The Effects of Poverty on Healthy Eating Choices

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Poverty:
The state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support: condition of being poor.

In the United States, the poverty rate is 45.3 million people or 14.5%. This rate shows an increase in over 8 million people since 2008.

Obesity:
Poverty used to be symbolized by severely underweight individuals, but now obesity is a sign of poverty. Why?
- As income falls, the rate of obesity rises
- Dr. Adam Drewnowski (Professor and obesity researcher) found that he could purchase a larger amount of calorically dense junk foods with his dollar than healthy foods that were lighter in calories.

Obese and Obese by BMI:
- Normal weight or underweight (BMI under 24.9)
- Overweight (BMI of 25 to 29.9)
- Obesity (BMI of 30+)
- Extreme obesity (BMI of 40+)

Overweight and Obesity among Adults Age 20 and older, United States, 2009-2010

Estimated Percentage by BMI

6.3%
31.2%
35.7%
33.1%

Poverty and Fast-food:
Approximately 23.5 million Americans live in areas that The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines as a “food desert”.
There are 5 fast-food restaurants for every supermarket in the U.S.
In a recent study done on Americans, 76% of the surveyed audience agreed that the food served in fast-food restaurants is either “not too good” or “not good at all for you”. However, 8 out of 10 of those Americans also admitted to eating fast-food monthly, while almost half say that they eat it at least weekly.
In the same survey, 57% of those aged 18–29 reported eating fast-food at least weekly, while it was 47% of those aged 30–49. 44% for those aged 50–64, 41% for those aged 65 and older.
Fast-food restaurants spend more than 4.6 billion a year advertising their food, targeting children, teens, black youth and Hispanic youth.

What can we do?

(https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/Pages/overweight-obesity-statistics.aspx)
https://www.brookings.edu/research/weight-and-social-mobility-taking-the-long-view-on-childhood-obesity

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