
The Importance of Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is not a matter to take lightly. In fact, it has proven to be a very serious health problem not just within our state, but within the United States as a nation. Just as the size of our residents have, the issue of obesity has become much larger than it has before. It is debatable as to what can be fully attributed to this lifestyle. In fact, I personally do not believe that the issue of obesity is a matter that can be blamed on one particular issue. At this point in human history, we have become unfortunate enough to see this result from genetics, overeating, inactive lifestyles, or just poor self-care in general. The most unfortunate but most undeniable aspect of obesity is that it is a problem which our children have had the misfortune to inherit. While the nation may be facing this problem, it is one which medical professionals and the general public alike have already acknowledged to the point of taking action against.

This is not to say that obesity is going to affect everyone. Municipalities throughout the country have different statistics regarding their obesity rates. Moreover, children, regardless of their genetics, must have the same opportunities to become who they want to be while they are still young. To prevent future obesity in children, West Virginia, among the rest of the states in the union, have implemented legislative plans to work with the NPAP. (Abildso, et. al, 2016) This plan acknowledges the rising rate of obesity in our nation's children as well as the need to make some significant changes. In West Virginia, the lack of Bachelor's degrees and physical activity is notably higher than that of the US average. Moreover, the population is predominately rural. (Abildso, et. al, 2016) This leads me to believe that a lack of proper education and resources can be attributed to West Virginia's extraordinarily high childhood obesity rate. Moreover, those living in the country as opposed to densely populated areas have fewer access to health resources. According to a study conducted in Charleston, the largest city in West Virginia, 78 percent of surveyed children met the criteria to either be deemed as obese or have hypertension. (Co, et. al, 2015)

Due to the high number of homeschooled students and students in rural communities, a five-year plan has been implemented in the state of West Virginia. (Partington, et. al, 2015) This plan focuses specifically on children. From an early age, children in West Virginia will be educated in regards to physical activity as well as eating habits. As opposed to a traditional physical education course, children participating in curriculums that abide by this plan will be taught the significance of how the material of the class. The goal behind this is to encourage children to be wary of their fitness in order to avoid the many outlets for obesity that are promoted to them and their parents.

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The primary contributors to these findings have been academic minds. In the case of children, one would hope that a nurse or other medical professional would never be in a position to give them news regarding a negative health condition that they do not have the capacity to understand. However, those in medical fields have been the ones to conduct the necessary studies to reach these conclusions. In turn, this has made it easier to pass the necessary legislation to encourage children to be cautious of their health in hopes that they will be able to avoid obesity as adults. While obesity may seem to be a matter of appearing unattractive at an early age, the physical health consequences become more evident later in life.

Nursing professionals were able to obtain the necessary medical knowledge that paved the way for the academic minds that were able to conduct these studies. As a child, obesity may be the only thing that a child knows. In this modern age, it is often a matter of genetics and disregard for one's eating habits and physical appearance. In the case of those who are affected in terms of their genes, other health conditions are also likely to ensue later on in life. It is unfair to the child, who has not been educated to act any differently. As the majority of people in West Virginia live in rural communities and have low levels of education, a disregard for one's personal health and appearance would not be surprising. However, there is much more to this national problem than just outer appearance alone. As the previously discussed study indicated, many of the people who fell into the group of people who were obese also had hypertension. This indicates an extraordinarily high level of blood pressure, especially considering that the surveyed group was comprised of children.

As children are not yet knowledgeable enough to be held accountable for their actions, it is not fair to them that they inherit the same physical health issues that their parents did. These are avoidable through proper dieting and adequate physical activity, however. The five-year plan that was established in West Virginia to accommodate specifically focuses on children who are at risk of becoming obese in their adult years. As this happens, it becomes harder to address one's health conditions and change them for the better. As such, the plan focuses on teaching the importance of physical health at an early age, both in terms of physical activity and proper dieting.

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