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### Obesity: A Growing Concern in America

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# Obesity A Growing Concern in America

Julie Garrity

Wicked Problem Research Paper

April 6, 2021

Obesity has been around since we all could remember. But have you ever wondered why it has not found a solution yet? Have you ever heard of a problem with no solution? A problem without a solution is called a wicked problem. There are many wicked problems throughout out the world today and one example is the problem of obesity. Obesity can be caused many ways, for example it could be genetics, food, inactivity, or something else. Obesity is a real issue, and the rates go up every day it is becoming worse and worse. Susan Straight (2018) says that “Among children and teens, that rate has reached 18.5 percent, also a record and more than triple te 1980 rate. If current trends continue, about 57 percent of today’s youth will be obese by the time they turn 35.” (1). As Straight said in the article, obesity is defined as excess fat

that has accumulated to levels that threaten a person's health, raises the risk for Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other medical problems, many doctors and health officials say. Researchers say being overweight or obese is responsible for about 7 percent of all cancer deaths. The rates for obesity are sky rocketing.

Obesity is a wicked problem. A wicked problem is a problem that does not have a known known solution and there could many different workable solutions. It can get more complicated the more you try to produce a solution because a solution can causes another problem. Obesity is considered a wicked problem because it has many different solutions and once, we produce a solution we have caused another problem. One problem that causes obesity is the food industry and advertising. Fast-Food advertising on television and its influence on childhood obesity is a problem. Childhood obesity is an issue around the world, and it is from fast food restaurant. Commercial advertising of food contributes to the prevalence of obesity among children and adolescents is still an ongoing debate, because it not something that can be solved. If restaurants do not advertise then few people will come to their restaurant, but then if they do advertise then people are going to end up going all the time. Chou, Rashad and write (2008) "Most recently also Kraft Foods have decided to curb advertising aimed at children in an effort to encourage better eating habits" (3). Fast Food advertising cannot be cancelled, and people are not going to stop eating fast food. As much as Fast Food advertising is causing obesity, elementary, high school and even college cafeterias and cafés are also causing children and young adults to become obese. One fact is their cafeterias have mostly unhealthy foods, and when the school offers fruits or veggies no one will take them. School lunches do not always have the healthiest choices. More

U.S. schools offer many opportunities for developing obesity-prevention strategies by providing more nutritious food, offering greater opportunities for physical activity, and providing obesity-related health services. The school food is not the only reason for preventing obesity; kids are not getting enough exercise. Schools must do more for physical activities with the students to get them active and start moving around. In this article gave some different perspectives on how schools are trying to prevent obesity in their students. It helped me better understand the health risks because food and physical activities are not the only reason for obesity. This article talks about how nutrition, and physical activity is linked with school performance. For example, Story, Kaphingst, French (2006) states that “a study involving 11,192 kindergarteners found that overweight children had significantly lower math and reading test scores at the beginning of the year than did their health-weight peers and that these differences persisted into first grade” (3). Being overweight is linked with poor academic performance does not mean that it causes poor performance. Obese and overweighted kids are not doing good in school because being overweight can cause bad school performance.

Obesity is hurting and affecting most people in the United States. J. Michael Gonzalez (2019) emphasizes “Obesity has become a serious health problem in the United States (US): nearly 35% of Americans have obesity.” (1) There are ways we can try to prevent obesity. There are some towns in the United States that are poor, and they do not have enough money for food. The food available for them is either cheap unhealthy food or not affordable healthy food. A way we can solve this is lower the prices of the healthy just so it is easier for those people in those town to get healthy

food. You should not have to be rich to buy healthy food. I think how we can start lower the prices is by starting with volunteers and not buying processed fruits and veggies. By having volunteers, we can process and clean them together, so we do not have to pay extra money for it to get cleaned. By cleaning the fruits, ourselves that saves money and by having volunteers to help clean will get the word out and maybe it can become bigger. Eating healthy in America is expensive. Low-income neighbors frequently lack full-service grocery stores that provide a variety of high-quality fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and lean protein. This solution may cause a problem within the stores, but I think it is worth a chance to lower the prices a little bit so they can afford to purchase healthy food. Another solution I had produced while doing this research is donating healthy foods to those who need them. I think by people donating healthy food for those who need them can make a change. We could donate to school and small towns who need them. By making these small adjustments we can lower the rate of obesity a little at a time. Gaining access to healthy and affordable food can be a challenge for residents. Most supermarkets it is more expensive for healthy food because they must go through more of process which costs more money, so people find it easier it but cheap and nonhealthy food. By lower the prices for healthy food just a little so we lower the rate of obesity is chance some companies will want to take.

Obesity we have learned is a wicked problem and when we come up with solutions, we cause another problem. By lower the prices of food so poor people can by healthy food can affect the stores money. If they lower the prices of food, they are losing money and they are not going to have enough money to have healthy food. Lower prices effect the store because they will lose money. The other solution I had produced

was to help the schools and poor towns by doing donations. By donating healthy foods to these places can help, but it does cause another problem. I think by donating it is showing that we care, and we want to help. We want to help and better everyone living styles just by helping with a meal a day. The problem it causes is people that live in these towns and school cannot just live off these donations. By doing these donations we are trying to help them realize that people care and want to help them. Children and young adults are becoming obese and overweight because of the food they are eating. Children and young adults are eating junk food because it is cheap; and eating fast food because it is faster than a home cooked meal at home.

In conclusion obesity is a wicked problem. A wicked problem can eventually be solved if we put the time and effort in to help. All we want to do is try to slow down the rate and try to help others, so they do not have to live worrying. We do not want the United states to be in the top ten obese countries, we all should want to slow down the rate and take care of our health. I hope by reading this article we all take a second and realize what we are eating and taking care of ourselves. Our bodies and health are very important and we should want to take care of them. The more research we all learn the more it will help everyone in the future.