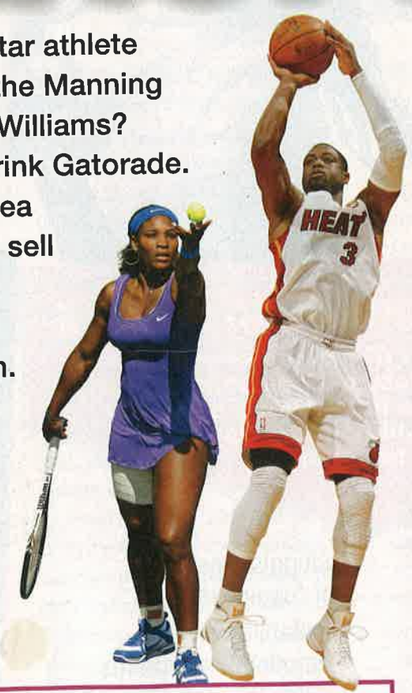
Claim Busters

Is Gatorade better than water?

Want to be a superstar athlete like Dwyane Wade, the Manning brothers, or Serena Williams? Then you'd better drink Gatorade. At least that's the idea Gatorade's trying to sell you with their multimillion-dollar marketing campaign. But what's the real story?

Find related activities online!



*WARNING

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "excessive intake of caloric sports drinks can substantially increase the risk for obesity in children and adolescents."

Don't be fooled by the calorie count. A serving size is less than half the bottle—if you drink it all, that's 200 calories.

This **additive** lends a unique flavor. But the acidity can damage tooth enamel, boosting your risk of cavities.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 12 fl oz (355 mL)
Servings Per Container: About 2.5

Amount per Serving	% Daily Value*
Calories 80	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Potassium 45mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	7%
Sugars 21g	
Protein 0g	

Not a significant source of Calories from Fat, Saturated Fat, Cholesterol, Dietary Fiber, Vitamin A, Calcium, Iron.

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet

Water, sucrose, dextrose, citric acid, natural flavor, salt, sodium citrate, monopotassium phosphate, modified food starch, red 40, glycerol ester of rosin, caramel color.

There are 52.5 grams of sugar in this bottle—the **equivalent** of 15 Oreo cookies.

Red 40 creates the rosy color, but has also been known to cause rashes, stomach aches, and nausea.

*Super Drink or Sucker Punch?

WHAT THEY SAY	WHAT WE SAY	BUT . . .	THE TRUTH
In the heat of battle, your body burns through more than water. You need Gatorade to replenish, refuel, and restore.	For your typical workout, water is all you need to "replenish" fluids. Gatorade's high sugar content and lack of nutritional value makes it full of "empty calories"—a very unhealthy choice for refueling. The salt and minerals (like potassium) that Gatorade claims you need to restore are exaggerated.	Teens often don't drink enough water when they are active—especially on hot days. The sugar in Gatorade encourages them to drink more and stay hydrated. If you need some extra sweetness, try adding just a splash of fruit juice to your water.	If you work out for 40 minutes or longer, you need some protein (peanut butter, cheese, yogurt, nuts), some carbs (crackers, fruit), and *plenty* of water.

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NATIONAL

SUGAR WARS

To combat obesity, New York City wants to ban the sale of large sugary drinks. Is your diet the government's business?

BY VERONICA MAJEROL

Wendy's discontinued the "Biggie" name in 2006, but kept its jumbo drink sizes.

The question has become a routine part of the movie-going experience for Americans: "Would you like the jumbo-size drink for only 50 cents more?"

But if Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York has his way, movie theaters, restaurants, fast-food joints, and other places that sell prepared food in New York won't be able to offer sodas or any other sugary drinks larger than 16 ounces. (Grocery and convenience stores like 7-Eleven would be exempt.)

The proposed ban is intended to help fight obesity, which has reached nationwide epidemic proportions. According to health agencies, more than one third of Americans are obese; in New York City, more than half of adults are either overweight or obese. High consumption of sugary drinks is linked to heart disease, diabetes, and long-term weight gain, so the city says it has an interest in preventing these conditions and the medical costs associated with them.

"Obesity is a nationwide problem," says Mayor Bloomberg. "I think [this is] what the public wants the mayor to do."

▶ TAKE THE SODA QUIZ
WWW.UPFRONTMAGAZINE.COM

New York isn't the only city taking aim at soda consumption. Philadelphia and several California cities are proposing a tax on sugary drinks, and a sales tax for sweetened drinks is already on the books in 30 states, including Texas and Iowa. But critics see these efforts as part of a "nanny state" mentality in which government tries to legislate good behavior.

"Fundamentally, I don't think we need the government to protect us from ourselves," says Justin Wilson of the Center for Consumer Freedom, which represents the beverage industry and has run ads poking fun at the mayor *(see facing page)*. "I think that's rooted in a paternalistic ideology that most Americans reject."

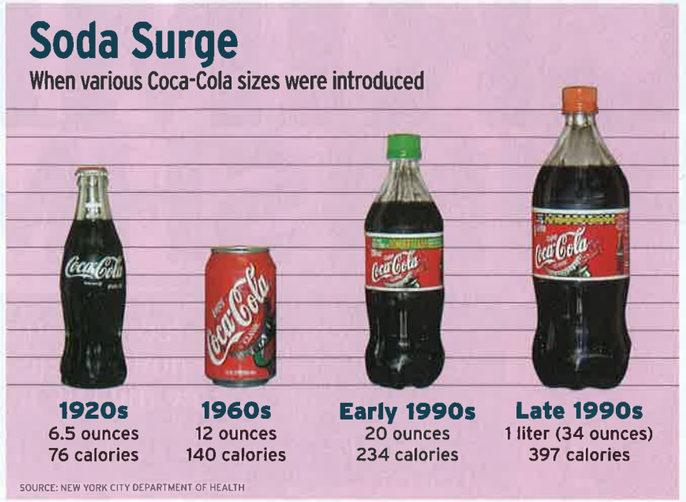
Supersize Me

Ronald Bayer, a professor at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, agrees that the proposed ban is paternalistic—but that doesn't stop him from supporting it.

"We know that people die from bad consumption patterns," says Bayer.

©AP IMAGES/PAT ROQUE (SODA DRINKER); © 2012 BRIAN FAIRRINGTON (CARTOON)

Mayor or Nanny? A beverage industry ad mocks New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his proposed sugary-drink ban.



"The goal of all this seems to be to change public norms."

Much like the candy bars, bagels, and french fries we eat today, the portion sizes of soda have exploded over the years. The 1920s Coca-Cola bottle was just 6.5 ounces *(see chart)* and in 1955, a 7-ounce soda was the only size you could buy at McDonald's.

But by 1999, the fast-food chain had begun offering 42-ounce "Supersize" cups, six times the size of the 1955 container. Most other fast-food chains followed suit with their own jumbo sizes.* Research suggests that when given larger portions of food and beverages, people will consume more without realizing it or feeling more full.

"How far should government be able to go to protect us?"

The Nanny State?

The sugary-drink debate is part of a larger question about the role of government in managing people's behavior. While government has an interest in protecting the well-being of its citizens, some argue that individuals should be free to make their own decisions—even if they end up choosing poorly.

Like New York's proposed sugary-drink ban, which carries a $200 fine for vendors and is expected to be approved by the city's Board of Health this month, other measures around the country are also raising questions about the proper balance between personal freedom and government regulation. This summer, the town of Middleborough, Massachusetts, made it an offense to curse in public, punishable by a $20 fine. In April, the governor of Tennessee signed a law prohibiting students from wearing sagging pants or any other clothing "that disrupts the learning environment." And in May, police officers in Fort Lee, New Jersey, began handing out $85 tickets to people texting while crossing the street.

On the food front, then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a law in 2008 forbidding California restaurants from using trans fats (sometimes called partially hydrogenated oils), affecting 80,000 eateries across the state. Trans fats, most of which are laboratory-made, have been shown to clog arteries more than other fats.

In New York, the proposed sugary-drink ban continues to be hotly debated. Some people say banning sugar alone is misguided since plenty of other foods and drinks contribute to health problems. Others point to how easy it would be to cheat the law by buying, for example, several 16-ounce containers of soda at a time. There's also the argument that the city would be better off focusing on instituting better physical education programs in schools.

And, of course, there are those like Zara Atal, a 20-year-old college student in New York, who say that none of this is any of the government's business.

"If people want to drink 24 ounces, it's their decision," he says.

But Bayer, the public-health professor, thinks that some health and safety matters do need government attention. Laws that require motorcyclists to wear helmets, for instance, have been shown to dramatically reduce fatal accidents.

Still, he says,"I think that at the end of the day, people have to ask the question, 'How far should government be able to go to protect us?'" •

With reporting by Michael N. Grynbaum of The New York Times.

©THE CENTER FOR CONSUMER FREEDOM (NANNY POSTER); NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (SODAS)

*In 2004, McDonald's mostly phased out the Supersize in the U.S.; the 32-ounce soda is currently the biggest size on its regular menu.

"If you look at me, you think I'm, like, stuck-up. But yet, like, I save animals," Snooki whines on the reality TV show *Jersey Shore.* Meanwhile, her pal Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino openly mocks her: "She looks like a spray-painted Chihuahua," he says. Switch the channel and you might find an episode of *Small Town Security* in which Joan, one of the owners of the security firm, laughs so hard at a co-worker farting that she pees on herself—making her and her co-workers laugh even harder. Then the camera zooms in on her wet pants, for all of America to see.

Insults, temper tantrums, selfishness, gross behavior, and plain old stupidity—these are the main ingredients for most of today's reality TV shows. Guess who's watching them? Millions of young people just like you.

According to *Entertainment Weekly*, three of the most popular shows teens watch are *Jersey Shore*, *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, and *Teen Mom*. "Teens love them for the same reasons adults do—they're **outrageous** and fun to watch," says Sierra Filucci, senior editor of TV and DVD reviews at Common Sense Media, a nonprofit **advocacy** group for media literacy. But are these shows just mindless entertainment, like so much of the media we **consume**, or is there a dark side to these views of reality?

Idiotic or Influential?

There seems to be an even greater draw than just the amusement factor of reality television, says cultural critic and family therapist Lori Gottlieb. "Teens are naturally curious about other people's lives and want to know how their own lives compare," she says. And they often look to reality shows for answers. Young people *also* tend to watch shows with older characters to learn what it will be like when they get to that age, according to David Bickham, Ph.D., staff scientist at the Center on Media and Child Health at Children's Hospital Boston.

So what happens when excessive alcohol consumption, teen pregnancy, and high levels of drama are presented as "reality"—worthy of being on TV, no less? Well, things get **dicey**.

A recent study from the Girl Scout Research Institute showed that regular reality TV viewers don't just accept but also *expect* a lot of drama, aggression, and bullying in their everyday lives, which just goes to show that these shows are creating a new sense of what's "normal" for teens.

But does that mean you'll blindly copy whatever irresponsible **antics** Kim, Kourtney, and company get into? Experts give you more credit than that. "You're not going to go out and get drunk or pregnant just because you see Snooki do it," Bickham says. "The influence is more subtle." When you see bad behavior on TV 24/7 under the **guise** of "reality," you might start to believe that these characters aren't exaggerating. Experts fear that a steady diet of watching people behaving badly increases our tolerance for rudeness—or even violence.

The Girl Scout study found that 73 percent of people surveyed thought that reality TV shows "make people think that fighting is a normal part of a romantic relationship," and 70 percent said that reality TV "makes people think it's OK to treat others badly." But the degree of influence these shows have might depend on how you feel about yourself, not just how you feel about the characters you see on TV. "If a teen is struggling with self-esteem issues, he might adopt some of these attention-getting behaviors to get recognition," says Gottlieb. "If, however, you're confident in yourself and have positive sources of attention, such as sports or theater or good friends, you'll probably see the Kardashians or The Situation as ridiculous, not role models."

"There is so much competition for television ratings that **producers have to up the outrageousness** factor to attract viewers."

Smoke and Mirrors

Given the impact these shows may be having on our worldview, you can't help but wonder: How realistic are these so-called reality shows? The production process starts the same way it does for most shows and movies—the wannabe stars audition. There are even acting schools devoted to helping "normal" people get on TV. At the New York Reality TV School, founder Robert Galinsky explains ways to impress producers: Be vulnerable, emotional, and not very good at keeping a secret. And even these qualities aren't always enough to make a successful reality star. "There is so much competition

GET A GRIP ON REALITY

Watch This, Not That

Like eating a steady diet of junk food, watching fake drama with violence thrown in can be unhealthy for even the most grounded person. So try these alternatives. You might find them just as entertaining—and even inspiring!

You enjoy "competition" shows like *The Bachelor*, *The Amazing Race*, and *Top Chef*. But you don't want to see contestants be insulted.

It shows a supportive atmosphere, where the judges value individuality instead of pitting contestants against one another.

The family **dynamics** and crazy antics are so amusing, but you could do without daughters cursing out their mom and constantly putting one another down.

Even though they're cuckoo, they treat one another with respect. Instead of making you cringe, it will make you LOL.

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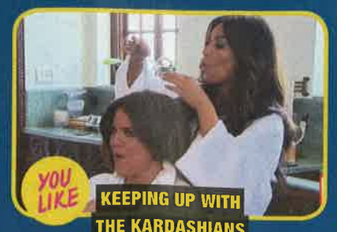
SO WATCH **THE GLEE PROJECT**

It shows a supportive atmosphere, where the judges value individuality instead of pitting contestants against one another.



YOU LIKE **KEEPING UP WITH THE KARDASHIANS**

The family **dynamics** and crazy antics are so amusing, but you could do without daughters cursing out their mom and constantly putting one another down.

SO WATCH **MODERN FAMILY**

Even though they're cuckoo, they treat one another with respect. Instead of making you cringe, it will make you LOL.

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"I wasn't calling my friends anymore."

–ASHLEIGH ELSER, 25, WHO QUIT FACEBOOK LAST YEAR

UNFRIENDING FACEBOOK

More than 900 million people are on the social networking site. But in the U.S., some young people are just saying no to Facebook.

BY VERONICA MAJEROL

Ashleigh Elser walked away and got drawn back in twice before calling it quits for good last October. There had been good times, the 25-year-old says, but in the end she decided her life was better off without Facebook.

"I wasn't calling my friends anymore," says Elser, a graduate student at the University of Virginia. "I was just seeing their pictures and updates."

Founded in Mark Zuckerberg's Harvard dorm room in 2004 and initially open just to college students, Facebook is the largest social-networking site in the world. It was worth more than $100 billion when it began selling stock to the public in its much-anticipated initial public offering in May *(see box)*, and it has revolutionized the way people keep in touch with friends and family, share photos, and discuss politics and pop culture. It also played a key role in the protests that toppled several autocratic regimes in the Middle East during the Arab Spring last year.

But while Facebook may now seem a nearly ubiquitous part of modern life, there are signs that Facebook fatigue may be setting in, at least in the U.S. In a recent Associated Press-CNBC poll, more than 50 percent of Americans said they think Facebook is a passing fad. And the rate of new users joining Facebook in the U.S. is slowing: annual growth is at 6 percent this year, versus 39 percent two years ago, according to eMarketer, which tracks Internet traffic. Then there are those, even on the younger end of the age spectrum, who refuse to try Facebook or have tried it and left.

Why They Quit

For some users, privacy is the main concern. Over the years, Facebook has faced questions over how it handles the vast quantity of data it collects from users and how much control they have to delete their own content. For others, it's simply a matter of not wanting the whole world to know about everything that's going on in their lives, from the serious to the mundane.

Zach Petersen, a 19-year-old sophomore at the University of Tampa in Florida, was on Facebook for four years before deleting his account in April. The final straw: He had just bought a new car and posted a picture on Facebook for his friends. Suddenly, everyone he ran into on campus—including people he wasn't connected to on Facebook—seemed to know about his new wheels.

"It's just kind of strange knowing that everybody knew about it," he says. "A friend of a friend of a friend can see your stuff," even if "it was intended for you and your friends."

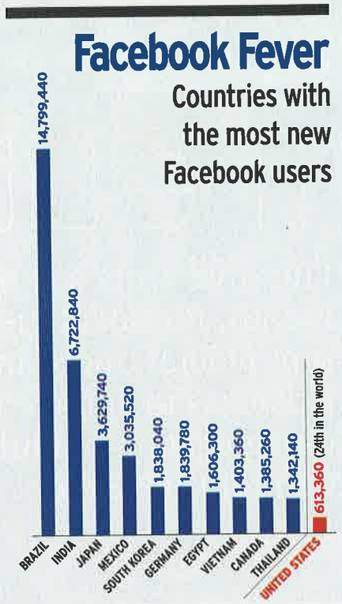
Others have left Facebook for a more basic reason: They're just not interested. Mary Carney, 21, a senior and food science major at Clemson University in South Carolina, belongs to several campus clubs, works as a peer mentor, serves on her school's student advisory board, and exercises an hour a day. She deleted her Facebook account two years ago, deciding she could do without the constant stream of photos and banter about things like what people were eating for lunch.

"It kind of just felt like a waste of time," says Carney, "like my time could be better used on studying or doing all the other things I have to do."

A recent study by Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania confirms at least part of Carney's assessment. It found that among college students, some Facebook activities—like playing games, posting photos, and chatting—seem to be tied to poor academic performance and less involvement in campus activities. By contrast, commenting on posts, creating or RSVP'ing to events, and viewing photos seem to be tied to better academic performance and extracurricular engagement.

Facebook's Future?

The slowdown in Facebook's growth in the U.S., where it still has 200 million members, could be just temporary, or it could signal trouble ahead for the newly public company, which now faces more pressure to turn a profit for its shareholders. Until now, Facebook has made most of its money from advertising, which in 2011 accounted for 85 percent of the company's $3.7 billion in revenue. Every time a person shares a link, listens to a song, "likes" something, or changes a relationship status, a piece of data is added to Facebook's vast data library, which advertisers use to match their ads with the best potential customers. The more users the social network has, the more it can charge advertisers.



SOURCE: SOCIALBAKERS.COM, JANUARY TO JUNE 2012

Facebook executives say they aren't worried—that they don't expect everyone in the U.S. to sign up. And it's still adding millions of members in Asia and Latin America *(see graph)*, and could add hundreds of millions more if it gets into China, where Facebook is currently banned. What will matter most for the company in the long run may be its ability to keep the millions of current users entertained and coming back.

But for Elser at the University of Virginia, there's no going back. Since leaving Facebook nearly a year ago, she says, she's been more deliberate about making plans with friends, like meeting for coffee, and her friendships have gotten stronger as a result. And yet for all that's been gained, she admits, certain little things are lost by not being on Facebook.

"I miss pictures, I miss the funny things my friends will say in the morning," says Elser. "I mean it's sad, but it's not sad enough to motivate me to go back." •

With reporting by Jenna Wortham of The New York Times.

Facebook & the Stock Market

In May, Facebook had its initial public offering (I.P.O.), selling company stock to the public for the first time. Private companies usually "go public" to raise money for expansion.

Facebook's I.P.O. was the third-largest in U.S. history–and one of the most disappointing. The world's largest social network raised $16 billion by selling stock to investors at $38 a share. But the stock price began dropping the next day and had dipped 25 percent by the beginning of the summer. Many small investors lost thousands of dollars, and some large ones lost millions, with many accusing Facebook of withholding vital information about its business. Dozens of I.P.O.-related lawsuits have since been filed against Facebook.

"People were excited about the stock in part because Facebook was a cool company," says Anant Sundaram of Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, who believes Facebook's stock was very overpriced. "But you have to make a distinction between a good investment and a good company."

Of course, anything can still happen with Facebook's stock. Amazon's stock quickly tumbled after its I.P.O. in May 1997, trading well below its initial price of $18 a share for several months. Within a year, it had roughly quadrupled, and this summer, it was trading at about $215. That means an investor who bought 1,000 shares the day it went public and held on to them has made, at least on paper, about $200,000.

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IT'S NOT A RACE. IT'S A rally
COMMITMENTDAY.COM
#myCOMMITMENT
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Stronger by the Year

Commit to doing one or more feel-good athletic events annually, and prepare to see your life change for the better.

I TURNED 51 this year. Not long after my birthday, I achieved a new personal record at the Leadville Trail 100 Mountain Bike Race. I also cut a full 14 minutes off my fastest Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival race time. I'm by no means unique in this regard. Increasingly, I'm seeing a number of good friends and colleagues achieve personal-best fitness results well into their 50s.

Maybe we're training smarter. Maybe it's that we're more seasoned as athletes. Maybe we're just more committed to a healthy way of life these days, and the net results of those choices are paying off. For whatever reason, we appear to be getting stronger as we go along.

Something that has helped me improve my health and fitness results over the past few decades — and that I strongly suggest to everyone I know — is making a commitment to repeatedly participate in specific athletic events each and every year.

Doing one or more annual events gives you built-in motivation to train and take care of yourself. It's also a great way to benchmark your progress over time. It gives you a tangible basis for setting new goals — to get better, faster, stronger or more confident year after year.

As you begin to make progress on any or all of these fronts, you may want to try out additional events or more challenging courses. But consider choosing just one to start with. It doesn't have to be a huge ordeal or a physically grueling experience. A simple 5K walk-run is a great way to begin, and something virtually anyone (including many differently-abled folks) can do.

What's important is that you sign up (which you can almost always do online), put it on your calendar and show up the day of the event. Get yourself to the starting line, then see what happens. You don't have to go all out. Just go.

If you have never done an athletic event before, I promise you, doing this will in some way change your perception of your own potential. It may just change your life.

> **"Get yourself to the starting line, then see what happens. You don't have to go all out. Just go."**

There's something extraordinary about athletic events that you can't fully appreciate unless you actually attend one. It's a sense of energy, positivity and excitement that can't be fully captured on TV. There's a powerful camaraderie in so many bodies moving together on a focused path. It's impossible to describe, which is why I want you to go experience it for yourself.

Not ready to participate in an event quite yet? You can still go and observe. Check out the scene. Soak up the vibes (and some vicarious thrills). Volunteer to help out at a water station. Or just sit and cheer on participants as they near the finish line. Sooner or later, I think you'll get hooked.

One thing I've observed in my more than three decades of working in the fitness industry is that when people make the commitment necessary to complete even one athletic event, they often feel the urge to make more healthy commitments. And they are much more likely than the average population to bring those commitments to fruition.

That's why, on Jan. 1, 2013, Life Time Fitness is launching its first-ever annual Commitment Day, a movement that I believe is one of the most exciting initiatives in our company's history.

With huge 5K walk-run events being held simultaneously in 35 communities across the United States, and coverage of the highlights being broadcast on national television, Commitment Day represents a giant commitment for us as an organization, and it's representative of a much broader commitment we are making to advocate for and support healthy change across our country.

While hundreds of thousands of people are participating in local 5K events and confirming their commitment to better health, millions more will be watching on TV, experiencing what we hope will be a tickle of motivation to start making some healthy-way-of-life changes in the upcoming year.

Maybe it's a commitment to drink more water or get more sleep or spend more active time outdoors. Maybe it's a commitment to lead, to be of service, to make an eco-responsible change on behalf of our planet. What you commit to is up to you. What matters is that you follow through.

You can learn more about Commitment Day by watching the video at CommitmentDay.com. While you are there, I invite you to make the commitment yourself: Get registered to participate in this amazing experience.

We hope this will be the start of a fresh, healthy New Year's tradition — one where tired resolutions are put to bed, where authentic commitments are strengthened, and where clear intentions are put into lasting action.

Bahram Akradi is the founder and CEO of Life Time Fitness.