The Battle of Obesity vs Poverty

What do you think about when you’re hungry, is it something healthy such as a salad, a protein bar, maybe even fruits, or is it a medium size bacon cheeseburger from Mc Donald’s, lets not forget the fries and XL fountain drink. These choices may sound pleasing to many for the simple fact of having a choice. Having a choice to choose between eating healthy choices for the day, or to slaughter your face within the greasiest meal ever known to mankind can sometimes be taken for granted. So, what about those who don’t have a choice, how those this affects them. Can you image not being able to chose what you would like to eat due to not having enough funds to pay for it. Here, within this article we’ll speak on the everyday struggles and obstacles that people living within poverty have to face with being obese.

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 this 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. Obesity is also the leading cause of death not only within the United States, but worldwide. If this continues can you image what it would look like to have 1 billion people that are obese, I can assure you it wont look pretty.

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 to 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, “ It’s poverty, not individual choice, that is driving extraordinary obesity levels” by author Martin Cohen, touches base on the importance of the obesity epidemic and how it deserves much more attention than it’s currently receiving. The author states, “This failure to face up to the underlying causes of obesity is all the more striking as issues of social inequality and justice are dominating news agenda” (It’s poverty, not individual choice that is driving extraordinary levels, Cohen 2018). Here, the author is stating that obesity is just as important as any other political issue. In which I believe he makes a valid point. Let’s say we continue to not bring awareness to obesity and the situation prospers and gets worst. The harmful effects of obesity will continue to raise, and people will start to drop like flies. We should not wait for matters to get extremely worst to be our wake-up call. This situation is already severe. So severe that 2.8 million people died from obesity within the year 2019 alone. That should be enough for a wakeup call.

This article isn’t being written to tell people how they should eat, rather it is being given to be helpful and informative. It’s Informative because its helping to bring forth awareness for people that are currently living within poverty and are being faced with obesity. It’s also helping to bring awareness to those low-income communities who are in desperate need. I hope this major issue matters to you and if it does here’s a few ideas on how to help. First, 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.

So, what role will you take to end this obesity vs poverty epidemic, and how can we help 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.