Alex Bustillo

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PSY 2301

Public Service Campaign

REDUCING CHILDHOOD OBESITY

My public service campaign will focus on reducing childhood obesity in the borough of Staten Island with the purpose of improving the health of our future generation. I want to inspire others to speak up about the issue and work with me in fighting this horrible epidemic that is affecting our children. According to a study conducted by the office of Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, more than half (57.7 percent) of Staten Island's population is obese or overweight (Staten Island advance, par.1). These alarming numbers must go down and I believe my community campaign will do just that! According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, “Kids who are obese are at a much greater risk for health problems now and later in life” (It’s about eating right, par.1).We must reduce this disease before our kids lifespan becomes less than ours. I am committed to distributing pamphlets all over Staten Island. Poor eating habits are often established at home during childhood, says CDC, therefore, it’s important for parents to eliminate those habits and that is why my pamphlets will be given strictly to parents to get them involved in the process of engaging children in healthy eating and physical activities. But what is the process, you may ask. The process refers to the parents getting educated on the issue of childhood obesity and implementing all the information learned from the pamphlets into their child's life to keep them away from obesity. These pamphlets will be highly educational for them because it will include the causes, consequences, prevention, and treatment.   
 Obesity is a killer and is coming for anyone regardless of ethnicity, but my campaign will mainly focus on helping the African Americans and Latinos because according to CDC, compared with the whites, blacks and Hispanics have higher obesity rates (CDC, par.1). These two groups concern me the most because they might not be aware of the danger of this disease. I know it’ll be hard to get them to eat healthy but I will do my best to get affordable food to their community. Buying healthy food will certainly present a problem to them as it's more expensive and their economic status only allows them to buy cheap and fattening products. Furthermore, these minority groups may have no choice as they are surrounded mostly by fast food restaurants. In my attempt to help them with this issue, I will be writing a letter to the councilman of Staten Island, informing him the danger of childhood obesity and the importance of getting these kids to begin eating healthy. In addition to that, I will ask him to bring more supermarkets to the area that sell fresh vegetables at affordable prices and will also request less fast food places. I will also create a petition on www.Apetition.com and will get people to sign it in order to support my request and let our voices be heard.

With the help of family and friends, I am committed to do anything to get my campaign going. I will be using social networks such as Facebook and twitter in order to promote it. In addition to that, I will place an ad on [www.SIlive.com](http://www.SIlive.com) which is a website with Staten Island’s latest news, with the purpose of informing people about my campaign. Little posters will also be giving out to people in the streets and big colorful posters will be hung in the subway where everyone can see it and be aware of this epidemic that is affecting our children.

Healthy eating is one of the concepts I will be promoting in my pamphlets to parents. My desire is for family dinners to be planned more often with home cooked meals that include vegetables, fresh fruits, and lower fat dairy products. Parents must encourage children to get into healthy eating routines and will do so by informing the child (information that will be provided by my pamphlet) of the consequences that come along with obesity. It's not only important to tell their kids to eat healthy, but most importantly try to shape their behavior into eating healthy through Skinners operant condition. For example, instead of only rewarding a child when they do well in school or behave well, motivate them to think that healthy eating habits also bring positive rewards. They may not understand the impact it has in their health, but rather that their parents will reward them for such behavior. Best results will be seen if parent use a variable interval schedule of reinforcement when rewarding a child. With that being said, parents will not reward a child after an exact time or weight loss, but at unexpected times. Not to mention, some people learn through observation, therefore, parents must also eat healthy in order to motivate such behavior.   
  
 This campaign will make a difference in the life of the child and the parent because it will teach them the importance of exercising and eating healthy. The consequences of this disease will certainly be an eye opener to a lot of parents, especially to those that aren’t aware of the prolong health issues that can have in a child. Childhood obesity it's one major issue to me because I have family members that have struggled with it. I want to reduce childhood obesity in Staten Island for the sake of our kids.

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