



# Starvation Fixed with Obesity

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Parents around the nation, struggling to make ends meet. What happens when the paycheck won't allow for a typically sized family to eat? What happens when the only food available is the cheapest, which happens to be fast food.

No nutritionally balanced meal is at the same price of a three-dollar burger from a fast food chain like McDonald's or Burger King. When resources are low, parents are forced to use what they have to provide, but what happens when what they have is not enough, for its simply harder to eat healthy when you are at a low income, or in other words, poor.

The figures from the Health & Social Care Information Centre show 25% of children in more deprived areas are obese. So, why is that?

Responses to these statistics have included appeals for a ban on junk food, but is this the most productive way forward? What society has not realized, is that it's not so much about "junk food," as we define it, but, rather, that all too often these days the junk is the food that's reasonably achievable for low income and needy families.

While fresh and nutritionally positive food is frequently prohibitively costly, less healthy options tend to be the opposite. When parents have to find the cheapest food available for their family, it's nearly always going to be less likely to be fresh; more likely to be highly calorific (therefore "filling"), as well as packed with additives whose addictive and metabolism-skewing properties should not be discounted.

Some food chains have pledged to stop this cycle, however, have they followed through with those promises?

According to a report released by the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at the University of Connecticut, they have.

In 2013, McDonald's promised to remove soda advertising directed at children and swapped this sugary beverage for a healthier option, and one that is affordable. The McDonald's kids menu only features water, milk, and juice as drink options.

In addition to McDonald's, KFC introduced the Li'l Bucket Kids Meal, which came with green beans, applesauce, and flavored water. In 2014, Subway said it would only offer items that met firm nutritional guidelines on its kids' menu.

Numerous nutritional specialists conclude that all Americans, regardless of income, have easy access to a nutritious diet of whole grains, lean meats, and fresh vegetables and fruit- However, is this reality?

In reality, food prices hold a substantial barrier for many who are trying to balance proper nutrition, with affordability. The Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), commonly cited as a model of a healthy low-cost diet, achieves cost goals by relaxing some nutrition constraints and by disregarding the usual eating habits of the American population. Diet optimization techniques, when sensitive to cost and social norms, can help identify affordable, good tasting, nutrient-rich foods that are part of the mainstream American diet.