

Imagine a lunchroom full with one hundred bustling, hungry children waiting in a long line to buy their school lunch. Seventy of those hundred kids will buy chocolate milk, and only thirty will buy plain milk. There is something very wrong with this picture.

Those seventy kids are choosing the unhealthy option of milk. They are choosing the addictive drink. It's not fair to kids that schools are serving this. Chocolate milk should be banned in schools.

The drink that many kids consume every day with their school lunches is actually a very unhealthy option.

According to Stephen Burns MD and Associate Professor at the University of Washington "While Coke has only about 26g of sugar in an 8 oz

-serving, chocolate milk has 28g of sugar in one 8 oz serving." That is a lot of sugar to get the nutrients kids need from milk. Chef Jamie Oliver, a health activist and philanthropist says kids gain about five pounds a year from chocolate milk. Chocolate milk is worsening the problem of childhood obesity.

Usually, when people think of addiction, cigarettes, alcohol and video games come to mind. Ever thought about chocolate milk? Kids who drink chocolate milk at school do not want to drink plain milk at home. Since kids are drinking chocolate milk every day at school, the frequency of their consumption makes them hooked on chocolate milk. In a recent study, when chocolate milk was

taken away from schools, total milk consumption dropped 39%. Kids are getting too attached to the taste of chocolate milk.

Serving chocolate milk in schools is not fair to kids. Dairy associations use artificial coloring to dye milk brown. Schools are serving artificial milk to approximately 21.7 million kids across the nation. Suzanne Lasser MD, Primary Care Physician at Group Health Cooperative Medical System says, "Fifty eight percent of the kids eating school lunch qualify for reduced or free lunches. These kids cannot afford healthy ~~to~~ food at home and now they can't get healthy food at school, because schools are serving chocolate milk." It's not fair to kids that schools are serving unhealthy options.

At Thurgood Marshall Elementary, chocolate milk is encouraged to drink more than white milk. You have to reach over two wet, cold crates of chocolate milk to access the plain milk. This is an example of how schools are pushing kids to choose unhealthy options.

Many people think chocolate milk is healthy, because it possesses nine essential nutrients. This is true, but what these people don't realize is that plain milk has those same nine essential nutrients, just without all the sugar, artificial dye, and extra calories. Even though chocolate milk may seem healthy, plain milk will always be the healthier option.

Schools would be better off if chocolate milk wasn't

served. The unhealthy drink would be away from kids. The addictive choice would be gone from school cafeterias. Kids deserve a change. Chocolate milk needs to go, but that isn't the only problem for our kids. Maybe soda needs to go too.