**Resolved**: Schools should provide coffee to middle schoolers.

|  |
| --- |
| **Basic Arguments** |
| **Pro** | **Con** |
| Help students to focus | Could cause addiction |
| Help students to learn & remember | Caffeine unhealthy for children— ie. sleep |
| Improve PE performance | Causes behavior problems— hyper kids |
| Improve students’ mood | Would cost schools additional money |

**Pro 1: Health Benefits**

#### *Markham Heid, Health reporter. https://time.com*. (2019). *Time*. Retrieved 11 November 2019, from https://time.com/5668456/coffee-kids-health/

The image of a 13-year-old drinking coffee seems somehow wrong—a child enjoying an adult’s habit. But there’s actually a lot of good in it. Recent studies have found that coffee consumption may [lower a person’s risk for heart disease](https://time.com/5022060/coffee-health-benefits-heart/) and [early death](https://time.com/5326420/coffee-longevity-study/). While coffee was once vilified, the prevailing wisdom these days is that if it isn’t messing with your sleep, it’s pretty much all upside. [Research](https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/180/8/763/2739131) has also found that coffee contains several antioxidant compounds, including polyphenols, that seem to have healthy anti-inflammatory effects.

**Pro 2: Helps Memory**

#### Watson, S. Executive Editor (2014). *Caffeine and a healthy diet may boost memory, thinking skills; alcohol's effect uncertain - Harvard Health Blog*. *Harvard Health Blog*. Retrieved 11 November 2019,

In the study, researchers from the [National Institute on Aging](http://www.nia.nih.gov/) compared scores on various tests of thinking skills and memory with caffeine, alcohol, and nutrient intake in 727 men and women taking part in the [Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging](http://www.blsa.nih.gov/). Over all, participants who ranked high on the healthy diet scale did better on 10 tests of memory than those with lower diet scores. The same held true for those who took in more caffeine. The effects for moderate alcohol drinking were mixed.

**Pro 3: No health issues when consumed in moderation**

#### *Markham Heid, Health reporter. https://time.com*. (2019). *Time*. Retrieved 11 November 2019, from https://time.com/5668456/coffee-kids-health/

So should parents deny their teens coffee? Bachtell says he wouldn’t go that far. “As with most things, I think moderation is key,” he says. While the amount of caffeine can vary widely in coffee, one 8-oz. cup shouldn’t contain much more than the 100-mg limit the AAP recommends. As long as a young person is drinking coffee early in the day—and not loading it up with sugar or other unhealthy additives—parents probably needn’t worry.

**Con 1: Caffeine leads to lack of sleep and decreases appetite; growing kids need a lot of nutrition to grow**

#### *Why Is it Bad for Kids to Drink Coffee? | Livestrong.com*. (2019). *LIVESTRONG.COM*. Retrieved 11 November 2019

Children ages 5 to 12 need at least 11 hours of sleep per day, and teenagers need nine to 10. These numbers seen attainable, but with hectic schedules and early wake-up times, sometimes they are impossible. More and more kids are using coffee to boost their energy levels during the day, but this could be a contributor to lack of sleep.

—————

Coffee is a stimulant, which can lead to decreased appetite. Growing children need a balanced diet full of protein, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. When kids drink coffee, the stimulant effect is likely to lead to a decrease in appetite and a decline in overall nutrition.

**Con 2: Caffeine can cause behavioral problems**

#### *Why Is it Bad for Kids to Drink Coffee? |* ***Livestrong.com*. (2019**). *LIVESTRONG.COM*. Retrieved 11 November 2019, from https://www.livestrong.com/article/496998-why-is-it-bad-for-kids-to-drink-coffee/

Coffee can create a host of behavioral problems in children, including hyperactivity, restlessness and inability to concentrate. This is because the caffeine in coffee is a stimulant that increases energy and alertness. While adults may benefit from this side effect, it can be damaging to school-aged children who are required to pay attention and sit still during instruction at school. The effects of caffeine can last for hours -- as long as an entire school day -- and can have negative effects on peer relations, studying and grades.

**Con 3: Addiction**

#### ***Dr. Toby Amidor,*** *MS, RD. Ask the Experts: When Can Kids Start Drinking Coffee?*. (2019). ***Healthline***. Retrieved 11 November 2019, from https://www.healthline.com/health/childrens-health/experts-when-can-kids-drink-coffee#3

Additionally, adding cream and loads of sugar, or drinking high calorie specialty coffees, can lead to weight gain and cavities. So when is it okay for kids to start drinking coffee? A few sips here and there are no big deal. However, when sips turn into daily cups, that’s a whole other story. Coffee is addictive and withdrawal symptoms are real, so the later you start, the better. I recommend starting towards the end of adolescence when growth and development is slowing down.”