

# Coke signs at schools 'encourage sugar use'

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South African schools are encouraging sugar usage among pupils by letting signs at entrances announce they are sponsored by Coca-Cola.



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In a report by the Centre of Science in the Public Interest, South Africa is listed as one of several countries that endorse sweetened beverages, which contribute to the unhealthy consumption of sugar.

"In countries [such as] Ghana [and] South Africa, advertisements for sugar-sweetened beverages are even found on school entrance signs, thus children are repeatedly exposed to sugar-sweetened beverage advertising each and every school day," the report read.

According to the latest South African health and nutrition examination survey, which is cited in the report, 13% of children aged between six and 14 years in the country's informal settlements are overweight or obese.

The report goes further to say that South Africa is Coca-Cola's largest market in Africa and is one of the cold drink's best-performing markets in the world.

"Marketing to young people today has become an even more targeted practice that tries to create a highly personalised and shareable experiences," the report reads.

Rob Moodie, a professor of public health at the University of Melbourne's School of Population and Global Health, said at a recent lecture at Wits University that the manufacturers of sugar-sweetened beverages profited due to advertising techniques aimed at children.

"South Africa is ahead with sugar consumption.

"It has a high level of intake among young kids in particular and that's because the industry has been good with advertising. They have linked it to sport, so there is a tight link," said Moodie.

"Little kids taking soft drinks through their sippy cups damage their teeth," Moodie added.

**Source:** The Times

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