

The cause and effects of childhood obesity essay sample

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



The damaging effects on a child's physical and mental health are two of the main aspects that are associated with childhood obesity. This condition is at epidemic proportions in the United States. (Henry and Martin, 13-6)

Childhood obesity is a condition where a child weights more than the normal weight for a child their age. There are several factors that cause this condition such as food choices, lack of physical activities, and genetic factors. These factors will in turn lead to the different effects on a child's physical, social, and emotional well-being. Childhood obesity is a rising epidemic that affects all cultures. In order to fight this epidemic, a better understanding of the causes and effects of childhood obesity is needed.

There are many factors that cause childhood obesity. A poor diet and lack of exercise or physical activities are two of the hugest factors that contribute to childhood obesity.

With the lifestyles of modern families, a home cooked healthy meal isn't always the first choice. With both parents working, eating out and fast food or take out are normally the most convenient options. While most of these options do offer healthy alternatives, they mainly thrive off selling menu items high in fat, sugar, and calories. These are the foods most appealing to a child which in turn leads to children eating lots of these foods. Another big cause of childhood obesity is the lack of exercise or laziness. Children these days would rather stay inside and watch television or play video games.

"The obesity epidemic is probably the result of evolutionary legacy interacting with our technologically advanced society." (Han, Lawlor, and Kimm, 1737-48) In the past , calorie burning activities such as running,

jumping, and engaging in physical activities outside were joyous times for children.

Nowadays, leisure activities like playing video games are the norm and unfortunately contribute to the problem due to the lack of physical activity. Family and psychological factors are also causes of childhood obesity. The history or background of the child's family is very important. Children are more likely to gain weight if they come from a family where other members are overweight. Extra weight is more likely to be put on in an environment where unhealthy foods are readily available. The child will follow in the family's footsteps if a healthy lifestyle and physical activity is not encouraged. A child's economic status also plays a big part in childhood obesity. The family may not be able to afford healthier food options and chose less expensive foods like frozen dinners and snack foods. Even though the family is purchasing what they can afford, these foods are generally high in salt and fats. In addition, families with lower incomes may not have the accessibility to gyms or workout facilities, due to the areas that they live in.

These factors all play a part in the reasons why childhood obesity is prevalent. If these factors are not addressed they will lead to different physical and mental effects on a child's life. The physical effects this condition can have on a child's life could be life threatening if they are not addressed. One disease that could develop in a child is Type2 diabetes. This is a condition affects the way a person breaks down sugar. Cholesterol and blood pressure regulation problems could also develop as a result of this condition. This harms the cardiovascular system and accelerates the

development of heart disease (Daniels, 16. 1). Next, asthma and other significant breathing problems could develop as an effect of this condition. The extra weight that a child carries could alter the development and growth of their lungs. In addition, this will have an effect on a child's sleeping as well. Additional weight on a child causes abnormal breathing and snoring which are conditions concurrent with sleep apnea.

In addition, to medical problems, childhood obesity can have negative effects on a child's mental health as well. Low self-esteem, behavior and learning problems, and depression are all effects of childhood obesity. Overweight children are often the victims of teasing and bullying by their peers. The bullying and teasing often leads to low self-esteem and depression. Children deal with this feeling in different ways such as shutting down, losing interest in activities, or hiding their emotions by acting out in a negative way. Some children disrupt classrooms thinking that it will take to attention away from their weight. Others withdraw and have little or no social life. It is important for adults to understand that depression and low self-esteem is just as important in children as they are in adults.

Childhood obesity not only affects the physical health of a child but it can also have negative effects on their mental health. Childhood obesity is a complex disorder that is affected by different genetic and non-genetic factors. (Han, Lawlor, and Kimm, 1737-48) Dealing with obesity is challenging condition for children. Each child is affected in a different way both physically and mentally. The key to battling this condition is to know and understand the all of the different causes and the effects that it

generates. Being familiar with the causes and effects of childhood obesity, can help and possibly prevent this condition.

Works Cited

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