

# What are children drinking before, during and after sports?

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Massey University honours student Daniel Gordon, on a mission to find out what Kiwi kids really drink when playing sports.

In a New Zealand first, a Massey University study hopes to discover what children are drinking before, during and after playing competitive

sports.

Drinks Research in Kids' Sport (DRinKS) is the brainchild of Bachelor of Science Honours student Daniel Gordon. His study, majoring in exercise and [sports science](#), is being supported by senior lecturer Dr Ajmol Ali from the School of Sport and Exercise, other sports scientists, as well as nutritionists from the School of Food and Nutrition.

Mr Gordon, 21, says the research will allow the public to avoid misconceptions around consumption habits, and will also help direct future research into caffeinated and sugar-sweetened youth sport drinks.

DRinKS is aiming to recruit 1200 children or more, aged between 11-14 years old, as part of the study looking into their beverage consumption.

Previous research indicates what parents think their children are consuming, but it's often based on perception or preconceived ideas.

The honours student, who works as a sport scientist with various football teams in his spare time, says playing and competing in sport is a large part of New Zealand's identity. "We believe the children in our study are at an age where they are beginning to think about what goes into their bodies to help them perform. We will also look at other factors affecting drink choice, such as taste, cost, and availability."

The ethics-approved study will question children about their drinking habits through an easy-to-manage online questionnaire, with Massey staff and students also visiting sports grounds, parks, indoor arenas and halls around the Auckland region to gather data.

Dr Ali says by targeting children, the study will unlock the primary source of information to provide in-depth data using qualitative and quantitative research.

He believes it is a world first. "We all have preconceived ideas of what kids are drinking. You might give them water, then they buy a fizzy drink at the game. Data around actual intake is non-existent in New Zealand and minimal in other parts of the world," Dr Ali says.

Children around the country will also be able to participate in the survey through a dedicated webpage. The data is completely anonymous. All children who participate can also opt in to a draw to win an iPad.

Dr Ali says there will also be focus groups conducted, "to obtain rich, in-depth information from the children's perspectives - the type of detail that can be missed within surveys. We're after information from different sources to gauge a holistic picture of what drinks [children](#) are really consuming for sport."

The study continues until October.

**More information:** Children aged between 11 and 14 playing competitive sport can participate in the study here:

[massey.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/f ... m/SV\\_bPg2aXtcL20RTI9](https://massey.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bPg2aXtcL20RTI9)

Provided by Massey University

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