

Childhood Obesity

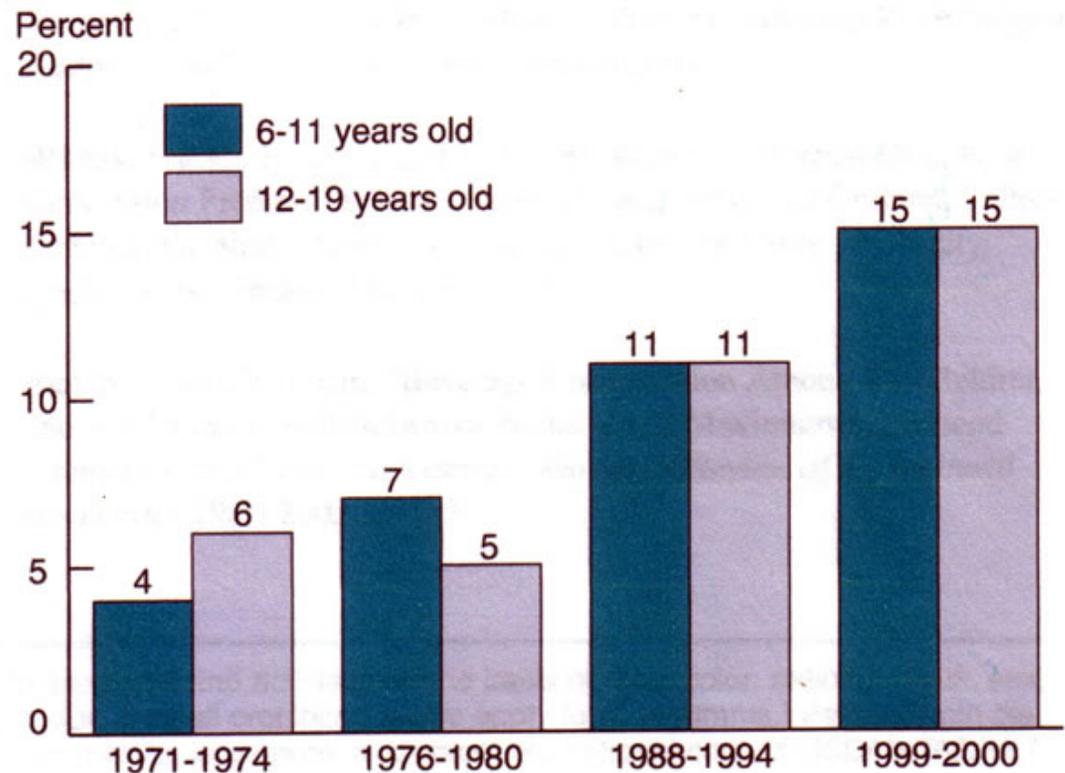
Laura Herman



History

- The first major increase in the weight of children took place in the early 1970's. This can be partially attributed to portion sizes increasing at most fast food chains.
- In the past three decades obesity rates in preschool children have doubled due to the food provided and the lack of exercise available.

Figure 1. Prevalence of overweight among U.S. children and adolescents, ages 6-19 years

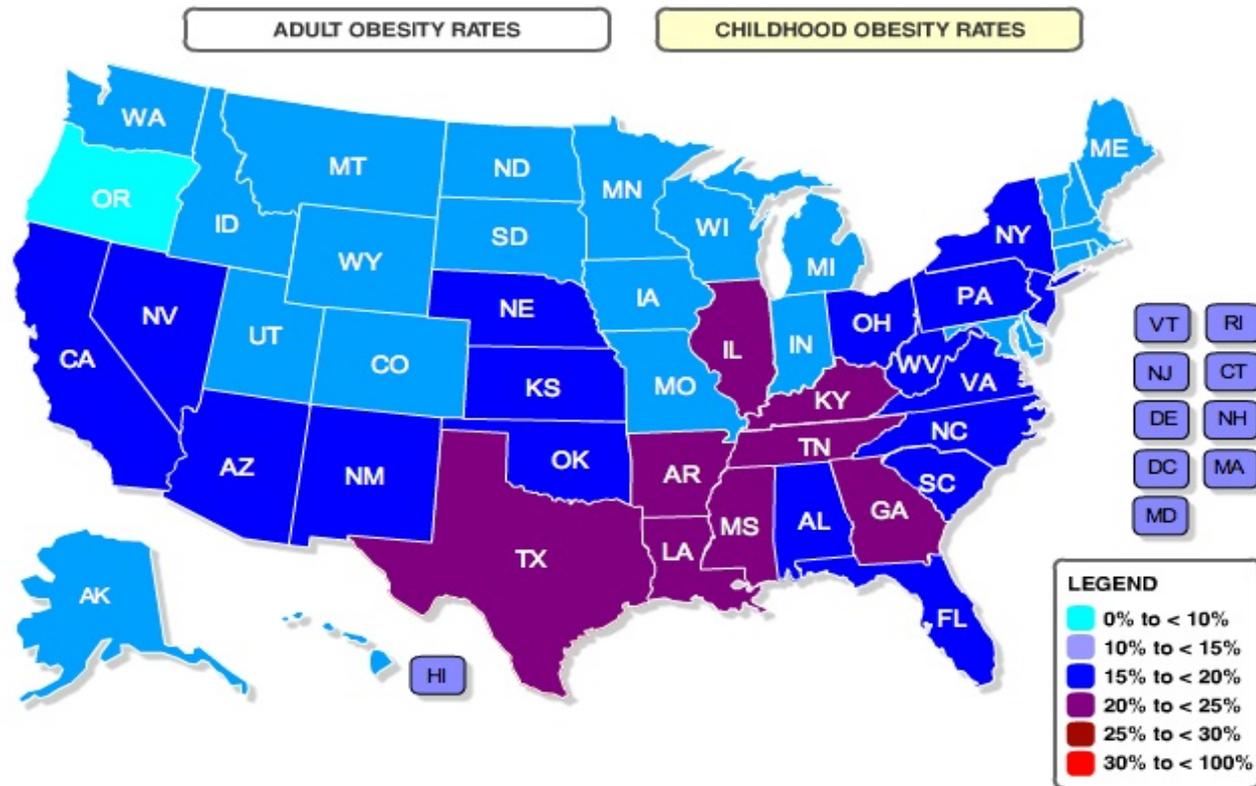


Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.

Current Conditions

- Currently there are more than 23 million obese children between the ages of 2-19 in the United States.
- Also, there have been recent laws to help battle the fight against childhood obesity. The Hunger-Free Kids Act which was signed by President Obama in 2010 hopes to provide public schools with healthier food and reeducate kids on the effects of eating unhealthy foods.

Adult Obesity Rates and Childhood Obesity Rates



Expected

- There will be a heightened awareness of the effects of poor nutrition and lack of exercise in schools.
- The FDA will be forced to reevaluate their nutritional regulations in the public school system.
- There will be more safe places of kids to play in lower income areas which will help kids get an adequate amount of exercise.
- All states will require menu's to label the amount of calories and fats in foods being served at schools and in restaurants.
- As a result of obesity, there will be a rise in the severity and number of diseases which will result in an increase in the cost of health care and government spending.



Feared

- Through continued advances in technology and media, more kids will play on the computer and watch television rather than spend time outside to stay active.
- The FDA will continue to be resistant towards helping the public school system improve the quality of the food that is served to the students.
- Children who live in low income families will continue to become obese due to not having adequate nutrition.
- More physical education programs will be cut out of the public school system.
- Rates of diabetes, various cancers, asthma, and heart disease will continue to increase due to poor nutrition.
- Food campaigns will continue to focus on unhealthy foods.



Preferred

- Funding to public elementary schools will help introduce programs for staying fit and eating healthier
- Schools will receive assistance in coordinating local “farm-to-school” connections so schools will receive fresh locally grown food.
- Eliminate unhealthy food choices in schools like processed foods and sugary sodas.
- Funding will be available to sponsor programs where nutrition and health education are taught in schools.
- Create self sustainable gardens in schools.
- Have more commercials sponsoring healthy alternatives rather than unhealthy snacks.



Aspiration Statement

- By the year 2030, there will be a reduction in childhood obesity through new FDA regulations and education with the help of national leaders.