**HARRIS NYADENYA**

**REPORT ON OBESITY TRENDS IN CHILDREN**

**AND ADOLESCENTS**

**Introduction.**

Obesity among children and adolescents has become a significant public health concern worldwide. This report examines the current trends, contributing factors, and implications of obesity in this demographic. Understanding these trends is essential for developing effective strategies to combat obesity and promote healthier lifestyles.

**OVERVIEW**

**1.Global Prevalence.**

**>**According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of overweight and obese children aged 5-19 has risen dramatically, from just 11 million in 1975 to over 340 million in 2016.

**>**In the US, the Centers for disease control and prevention reports that the prevalence of obesity among children and adolescents has increased from % in 1971-1974 to nearly 20% in 2017-2020.

**2.** **Age and Gender Disparities.**

**>**Obesity rates vary by age group. Recent studies indicate that children aged 5-11 are particularly affected, with higher rates of obesity compared to younger children 2-5 years and older adolescents 12-19years.

**>**Gender differences show that boys are more likely to be obese than girls, although the gap is narrowing.

**CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.**

1. **Sedentary Lifestyle**

* School and community programs often lack adequate physical activity components, leading to decreased opportunities for exercise.
* Increased screen time (television, computers, computers, video game) contribute to more sedentary lifestyle, with many children engaging in minimal physical activity.

1. **Dietary Habits.**

* Marketing of unhealthy foods targeted at children has been linked to poor dietary choices.
* The consumption of high-calorie, low-nutrients foods (e.g., fast food, sugary snacks) has significantly increased among children.

1. **Socioeconomic influences.**

* Education about nutrition and healthy habits is often lacking, resulting in poor dietary choices.
* Families with lower socioeconomic status my have limited access to healthy food options, leading to reliance on cheaper unhealthy foods.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS.

1. S**hort-term Effects.**
2. Children with obesity may experience immediate health issues, such as high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels, and insulin resistance.
3. Psychological effects, including low self-esteem, body image issues, and increased risk of depression, are also common among obese children.
4. **Long-term Consequences.**
5. Obesity in childhood often leads to persistent obesity in adulthood, increasing the risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers.
6. The economic burden of obesity-related health issues places significant strain on healthcare systems.

**Strategies For Prevention.**

1. **Increasing physical Activity.**

**-** Schools should implement programs that promote regular physical activity, such as sports, recess, and active transportation.

**-** Community initiatives can create safe environments for outdoor play and physical activity.

**b. Promoting Healthy Eating.**

-Encouraging a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins is essential.

-Limiting sugary beverages and snacks can help reduce calorie intake.

**c. Parental and community involvement.**

**-** Parents play a crucial role in modeling healthy behaviors and making nutritious food choices for their children.

**-** Community education programs can raise awareness about the importance of healthy lifestyles.

**CONCLUSION**

**.** Obesity among children and adolescents is a multifaceted issue requiring a coordinated effort from families, schools, and communities. By understanding the trends and contributing factors, stakeholders can work together to implement effective strategies to prevent and reduce obesity, ensuring healthier futures for the younger generation.