to kids, the parents will have to be involved in their child's wireless experience."

"While mobile handsets now being marketed directly to young kids do limit the numbers that can be called, these phones cannot restrict the time of day when the phone is used. Parent Patrol(TM) can be used with regular phones and the limits are easy to modify so parents can loosen the rules during summer holidays, for example, and tighten them during exam times."



According to the survey, teens are very attached to their mobile phones. Fully one half of those surveyed said they would rather have their TV privileges restricted than their mobile phone use, while more than a quarter (27 percent) indicated they would prefer to have Web access or use of iPods limited rather than have their mobile phones taken away.

Parent Patrol(TM) works for both parents and teens, because parents can place limits on phone service access that they feel is reasonable, yet teenagers are free to enjoy their phones within those limits.

VOICE would like to know student response to this. Do you think it is a good idea to impose parent control on mobile use by 'tween'.

Yes

No

Is your privacy at stake?

“Babies too have privacy rights!” said a news item in *The Times of India* (September 29 2005). The news reported that visitors to hospitals in London have been warned against cooing to newborn babies, as it is infringement of their right to privacy. The hospital staff has put up a display of a doll in a cot with a message saying “What makes you think I want to be looked at?”

Think of it, if babies can have a right to privacy, so do teenagers and adults! But our rights are infringed upon everyday, by the market, advertisers and media, sometimes even by the government!

How? Read this!

- Call centres (like phone-in helpline services) take down our email IDs everytime we call them, so do banks, credit card and cell phone companies. They then sell our email ID, and information like our phone numbers, age, name, addresses, to those companies who want to reach us to sell their products to us. You get phone calls at odd hours where the voice at the other end says, “Congratulations, you have just won a free gift!”, even when you have done nothing to win yourself any free prizes.

- You go to a supermarket and find a camera in the aisle – recording each and every detail of what you pick up from the shelf – the industry researchers then scan the pictures very closely to look at who you are, what is your age, and why you pick up a certain product. This analysis is then used to position the products better for the future.

some schools and universities use class rooms surveillance for more information read the Ist newsletter or read article titled and go to our website www.consumer-voice.org

Debate in your classroom, about other instances of breach of privacy you see in life around you.

■ How do you feel about this issue?

Good Not so good

■ Do you think technology is taking privacy away from you?

Yes No

■ Would you like to say yes to it, or would you like to say no it?

Yes No

■ Do you think this is an infringement of your consumer rights?

Yes No



Student activity

Is your home water-wise?

Context: This activity is designed to introduce students to the topic of **water efficiency** at home. This is an area of growing importance for all consumers in today's society.

Year Group: upto class 12

Topic Reference: Water Efficiency

Time/Length: 1 hour

Aims: • To highlight the importance of responsible water use by all consumers.

• To increase student awareness of the various ways water can be wasted in everyday situations. • To identify ways we could improve water efficiency in our homes.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of the activities pupils will be able to:

- Understand the importance of water to our everyday lives.
- Identify simple ways we can conserve water in our homes.
- Have a basic understanding of The Water Cycle.
- Realise that the provision of clean drinking water is an expensive process for which consumers will be charged directly for in the future.
- Conduct a water audit and a survey in their own homes.
- Measure how much water a dripping tap wastes if left unnoticed.

Resources: Worksheet for water audit, word search and water quiz worksheets.

Prize of water: Look at and analyse a water bill. initiate a

Consumer club activity:
Initiate a Water Harvesting project in your school

Water Quiz

1. How much of the human body is made up of water?
 - a) 50%
 - b) 60%
 - c) 75%
2. What uses more water?
 - a) a bucket bath
 - b) a shower
 - c) A tub bath
3. When you brush your teeth should you
 - a) use a glass of water
 - b) keep the tap running
 - c) turn the tap off as you brush
4. When you want a cold drink of water should you
 - a) run the water until it gets cold
 - b) add some ice
 - c) use cold water from a jug in the fridge
5. When you use the washing machine it should be
 - a) half empty
 - b) full

Destination India for students

Indian students aren't the only ones going abroad to study. Foreigners too are coming to Indian Universities in droves, shows a recent study by Association of Indian Universities- a body having about 275 universities as its members.

Report says "very few people come to pursue technical or professional studies. Foreigners generally come to pursue general courses at under graduate and post graduate levels in India.

This Year they came from

Asian Countries : 4,809
African Countries : 1,755
European nations : 128
South America : 7

Through the years

1990-91 : 13,000
1996-97 : 5,841
In 2003-04 : 7,753

Country-wise break-up

Malaysia : 806
Nepal : 689
US : 354
Canada : 99
Pakistan : 1

