The Battle against Poverty and Obesity

Before our main focus was based on the corona pandemic there was something called an obesity epidemic. Now, at this very moment obesity within the united states are at increasingly high rates, ranging from both children to adults. It’s estimated that over 500 million people in the world are currently obese, and if epidemic continues there will be an estimation of 1 billion adults that will be obese by the year 2030. So, what is the obesity epidemic, and what’s the main source to this cause towards Americans? The obesity epidemic is a major health issue within the united states. Those major health issues can result in numerous diseases such as cancer, coronary artery disease, type 2 diabetes, and a stroke. Research studies shows that one of the main sources to the obesity epidemic is in fact due to poverty. It is proven that families which live in Improvised living conditions have a higher disadvantage of making healthier choices, such as eating right and engaging in regular physical activities. It is also proven that poor families don’t have a choice of making healthier choices due to the fact that healthier food are extremely hard to find within their neighborhoods. Have you ever been to a supermarket within a low-income neighborhood? I can assure you that there’s only about 10% of vegetables and throughout every other aisle there’s about 90% of processed food that’s high in sugar content and drinks that contains high fructose corn syrup. Also, did you know that more than 50 million people that are low income, living within the united states have no convenient access to a supermarket? This means that low-income families have to travel at least one or two miles to their nearest supermarket. Where’s the fairest in that? It’s time to help gain back control of this epidemic and help show people that are struggling with poverty and obesity that they are not alone.

Let’s take a deeper look into the obesity epidemic with the main question in mind, “How does poverty cause obesity?” It’s clear to us all that in order to live a long and healthy life you have to eat a healthy diet that filled with whole grains, protein, vegetables and fruits. It’s also said that It’s best to be physically active every day and to maintain a healthy weight and body shape, but what if all of those resources were out of arms reach? That’s where the poverty vs obesity crisis comes in. Poor families have limited food budgets and choices towards resources as such. Within the article “Why poverty leads to obesity and life-long problems” author Hedwig Lee speaks on the problems faced by low-income families and the inconveniences that comes with it. Within the article it is mentioned, “Poor families often live-in disadvantaged neighborhoods where healthy foods are hard to find. Instead of large supermarkets, poor neighborhoods have a disproportionate number of fast-food chains and small food stores providing cheap, high-fat foods.” (Why poverty leads to obesity and life-long problems, Lee 2012). Here, the author speaks on the great disadvantage poor families have towards gaining a healthy meal due to the fact of their low budget income. Low-income families are not only faced with being financially unstable, but they’re also face with not being able to have a choice. Poor families are not able to have that wide variety of healthy food choices that even a middle-class neighborhood may have. They are only left to choose from the significantly poorer quality fresh produce. Which I believe is severely unfair.

The United States of America is one of the world’s wealthiest countries, but according to statistics poverty and obesity are on the raise. So, how do we fight this epidemic? It is said that in order to fight obesity we must first tackle poverty. It’s a conversation that many may ignore but it’s time to bring forth awareness. Within the article, “The true connection between poverty and obesity isn’t what you probably think” by author Tamar Haspel, touches base on things in that such matter. The author provides ideas on how to attack obesity and poverty together, both with one stone. She states the best way to help fight obesity is to “Increase the minimum wage, ensure decent housing, and to provide medical care.” She also states, “If we lift people out of poverty, the obesity problem will ease” (The true connection between poverty and obesity isn’t what you probably think, Haspel 2018). If those Ideas were really set forth would it really destroy this epidemic? It is said that not only is those ideas out of arms reach, but there isn’t enough evidence to support that proposal. I believe we should start off with a simpler approach such as creating programs that can help gather up heathy food and fresh produce to offer to poor neighborhoods. I believe that poor income neighborhoods can come together as a community and help set up different activities that can help make an impact towards their physical and mental health. I also think that investing within low-income neighborhoods with things such as charities and fun actives can help fund for the sources that poor income families so greatly need.

It is proven that the food environment has overpowered the lowest socioeconomic tier. It is also said that the food environment is the real culprit, not poverty. So, what now? what role will you take to end this obesity vs poverty epidemic, how can we solve it? There isn’t an exact answer to solve this epidemic, but there are ways that people watching from the outside looking in can help flatting the curve. Let’s start by developing public policies that can help promote access to healthy, low- fat high-fiber foods within low-income neighborhoods and setting up health care trainers that’s willing to come out to free functions to help support low-income families and their fight towards obesity. By taking these little baby steps we’re not only contributing to the cause, but we’re also showing low-income families that they are not alone, and that there are people who care for their well-being. This is a worldwide problem that can spiral out of control within the next couple of years. It is our job as a community to come together as one and touch force with this epidemic. Why is it that just because a family is low in-come, they should have to settle for less? I think we should all be able to have a choice, especially on what we put into our bodies. So, let’s work together for a greater cause because what may not seem important to you now may turn out to be extremely important within the long run. Together we can work together to help fight and end the obesity vs poverty epidemic.