

You are what you eat

[Business](#)



Everyone wants to be healthy. However, being healthy does not always come easy. Unhealthy foods are common, convenient, and inexpensive (Mooney). With alarming rates of obesity of above 35 percent of the population in America, unhealthy foods should be a major concern (Overweight).

So why are they encouraged and served as an open option of foods to the young minds of the future? Similar to the other schools across the nation, the cafeteria at my school serve foods that are deemed unhealthy. Cafeteria food should be much healthier and more nutritious in order to support children's health, promote students' academic success, and fight childhood obesity. First, cafeteria food must be healthier and more nutritious because a child's health should be the most important concern above any other. The school is responsible for every student's health and well-being. With that being said, surprisingly, unhealthy foods, such as greasy french fries and fatty snacks, are offered to students, allowing obesity to become an issue and a concern. According to the National Health and Nutrition Survey of 2009-2010, 31.

8 percent of American children and teenagers were overweight and/or obese (Davidson). This consists of 12 million children. Unhealthy school food is a direct contributor to children being overweight or obese. Furthermore, not only does unhealthy cafeteria food directly affect students, it also indirectly impacts them. Unhealthy school food consequently influences children to eat with unhealthy habits.

In fact, presented by a 2014 study, 25 percent of food consumed by Americans is unhealthy and nutrient-poor (Mooney). Because of their habits developed from the influence of unhealthy cafeteria food, children are more likely to snack on potato chips than celery. Finally, the cafeteria food lacks nutrition. According to Healthline's 2015 article titled Nutritional Deficiencies regarding malnutrition, a lack of nutrients can cause digestive issues, skin problems, stunted or defective bone growth, and even dementia (Nutritional). The human body needs a balance of nutrition for healthy development and preventing disease.

Consequently, the unhealthy and nutritional deficient cafeteria food affects children's health and needs to be healthier and more nutritious. At the same time, in order to promote students' academic success, the cafeteria food provided should be healthier and more nutritious. In order for a student to be attentive in class, the student needs to have the energy for direct concentration. The energy required mainly comes from the nutrients in the student's lunch (Duverge). Because the unhealthy cafeteria food lacks nutrition, the student is more likely to have little energy and problems concentrating, therefore lowering his or her performance in the classroom.

In addition, a lack of nutrients increases the chances for illness. In Campbellsville University Professor Gabe Duverge's article "The Impact of School Lunch on Student Performance," Duverge states, "The indirect effects of poor nutrition can be severely detrimental to the performance of students over time. Students with unhealthy lifestyles are far more likely to become sick" (Duverge). The lack of nutrition of unhealthy cafeteria food causes illnesses, which has an effect on the amount of class time that is <https://assignbuster.com/you-are-what-you-eat/>

missed by students, therefore increasing the chance for students to fall behind in class. Finally, proper nutrition is relative to better academic performance.

According to registered dietitian Timi Gustafson's 2012 article, not getting enough essential nutrients at meals may lower kids' IQ scores, memory capacities, fine motor skills, social skills and languages skills into early adulthood and beyond (Schuna). As a result, children who eat unhealthy and nutrient poor foods are more likely to have lower test scores and struggle more with schoolwork. All in all, the cafeteria food should be healthier and more nutritious in order to further promote students' academic success. Finally, the cafeteria food should be healthier and more nutritious in order to fight against childhood obesity. Childhood obesity is a major issue in the United States. Among people ages 2 to 19, 31.

8 percent are considered to be overweight and 16.9 percent are considered to be obese (Overweight). If cafeteria food and other schools around the United States were improved to become healthier, childhood obesity would not be as common. Next, by fighting childhood obesity, improving cafeteria food is also indirectly fighting the effects that result from obesity. Culinary expert Amanda Ray from the Art Institutes states in her article on childhood obesity, "The possible consequences of childhood obesity can range from physical complications such as diabetes and high blood pressure, to social problems like low self-esteem and depression" (Ray). By improving school food to fight childhood obesity, other illnesses and diseases can also be fought alongside.

Last, decreasing numbers of childhood obesity also decreases numbers of adult obesity. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, obesity found among adults typically start at a young age (Overweight). Hence, improving school food to fight childhood obesity also fights obesity all across the United States. On the whole, the cafeteria food should be healthier and more nutritious in order to fight against childhood obesity. Despite what was mentioned, schools may claim that they offer foods with the right amount of nutrients, such as broccoli or peas, because of the recent Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (Duverge). However, even with a federal act passed by Congress among schools across the United States in an effort to make school lunches healthier, schools receive only \$2.

68 for each meal served through the National School Lunch Program (Ray). Therefore, that is not enough money to cover a complete healthy and nutritious lunch, counting the cost of the food, labor, and facility. In short, everyone wants to be healthy. Because obesity and its effects are such a major issue in the United States, different actions must be taken. Although unhealthy foods are ever present and inexpensive, schools should not encourage and serve them to the new generation of the future.

It is time to take a stand and prevent future issues that can be prevented; and what better place is there to start than the education system?