

British teens drink a 'bathtub' of sugary drinks a year

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British teenagers drink almost a bathtub full of sugary drinks each year, Cancer Research UK said on Tuesday as the charity urged the government to do more to improve children's diets.

Children aged 11 to 18 consume on average 234 cans of sugar-sweetened [soft drinks](#) each year, CRUK said.

The figure amounts to almost a bath full and is more than double the figure for children aged between four and 10, whose average annual intake is 110 cans.

The data stems from a recent report carried out by the government's health department and the Food Standards Agency, charting the population's diet and nutrition.

The study found a drop in the amount of sugar-sweetened soft drinks consumed by children, with a more significant fall recorded in the under-10s than teenagers.

Despite the improving figures, CRUK said there was an urgent need to further reduce children's intake of [sugary drinks](#) and threw its support behind government proposal to introduce a sugar tax.

"The ripple effect of a small tax on sugary drinks is enormous, and it will give soft drinks companies a clear incentive to reduce the amount of sugar in drinks," said Alison Cox, director of prevention at CRUK.

"But the government can do more to give the next generation a better chance.

"The UK has an epidemic on its hands, and needs to act now," she added.

British Prime Minister Theresa May revealed plans in August to introduce a sugar tax aimed at tackling childhood obesity, tooth decay and type 2 diabetes.

The sugar levy was first unveiled in March by the administration of May's predecessor David Cameron.

The tax on drinks with more than five grams of sugar per 100 millilitres will be introduced in two years, despite strong opposition from the drinks industry.

Soft drinks giant A.G. Barr, maker of Scotland's Irn-Bru fizzy drink, in September said the move towards sugar-free drinks followed "negative media coverage of the sector".

Barr said the drinks industry's own action to reduce sugar rendered the sugar tax "an unnecessary measure in the context of government health policy objectives."

Only a handful of countries such as France, South Africa and Mexico have attempted such a tax.

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