

# Shrinking the u.s. – one body at a time

Business



Shrinking the U. S. - One Body at a Time Obesity is a condition where one's Body Mass Index(BMI)is over  $30 \text{ kg/m}^2$ .

Although the United States seems to have countless health and wellness resources, but the obesity trend continues to rise. Perhaps, the government and school systems could be more involved in educating students and parents, and help them to practice healthier lifestyle habits. Obesity is caused by many factors. For example, the toxic food environment and vending machines at many workplaces and schools, as well as unhealthy school meals contribute to the climbing obesity trend. A study also showed that a lack of sidewalks in a community reduces safety when exercising, thereby discouraging people who would otherwise engage in physical activity such as walking and jogging.

Amongst many other factors, stress, eating too quickly and too late in the day, or at night, contributes greatly to obesity. Obesity is dangerous and causes physical issues with negative long-term effects. Studies have shown that when one is obese, it increases their chances of migraine headaches with high frequency and intensity. It also increases one's propensity for various types of cancer. Foot pain, low self-esteem, negative social biases/stereotypes, and bullying are also some of the consequences of obesity. All these have been proven scientifically and experimentally.

School systems and government should become more involved in combating obesity, and could make some changes in order to reduce the growing trend. For example, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) could review snack nutrition guidelines. This agency, USDA, plans to review snack

nutrition guidelines and improve them. While an effort has been made to offer healthier beverages, sugary beverages, are still available in many schools. Also, because a study showed that lack of exercise could be as a result of lack of sidewalks in certain areas, the government should provide more funding to build sidewalks to ensure that people feel safe to exercise.

The school systems and government can make some adjustments regarding how obesity is managed in the United States. However, there must be a connection between the schools and the home. Some schools in the Midwestern region of the U. S. grow their own fresh foods, and the children are involved. That way, they could go home and tell their parents, and then parents could be more motivated to take action and change eating habits.

In Britain, teachers grade their students on health, and more specifically, weight; the higher the child's weight, the lower their grade. It could be challenging, but it tells the parents that obesity is not acceptable. At Hammond High School, there are multiple guidelines that are followed for school meals. The student just needs to make the decision to choose the healthier options. This shows that in order for a child to be healthy, he/she must take advantage of what is offered to them at school.

Then, they should also take responsibility and relay the information to their parents. Although the U. S. government and school systems could become more involved in fighting the obesity issue, it is ultimately the job of the citizens to take advantage of the resources already available to them, and become responsible for their own health.