

## GREENADES

The Maryland State Police—Forensic Sciences Division Laboratory recently received two yellow gumballs, each with a smiley face printed on one side and a bored hole filled with greenish-brown vegetable matter on the opposite side. Both gumballs were wrapped in foil and labeled as “Greenades” with a marijuana leaf and detailed instructions for use. A school resource officer seized the items from two high school students involved in a purchase while they were passing between classes.



Analysis of the plant material confirmed marijuana. Each gumball contained approximately one gram of marijuana, and the total net mass of the two gumballs was 17.5 grams. The diameter of the gumball is about one inch.



The perimeter of the label includes instructions: “Take 30 mins.-1 hour before you would like to receive your high,” and “Chew for as long as possible, then swallow.”

(Information courtesy of G. Baker, Southwest High and M. Schnabel, Papillion-LaVista)

## Cough Syrup/Soft Drink Mix

Mixing prescription cough suppressants containing promethazine and codeine with soda, sports drinks and power drinks has become popular to get high, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Sometimes a Jolly Rancher candy and ice are added to the drink. The mix causes euphoria and impairs motor skills.

The trend got national attention when Terrance Kiel, a defensive back for the San Diego Chargers, was arrested recently for allegedly having cases of cough syrup shipped to his home in East Texas. The cough medicine cocktails, known as “Lean,” “Sizzurp,” “Purple Drank,” and other nicknames, are especially popular in that region.

The syrup is often obtained from online pharmacies. It sells for about \$12 a pint wholesale, but is sold for \$300 a pint to dealers who then sell it for \$40-\$85 per ounce to consumers. Cough syrup use has been popularized in rap songs, including mixes by Houston disc-jockey DJ Screw, who died of a cocaine overdose in 2000. Also, songs by Three 6 Mafia, such as “Sippin’ on the Syrup” are getting air time.

(Source: [USA Today](#), 10-19-06)

## Vodka Snorting

Bar owners in England say that some young drinkers are snorting vodka in order to get drunk more quickly. Bar patrons snort vodka through straws or thin glass tubes. Over time, this practice will damage the nose and alcohol outlets and authorities are being urged to ban the practice. However, it is an appealing practice since a person will get drunk more quickly than if drinking the liquor.

Vodka is also being sold in thin tubes that allow users to inhale spirits like nose drops, according to the Alcohol Problems Advisory Service in England.

(Source: [jointogether.org](#), 10-24-06)

## Cocaine in a Can

A new energy drink called, “Cocaine,” is being marketed as a “legal alternative” to the real thing. Redux Beverages claims that the drink, which contains simple sugars, caffeine and vitamin B-12, give users a “high” that lasts for five hours and doesn’t make drinkers crash like other energy drinks. The say that Cocaine is “350% stronger than Red Bull.”

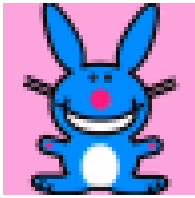
Drinkers report that the beverage has a taste like cherry Jolly Rancher; some report getting a rush from the drink, but side-effects like heartburn and a racing heart also were noted. Redux owner, Jamey Kirby, says that one of the ingredients in Cocaine induces a slightly numb feeling in the throat, mimicking the effect of real cocaine. He also commented, “When a person sees the name of the drink, some psychological effect happens and the person is already experiencing the energy buzz before they even open the can. I can think of no other product except real cocaine that could have that effect on the public.”



Critics say it glamorizes the use of illicit drugs. It is a salted, heavily caffeinated, sugary drink with extra calories that nobody needs, says a nutrition expert. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has little power to regulate the product since energy drinks are classified as dietary supplements rather than foods.

(Source: [jointogether.org](#), 10-3-06)

## HAPPY BUNNY



A new character is being used to deliver anti-drug messages. The popular Happy Bunny character, created by Jim Benton, has been used in the creation of T-shirts and other merchandise sold in stores like Hot Topic, Claire's, Sears, J.C. Penney and Kohl's. Happy Bunny Books are already top-sellers with Scholastic.

The Happy Bunny Character, a mix of innocent demeanor and cutting humor, has made the character popular with young adolescents and Texas prevention experts say the campaign should enjoy some credibility with youths. Messages include Happy Bunny saying, "Drugs. The perfect choice for kids who want to be stupid but weren't born that way," and "Meth. Finally a simple way to become a twitchy idiot in no time."

The character's creator says Happy Bunny is funny, but not preachy. He says, "Some people don't get that it's a goof, or some people think that everything is representative of something else. You really have to know the difference between right and wrong to get it. It's Happy Bunny says the things you're thinking but don't say."

Note: There are many Happy Bunny products, such as T-shirts and hats, that may have other objectionable messages.

(Source: [Houston Chronicle](#), 10-20-06)

## F<sub>etal</sub> A<sub>lcohol</sub> S<sub>yndrome</sub> KIDS

Children with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) can catch up developmentally with their peers, according to a new program. The Toronto program is trying the intervention, which consists of a regimen of constant mental stimulation and nurturing during the first two years of life.

According to a researcher, the widespread implementation could transform the lives of hundreds of thousands of children.

"Forever, people thought, once you cause damage to a baby, nothing can happen (to improve them), said Gideon Koren. "This program really does miracles...Here actually is a huge breakthrough."

The program is called Breaking the Cycle intervention. Most of the children who have passed through the program end up testing normal on standard developmental tests, according to Koren. The study followed the children up to age six.

(Source: [Can West News Service](#), 9-10-06)

## Smoking, Lead Exposure and ADHD

One-third of all cases of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, ADHD, may be caused by maternal smoking during pregnancy or lead exposure after birth.

The study conducted by researchers followed up on 135 kids identified as having ADHD by interviewing their parents about smoking and administering blood tests for lead exposure. The study found that women who smoked during pregnancy were 2 1/2 times more likely to have children with ADHD, and that children with more than 2 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood were four times more likely to have ADHD than children with 0.8 micrograms or less in their bloodstream.

The authors of the study said the findings, "underscore the profound behavioral-health impact of these prevalent exposures, and highlight the need to strengthen public health efforts to reduce prenatal tobacco smoke exposure and childhood lead exposure." This study does appear to quantify the number of cases of ADHD that can be attributed to very important environmental exposures.

(Source: [Environmental Health Perspectives](#))

## Family Meetings

Here are some tips for conducting a family meeting that may help you not miss the boat when it comes to getting time together to discuss important issues in everyone's life.

- Carve out the time for a family meeting.
- Make this time regular and make meetings official.
- Establish three group traditions: No interrupting another person who is talking; No using shared information against a family member; No using family meetings regularly to discuss only difficult and emotionally draining topics.
- Mix family meetings with positive and enjoyable topics or plans.
- Keep a diary for a look back over the years.
- Make meetings fun by having snacks, fun things to do, and changing the meeting location.

