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## CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS DRINKING COFFEE

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### WORKSHEET 1

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#### Text 1

What do parents think of children drinking coffee?

In general, coffee is widely seen as a drink for adults, and most school children just don't like coffee, but prefer fruit juices, flavoured milk with cocoa powder, yoghurt drink, and soft drinks. A lot of parents think that it's OK for children to taste coffee, but preferably decaffeinated and with lots of milk (and sugar). Parents don't like it when children drink coffee because of the caffeine which might prevent the kids from sleeping – and as a result, the parents as well.

From what age should children start drinking coffee, then? In some countries, they start as young as 11 or 12, while in others it would rather be from 15, or even from the age of 18.

However, results from research show that coffee has the same effects on children as on adults. While some parents don't allow their children cola drinks because of caffeine, it is actually the high amount of sugar in these drinks which is problematic for children's nutrition.

#### Text 2

##### Effects of caffeine

Moderate consumption of caffeine is harmless to most of the population however, some people are more sensitive to caffeine than others. If you are sensitive to caffeine you may experience negative effects such as: head-aches, rapid heart beat, upset stomach, nervousness, increased blood pressure, heartburn, dehydration (caused by an overstimulated bladder), difficulty falling asleep, and it may intensify or even cause migraine head-aches. Caffeine is a natural drug that stimulates the body and tightens and constricts blood vessels. About two cups of coffee (200 mg of caffeine) is considered safe for most people. Sensitivity to caffeine varies among individuals, so you are the best person to gauge what is best for you. While a soda or cup of coffee may be just the thing to get you going in the morning, moderation should be practiced.

Another negative effect of caffeine is addiction. People who consume more than two cups of caffeinated beverages each day may find themselves addicted. One way to tell if you are addicted to caffeine is to simply stop using it for one day. If you develop a head-ache, nausea, or become unusually irritable, you may suffer from caffeine addiction.

(Source: <http://www.helium.com/items/313998-the-negative-health-effects-of-caffeine> )



### Assessment

**Formative:** Use of English in pair work, quality of family research findings

**Summative:** Learners write a short text about their personal point of view on the topic, including e.g. if and when they personally like to drink coffee and from what age they think children should be allowed to drink coffee.

### Answer sheets

It is true that coffee might prevent children from sleeping, but this effect seems to be the same for children as for adults, as all the other effects from caffeine.