

Killing the youth

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Children have been thought as, “ Killing Themselves,” by their choices in food and moderation. They are taking these sayings as a joke and by not caring of the condition they are in, but these children are slowly ending their lives with the poor decisions they are making (Downes).

Under current research over the past thirty years, the number of overweight and malnourished individuals have come in equal balance to each other. Obesity has been seen somewhat as an effect from television commercials (Rachagon). The obesity rate has increased to seventy- five percent of teenagers, and it is not a laughing matter. It has become a serious epidemic that has left children with adult cases of many illnesses because of the poor food choices (Chan). These choices that this generation makes affects every child because they are triple the weight that past generations were (Downes). Over past years, the ideas of children diets have almost disintegrated, leaving them with sickly and unhealthy lives.

Most of the population has found themselves eating pounds of junk food just to get a small amount of energy for the day (Chan). Over eating is a leading cause of adolescent obesity. Hormonal changes and different social influences are the top two main causes of child or teen obesity (“ Childhood Obesity”). Children in particular, are less aware of the consequences of making the wrong food choices (Rachagon). However, healthy eating should be promoted through the child’s home and school life, but if the child decides to waste the efforts and eat junk food, he or she has ruined their chances at having a healthy lifestyle (Chan). Some methods of obtaining the same weight as the child was currently at is to manage the amount of food intake and have a substantial amount of physical activities.

Parents are the overall decision makers in the food habits of the children. Choosing more fruits and vegetables to incorporate in meals, cutting down on high caloric beverages, and choosing the appropriate portions of food will help to reduce some fat and calories from their diets (“ Childhood Obesity”). The recent targeting commercials has caused a recent spike in childhood obesity due to the commercials promoting high amounts of fats, sugars, and salts (Rachagon). The marketing industry has these children essentially, “ hooked,” on their products to where he or she only wants that type of food. This also gives every child the chance to have a sense of, “ power,” in their own decisions on food choices (Rachagon).

The television advertisements had persuaded children through images because they are susceptible to these visual clues (Chan). Recent studies show that the more advertisements shown to children proves that more snacking of junk food or unhealthy foods are more likely to occur than snacking on unhealthy foods. The companies producing these advertisements did focus mostly toward children, which affects the child’s consumer behavior (Rachagon). Overall, the impact on children from advertising is very minuscule, but what leaves the impression on them is the specific types of nutritional knowledge (Downes). Animation and fantasy are most common in these types of advertisements to allow them to build quantity and quality to their products as well as using catchy phrases to keep buyers remembering their product or company (Rachagon). Now using the television to advertise, these fast food restaurants can reach a wide rang of people.

Due to this, more than half of the children believe what the advertising is saying and they react to it distinctly (Rachagon). At the ages of seven and eight, children of these ages start to comprehend that the persuasive techniques are aimed directly at them (Downes). A child tends to direct their behavior towards a role model, which he or she reenacted how the person of interest does. Since they lack the skills to mature and become accessible to the advertising, marketing uses role models of those children so they will want to eat at their restaurant (Rachagon). The amount of weight loss or diet plan commercials has been over taken to advertise what children prefer to see. Ever since children began to spend more time watching the television, food advertisement has been the top producer of the sudden adipose in children and teens (Rachagon).

Children having time to play outside has turned to an all-time low seeing that more than sixty- two percent of parents see that their children have less chances of playing outside than in their youth. One- third of children play outside for thirty minutes a day, which is thirty minutes less than a prison inmate gets per day. Eighteen percent of children do not play outside at all. Polling research asking children why they do not want to play outside and it has been found that since they have such a short amount of time to be outside. The top reason has been found that children just do not want to be or play outside at all (Barlow). Since the average child watches the more amount suggested watching television, children are said to have watched over ten thousand food advertisements per year (Dugdale).

Thirty percent of children are said to spend during the holiday season or eight- hour work day, two and a half hours of the television time are food
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advertising (Rachagon). Mc Donald's is a large contribution to having children and teens overweight. They feed more than the entire population of Spain (Rachagon). Toys R Us has claimed to have sold less toys than Mc Donald's has in the past years (Dugdale). Around the amount of 17.

6 million children of the ages of five or younger have been reported to be on the verge to be overweight (Rachagon). At the ages of six months, babies already form the ideas of, "meal mascots." By the age two, children begin to be, "brand loyal," to their favorite fast food restaurants. Finally, at the age of three, children are asking for specific food restaurants (Dugdale).

Childhood obesity can be seen with high- related diseases. These children may be prone to sickness or diseases if the children are not already exposed to the illnesses already.

The common illnesses following childhood obesity are: Asthma, Hepatic Steatosis, Sleep Apnea, and Type 2 Diabetes ("Tips for Parents"). Asthma is a disease which causes a person to have a hard time to breathe because their lungs are being closed and tightened. This causes shortness of breath, uncontrollable coughing, and soon after he or she will need an inhaler to open the lungs so the child can breathe ("Tips for Parents"). Hepatic Steatosis is a fatty liver causing the liver enzymes to build more than it needed to. The only way to rid this disease is through weight loss ("Tips for Parents"). Sleep Apnea is a well- known breathing disorder, it is commonly found in obese children, teens, and young adults.

This causes oxygen levels to drop drastically and makes he or she stop breathing for a certain amount of time ("Tips for Parenting"). Type 2

Diabetes has been more frequently been diagnosed in pre-teens who are classified as overweight. This illness has been seen to cause kidney failure. It also has been classified as having the same trouble as someone who has a glucose intolerance (“ Tips for Parenting”). Physical activity is a major part in maintaining and losing weight.

It helps to burn calories and strengthen bone and muscle mass (“ Childhood Obesity”). To have children exercise more, doctors say to limit television and computer time, while keeping it to a one hour span a day. Another suggestion made by doctors is to keep reminding children to perform activities and do not badger them to exercise. Also, doctors say to have the child keep moving with games rather than what they should be doing so they will be more interested (“ Childhood Obesity). Slim to none of the children or teens that are obese do not achieve weight loss or keep their weight down to a healthy weight.

It has been found that children who live in a low-income household are prone to these unhealthy food choices since junk food is very cheap. Parents can buy bulk products of the food because the prices of it are very cheap (Barry). Researchers have found that overeating can be more than just a choice, but a psychiatric disorder. Finding a new disorder which has been called, “ Binge Eating Disorder,” children are known to eat uncontrollably by the way their feelings are. Most of the children or teens who have this disorder are known to eat more when they had a bad day at school or are not feeling themselves (Barry). The adolescents that are taken over by this disease could have a substantial amount of food eaten in just a short period-of-time.

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These children go through withdrawals which makes the child want to eat the food they are craving more (Barry). Adolescents who are obese are said to be similar with people who have addictive disorders. They follow under the same categories of personality characteristics, disruptive behavior, and brain mechanisms (Barry). Women who were obese and who used substances were tested and findings show that they both prefer to overconsume while eating or using drugs or alcohol because they feel less vulnerable to their hard situations (Clarke). Under current testing, teens who are obese and have used or abused substances have the same personality characteristics.

Both test subjects were seen wanting a reward rather than success (Barry). A Delay Discounting Test was also performed on the same test subjects. This test is to see the preference of a small reward right away or a large reward after a long period- of- time. It was shown that girls who were overweight did prefer the long- term reward over the short- term reward that girls of normal weight chose (Barry). Children who are obese are seen with having behavior disorders.

He or she may have problems with staying focused while in school or while having a conversation. It has been seen as children having a body mass index greater than forty are prone to having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. They can also have trouble switching their attention to different people at once (Petry). Children who have been seen abusing substances are also prone to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and are extremely at hand of abusing cannabis and nicotine before the age of eighteen (Barry). In the past generation, doctors have seen neurotransmitters of obese and

substance abusers look similar because they have both used excitement which excels the brain into having more activity (Petry).

Neurotransmitters have made an increasing amount of dopamine has been blocked, which has the person over excited and makes them hungrier or crave their food (Barry). There are very important differences between obesity and having an addiction. In obese children, there is the hormone called Ghrelin. It is higher when you are hungry or have an empty. This will cause children to over eat until they have the feeling that they are full.

It does have an effect on substance users as well, it makes users have a higher level of this hormone. It also makes he or she go through withdrawal for more of the substance a person is using (Petry). There are many different ways you can prevent this disease from happening. A person should be educated on the effects of obesity. Researchers have also recommended a higher sales tax on junk food so that teens and adolescences do not want to spend money on these foods, but there should be a lower tax on the food that should matter in his or her diets like fruits and vegetables (Clarke).

Another way you can stop the effects of overeating is by using pharmaceutical drugs. This drugs will not alter the damage that has been done because doctors do recommend that a person should perform more physical activity, but the medication will help to portion and eat the suggested amount of food. This will also help a person who is overweight because it has a way that will fill he or she faster so they will not have the chance to overeat (Barry). Another option that can help an overweight individual is to have a behavioral treatment. This treatment is to help control

the amount of food he or she will eat and help them lose weight and get on the right path to help them with a better outcome (Petry).

There are many different options of this treatment, and they include: cognitive behavioral treatment, twelve step groups, (Barry). Cognitive Behavioral Treatment is based off of three main changes: diet, therapy, and physical activity. This helps the teens to set goals for themselves and make he or she want to achieve (Clarke). He or she will be able to say what they want when they are finished with this journey and it make he or she work harder because they know what they want to achieve (Barry). The Twelve Step Group is compared to an Alcohol Anonyms Group it helps a person admit to his or her problem and gives them a way to change their ways in their bad habits and unhealthy eating (Clarke). In conclusion, it does not mean that having some weight gain is unhealthy.

The choices a person makes in his or her everyday life affects the way their body works. Having too much of a good item can be very unhealthy for child, teen, or young adult (Clarke).