

# Junk food should be banned from elementary and middle schools research paper

[Health & Medicine](#), [Obesity](#)



It is unfortunate to see an increase in obesity in children in the age group of six to thirteen year olds in the United States since the last thirty years. This is mainly due to the large amount of junk food being served in schools. This junk food is available through vending machines, student stores, and through the lunch itself. This statement up shoots some consequences that are too trivial to be ignored - obesity and other health problems which affect the development and growth in children. Parents also play a major role by influencing the child's food preferences and daily physical activities for a healthy body, mind, and soul. Children in this age group tend to eat a lot of junk food in school and outside of school causing health problems (Lytton, "Why is there so much unhealthy food in schools?", Fooducate. com).

Junk foods are very greasy and overly salty. Some of the common junk foods are potato chips, fries and burgers, which aren't exactly the healthiest form of fighting hunger. Foods are also loaded with lots of sugar such as cookies, cupcakes and candies (McRae, "How does junk food affect health", ehow. com). These foods are rich in saturated fats, sodium, and refined sugar. These foods provide little or no nutritional value what so ever. Therefore, our bodies can't transform junk food into healthy organ, bone, and muscle cells (McRae, "How does junk food affect health", ehow. com). Saturated fats and trans fats are found in most junk foods that cause high blood pressure also (McRae, "How does junk food affect health", ehow. com). These foods also increase the risk of heart diseases. Junk foods which are rich in sodium contribute to kidney problems and may cause some heart problems too. High sugar contents in junk food lead to tooth cavities and osteoporosis (Krepcio, "Obesity and the School-Age Child", Nurse. com). Eating too much junk food

can ultimately result in health problems that can either have long term effects or short term effects. Not all problems caused by unhealthy eating are curable.

The parents tend to take short-cuts for food preparation and they lay emphasis on eating out. Our busy schedules tend us to take the easy way out in preparing meals for our families. I realized that the parents are the role-models for their children's behavior and activities. Unity and cooperation between parents and the kids is necessary in eating modification (Krepcio, "Obesity and the school-age child", Nurse. com). This will lead to a replacement of junk foods with healthy foods. The parents should talk with the children about what is available and allow them to decide whether they will buy their lunches or pack them at home. If they choose to pack their lunches, the children should get help deciding on what foods they will want to have. They may have access to an array of foods from snack machines and other sources. (Lytton, " Why is there so much unhealthy food in schools?", Fooducate. com). In addition, kids must cope with peer influences. It is not possible to let them eat what they please to, but it is reasonable to suggest that they make healthier choices most of the time. The parents being the role model in eating habits and behavior patterns should decide on activities that will lead to physical output which will ultimately result in more calorie-burn out of the kids (Scott, " How to calculate your calorie intake and use it to lose weight", About. com). Parents need to spend more time with their kids in educating them about the advantages of healthy eating patterns.

Children need nutritious foods for proper growth and development (Krepcio, “ Obesity and the school-age child”, Nurse. com). Researchers show that children skip meals and depend on junk food for their nutritional needs. Overweight children have higher risks of health problems (Scott, “ How to calculate your calorie intake and use it to lose weight”, About. com). Therefore, teaching children about eating balanced regular meals is very important. These balanced foods should be served as breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Junk food should be banned from elementary and middle schools because it affects child’s growth and development (Krepcio, “ Obesity and the school-age child”, Nurse. com). Obesity results in abnormal acceleration of growth and it leads to early onset of puberty in girls and abnormalities in sexual development in boys (Krepcio, “ Obesity and the school-age child”, Nurse. com).

Physical activity also plays an important role in control of obesity and other health problems (“ Healthy food choices”, Health Food- Guide). I think parents should encourage their children and participate with them in the physical activities. Family members can make plans for outdoor activities such as playing football or bike riding on the weekends. Encourage the children to eat breakfast daily, and to do at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise (“ Calories burned”, Livestrong. com). Moreover, parents must have limits set for viewing television and playing computer games. This information will help in teaching the children about the benefits of nutritious foods and how making bad food choices can affect their health (Krepcio, “ Obesity and the school-age child”, Nurse. com). Even though obesity can be helped with medication, the best alternative to reduce obesity and reducing

overweight issues among children is to present the reality of junk foods and tell them about healthy foods and indulge in physical workout (McRae, " How does junk food affect health", ehow. com).

Variety in food is important, and servings of fruits and vegetables can be substituted for servings of higher calorie food items (" Healthy food choices", Health Food- Guide). Intake of high calorie foods such as pizza and snack foods are increasing day by day and the consumption of vegetables and fruits is decreasing (McRae, " How does junk food affect health", ehow. com). Large portion sizes of food are being served, which are high in fats and resulting in high intake of calories (" Healthy food choices", Health Food- Guide). Replacement should be made with healthy food choices.

As we saw watching the movie Super Size Me, eating out everyday can cause so many health problems and life-time obesity. We think that if we were to gain weight that, " Oh well, I just have to start working out and before I know it I will start losing the weight I gained by eating all this junk food." Yes, you can lose weight by working out but it definitely isn't as easy as it seems to be or sounds to be (Scott, " How to calculate your calorie intake and use it to lose weight", About. com). It is proven that if you lose one to three pounds a week and continue that pattern then you can lose weight and still be healthy, instead of trying to lose 10 or more pounds every week and harming your body (" Calories burned", Livestrong. com). When cases like this come especially upon kids, parents need to start taking it seriously and educate themselves as well as their kids on how to start living a healthy life for a healthy future.

Everyday schools serve fried and oily foods for lunch, such as fries and corndogs. (Lytton, “ Why is there so much unhealthy food in schools?”, Fooducate. com). These foods contain so much fat and maybe are healthy to a point but still can be substituted with something that is a lot healthier. Pizza is served on an everyday basis and the school pizzas are usually packed with cheese which is all fat and unhealthy for the young teenage body. I’m not saying to completely stop serving these items but they should be rotated around the week and served only a couple of times rather than all five days of the school week. Instead of these the schools should substitute them with items that are a lot healthier and that the students would enjoy eating.

In conclusion, to make efforts to decrease junk food intake there should be cooperation between the children and parents. There should also be replacement of healthy foods instead of junk foods in schools (Krepcio, “ Obesity and the school-age child”, Nurse. com). Junk food should be banned from elementary and middle schools because it causes obesity and health problems, which affects the development and growth in children (Lytton, “ Why is there so much unhealthy food in schools?”, Fooducate. com). To prevent this from occurring parents can help in influencing the child’s food preferences and planning daily physical activities for a healthy body, mind and soul (“ Healthy food choices”, Health Food- Guide).

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