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Chronic Disease Covered: Obesity

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Class: KINS 215 Exercise is Medicine

Topic Introduction Report

References:

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Big Theme:

The main theme of obesity, specifically childhood obesity is being overweight as a direct result of lack of physical activity. Obesity is defined as having a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for those of the same sex/age (CDC). In an article by the Mayo Clinic, obesity was listed as affecting as many as 1 in 3 children (MayoClinic 1). Childhood Obesity is a chronic disease, meaning it is recurring or persisting. Obesity is being overweight, in this case in young children. Most childhood obesity persists into adulthood, largely due to those children never developing habits of consistent physical activity. Another recurring theme in childhood obesity is the role youth sports can play. Multiple studies cite youth sports as a method to establish routine exercise, to motivate kids to exercise, and to help put physical activity in a positive connotation with sports. The main themes of obesity are the benefits of physical activity and youth sports contribute.

Prevention Methods:

According to PubMed Central (PMC), it is better to prevent obesity rather than cure it when it appears. The PMC cites “genetic, environmental, and developmental factors” when discussing

prevention. Prevention can be signing children up to play sports, controlling access to foods, or encouraging physical activity in the classroom, depending on the factors surrounding them.

There is no one right way to fight obesity; it depends on the individual, their environment, the time and effort they give, and the resources they have. In a recent study in Santiago, Chile, teachers were given an exercise routine to mix in with their classes. This was an attempt at integrating prevention into the youth school system. The study, published in the *Journal of Nutritional Science*, reported: “positive changes in their attitudes towards physical activity” (Journal 1). Physical activity can help obese children lose weight and become mentally and physically healthier. Chile attempted to introduce physical activity in the classroom, where all children could participate, with the children becoming excited about exercise at school. This study is just one example of the role physical activity can play in preventing childhood obesity.

Miscellaneous:

What most people may not realize is that the obesity rate in preschool children is as high as 14 percent (Plos 1). That rate rises across high diversity and low-income preschoolers as well. This rate shows that in a classroom of diverse background students, almost a quarter would be obese on average. This rate of obesity in preschoolers is often reflected in their lifestyles as well.