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AP Seminar - 1

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Processed Food is Affecting Our Children Negatively

“The rise of childhood obesity has placed the health of an entire generation at risk”

(Source F). This rising problem of processed food being sold and spread everywhere to everyone is putting not only adults into harm's way, but to children too. In fact, children are more likely to become obese over time because of the marketing world trying to sell their products to kids (Source E). This is causing many children to be exposed to deadly health issues and be more prone to psychological damage. Childhood obesity is directly and indirectly damaging the bodies and minds of children that are struggling every day with the processed food they are surrounded by.

Horrifyingly, obesity in children is causing health issues and diseases that children should not be acquiring at such a young age in the world today. The amount of processed food that is consumed by children is a leading factor for the cause of being overweight. When children are becoming overweight from the amount of insulin their body is producing to digest the fattening foods, they start to be more prone to develop health side effects. In a powerful TED talk by Jamie Oliver called “Teach Every Child about Food”, he discussed the possible health issues for obese children that are being caused by the food they are eating. He addresses that children can develop heart disease or liver failure as a result of eating high fattening processed food (Source D). He implied that these diseases can cause difficulty for children to function and can even be

fatal in some cases. In the documentary “FED UP” by Stephanie Soechtig, real-life stories of children struggling with obesity were shown to help people see what children are actually going through when dealing with obesity (Source E). She included the fact that sugar is one of the leading causes of diet-related illnesses that are becoming more common in children and that companies are marketing it to kids, making it an even bigger problem. The documentary discussed the importance of stopping food companies from marketing their unhealthy food to innocent children that cannot determine the right food to eat by themselves. Not only is childhood obesity and processed food harming children’s bodies, but it is also harming their physiological health.

Psychological health is an important part of children's lives and sadly, obese children have more mental health issues than most others. According to the article “Perceived Expressed Emotion, Emotional and Behavioral Problems and Self-Esteem in Obese Adolescents: A Case-Control Study” by Merve Çolpan, obese children were more intrusive, irritable, and had a lack of emotional support (Source A). Since obese children usually are prone to be bullied for their weight, this can negatively affect their minds and feelings. Çolpan’s article dove into how children dealing with obesity are more likely to be linked to body shaming and vulnerability. In the article “Psychosocial Implications of Childhood Obesity” by Laura Mihaela, she explains that 96% of 50 obese girls went through some sort of fat-shaming including jokes made about them at school. She later claimed that this stigmatization can cause children to think of suicide or self-harm (Source C). She used a very informal, yet serious tone to express the importance of the mental effects of childhood obesity. These studies are showing that children dealing with obesity are having serious effects on their mental health.

Therefore, it is clear that childhood obesity is a growing problem that comes with many severe side-effects on the bodies and minds of the children having to face it. Not only is the weight of obesity a major problem, but the diseases and mental health issues that are coming with it either directly or indirectly. Everywhere kids are facing direct physical health issues and under the radar mental struggles and nothing is getting much better. "Childhood obesity issue is critically important to me because it's critically important to the health and success of our kids, and of this nation, ultimately (Source B).

Word Count: 647

Works Cited

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