

TC

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Excellent Introduction

- connects w/ reader
- clarifies research question
- presents one sentence summary of findings

Does Sugar Affect My Toddler as He Grows?

Having a child is a battle, but making sure your child eats right is a whole different story. I have a six-year-old son who loves sugary foods and drinks. It's so hard to get him to want to drink water over juice or eat an apple rather than a piece of candy. Don't get me wrong, he loves fruits and vegetables, but somedays he has a lot of sugar in his diet. I never really thought about how it would affect him as he grows older until now. What if the sugar that I allow my son to have affects him as he gets older? Could it be affecting his brain, academic performance, or healthy eating habits? From my research, I learned that sugar does, indeed, have many negative effects on growing children.

Second section is ok but weak—it needs to be developed more (1 to 1.5 pgs.) and use the language of research more.

When I decided to choose this topic, I was unsure where to start. So, I entered my research question into google search engine to see what it will produce. A lot of websites popped up, and I was stuck and not sure where to go. I found two that stood out because they focused they focused on poor eating habits involving sugar. I stuck with them and didn't look back. I only chose two websites when it came to my research sources because I wanted to narrow my research. I also wanted a professional's insight to give my essay another perspective, so I turned to a Nurse Practitioner that I know well. Not only did I speak to a professional, but I also spoke my mom. I figured you couldn't write about giving kids sugar without talking to a mom.

Researching this topic was a little challenging and sometimes I just wanted to quit, but having

patience helped me find the answers I was looking for—not answers just to my research question, but answers for me, a mom, which I would love to share with you.

Strong third section.
Notice the good signposts.

The first result I came across in my research was that poor diet affects your child's mental health. Taubes stated that "sugars are not short-term toxins that operate over days and weeks... but ones that do their damage over years and decades, and perhaps even from generation to generation" (17). This damage can lead to poor mental health as they grow. In Learning Liftoff's article, it states:

That according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average child under 12 consumes 49 pounds of sugar annually." Which is honestly a lot of sugar, approximately four pounds of sugar each month that goes into our children's body. According to American Journal of Public Health article, they "found evidence of a significant, cross-sectional relationship between unhealthy dietary patterns and poorer mental health in children and adolescents.

Who would have known that a poor diet is linked to poor mental health? An article in *AM J Public Health* also noted: "some studies have observed a dose-response relationship between diet quality and mental health in young adolescents" (O'Neil). It shocks me that the choices we make for our kids have a significant impact on their mental health. It is always so much easier to give in than take the time to make healthy choices for them. According to Learning Liftoff, discusses the negative effects: "studies suggest that overindulging in sugar early may have a long-lasting effect." They list a number of negative effects on children that appear in their adolescent years such as depression, anxiety and bipolar disorders. Researchers have found a relationship between excess sugar and mental health, but unfortunately, this information is not

broadcasted to the general population because we continue to feed our children excess amounts of sugar in their diet.

Another thing I learned from my research is that sugar affects children's academic performance. I'm not sure about you, but growing up my mom was really big on grades, If I didn't have all A's, it was a big problem. I didn't have many issues in school growing up, but a lot of my classmates did because they couldn't really sit still or pay attention. Was sugar one of the reasons my classmates couldn't sit still or be attentive? I'm not sure, but according to the Learning Liftoff, it is. Learning Liftoff states:

when people consume a lot of sugar and then attempt challenging tasks, like math problems, the brain's hypothalamus allows the body to release a lot of cortisol. Known as the stress hormone, this substance impedes memory. When children's bodies are flooded with cortisol at school, they struggle to pay attention to their lessons and find it difficult to sit quietly. When their attention is elsewhere, they find it difficult to retain information they're taught.

After reading this article from Learning Liftoff, I thought about where was the evidence to support it. I needed proof, and I found it in an article by Adrienne O'Neil published in *AM J Public Health* with research about the impact of sugar on brain function: "researchers from the University of Southern California fed adult and adolescent rats beverages with sugar levels comparable to that found in ordinary sodas. After a month, the adults showed normal brain function. However, the adolescent rats showed reduced memory and learning capacity." This is what happens to our children, and it is honestly mind-blowing, I never thought that choosing a lollipop over an apple could be so damaging. Learning Liftoff, states that, "whether your children attend a traditional school or learn online through a program like K12, too much sugar

can and will affect their educational outcomes." No matter how good the school is, sugar can impact their learning.

Another finding from my research was about the negative impact of sugar on a child's memory. Mrs. Licorish, the Nurse Practitioner I spoke to, also informed me that sugar can impair a child's memory. It's hard enough for my toddler to remember I told him to make his bed, and now I know that sugar could be to blame for this. According to Mrs. Licorish, "sugar affects the memory by keeping the brain cells over simulated, in other words; continuously firing. Which causes temporary cell burn out, this affects short-term memory rather than long-term memory." Being a parent didn't come with instructions on what to feed our kids, but I sure wish it did because many parents would avoid giving their kid's sugary foods. Learning Liftoff reflected what Mrs. Licorish had stated: "in the short term, sugar consumption will only impair memory temporarily." For two different sources to state the exact same thing, it must be true, and if you're still on the edge, I have more proof. Earlier in this essay, I mentioned research from the University of Southern California that experimented on rats. During their experiment, they also found the adolescent rats to have inflamed hippocampus. The hippocampus is part of the brain that forms, organizes, and houses memory (O'Neil). The fact that this part of the brain is affected is something important because it implies sugar can cause my toddler to have short term memory impaired.

The last significant finding regarding my research question is that sugar can affect my toddlers' food choices as he grows older. He may grow up to only choose sugary foods over healthy items due to poor diet choices as a kid. Has it ever occurred to you when you take your toddler to the doctor why they always ask what does your child eat? Well, according to a book I read, it states: "a nutrition assessment is an analysis of an individual's approximate nutrient

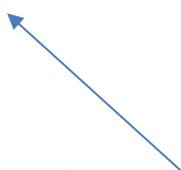
intake and relates it to the history, physical examination findings, body size measurements and biochemical measures" (Ball et al., 94). This assessment is done to identify at-risk qualities for poor nutritional intake in individuals. According to Learning Liff, "researchers from Pennsylvania State University have found that the more added sugar children consume, the less likely they are to eat healthy brain foods like grains, vegetables, fruits, and dairy products." This proves that kids who eat unhealthy tend to not choose to eat healthy as they grow older. I could never have guessed that what I feed my toddler can affect his choices he makes when he grows older. I asked my mom whether I ate a lot of sugar when I was little, and she said I've always chosen something sweet over anything healthy. The reason I know this answer to be true is because I still choose sweets over anything healthy. Knowing this to be true and allowing my son to have so much sugar in his diet, I am setting a stage for multiple problems for him as he grows older. Therefore, I need to start making healthier choices for my son in order to prevent an unhealthy lifestyle that may lead to both memory and mental health problems.

Good fourth section, but a bit short and needs more language of research. Should be .5-1 pgs.

The research throughout this essay was not easy; it felt like a rollercoaster figuring out what to use and what not to use. There were times I lost focus while trying to read through an article, or even to find an article. The hardest part was putting it all together. I had all my quotes that I wanted to use from each article in a separate word document. I was stuck on how to blend more than one source into a paragraph. It felt like a really big puzzle and I was not sure where the pieces would fit. I've noticed that when it comes to researching I look for things that stand out and I don't like to choose a source that many people may choose. I like to think out of the box and talk about things other people may not address, so it gave my

research better results than I expected. Not only am I letting people know what sugar does, but I'm also learning about it myself and applying it to my family's lifestyle.

This topic was important to me because I have a toddler who currently doesn't have an awful diet, but he does love to eat sugary foods. I wanted to dig deep into what sugar can do to him as he grows, not just for him, but also for my 3-week-old daughter when she is able to eat regular food. After researching this question, I felt like I had learned so much, that now I understand the effects sugar has on my children as they grow. Sugar can cause mental health problems, impair memory, and affect academic performance. It tastes so good but obviously packs a punch: sugar can do so much damage that it is the big bad wolf in sheep's clothing that entices our toddler's palate each day. As parents, we need to be our children's shepherd and protect them from this sweet demise.



Excellent Conclusion! Nice length.

Excellent Works Cited
page!

Works Cited

Ball, Jane W et al., Seidel's Guide to Physical Examination, 8th ed. Elsevier/Mosby, 2014.

Learning Liftoff. "The Effects of Sugar on a Childs Academic Performance." *Learning Liftoff*, 25 June, 2015, www.learningliftoff.com/the-effects-of-sugar-on-a-childs-academic-performance/#.WhjCNkyZOU2. Accessed November, 2017.

Licorish, Renee. Personal Interview. 21 November, 2017.

O'Neil, Adrienne et al., "Relationship Between Diet and Mental Health in Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review." *AM J Public Health*, October 2014, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4167107/. Accessed 20 November, 2017.

Taubes, Gary. *The Case Against Sugar*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.

Thomas, Amy. Personal Interview 21 November, 2017.

Really good Appendix!

Appendix

Ball, Jane W et al., Seidel's Guide to Physical Examination Eighth Edition. Elsevier/Mosby, 2014.

This is a source from a college textbook from a Nurse Practitioner. It was written by multiple authors. It was made to inform and educate its audience. It was published in 2014. Sources that were published recently are great sources to use. They are more relevant and understand more than something made in the 1900s. This book gathered information from other sources to use in the book. It has great information that could be used for a lot. I saw a lot of information that I wanted to use throughout my essay. I figured college professors used it then it would be a great source for me to use.

Learning Liftoff. "The Effects of Sugar on a Child's Academic Performance." *Learning Liftoff*, 25 June, 2015, www.learningliftoff.com/the-effects-of-sugar-on-a-childs-academic-performance/#.WhjCNkyZOu2. Accessed November, 2017.

This article comes from the Learning Liftoff. It is an article that was made to inform and educate their audience. Throughout this article, the author cites their references to give other authors credit. It was published on June 25, 2015, which makes it quite relevant to today. It is posted on a popular website that includes a lot of other articles with information. It has a lot of key evidence and information throughout the article. It names good places that they have received their information from. There are also links throughout the article for you to be able to look and make sure the information is true.

Licorish, Renee. Personal Interview. 21 November, 2017.

I wanted to use a different source like a professional. My mother in law is a Nurse Practitioner and has been for a very long time. She was in the Army for 20 years and retired, and now works at a hospital. She has had a lot of experience as a nurse and has seen a lot and done a lot. She has more knowledge than any book I have read. She has had hands-on experience. I believe this is a great source because it's a real person, not an article. You're able to hear real stories face to face.

O'Neil, Adrienne et al., "Relationship Between Diet and Mental Health in Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review." *AM J Public Health*, October 2014, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4167107/. Accessed 20 November, 2017.

The reason why this is a good source is that it is a peer-reviewed article. It comes from a .gov website. It was made to educate the audience. This source also used outside sources throughout this article. The authors also cited their references. This source came from multiple authors and was published by AM J Public Health. It has key evidence that I wanted to use in my essay. It explains how they got their information and how they conducted their experiments. It is easy to understand and the flow throughout the article is great. It also tells you each authors background and where they came from.

Taubes, Gary. *The Case Against Sugar*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.

This source is from a book. Its author is Taubes, Gary. It was published on December 27, 2016. It was made to educate and inform the audience. It not only tells you how the author feels towards sugar. It also gives you a lot of other sources throughout the book.

He has in-text citations and also lists his references. He doesn't just have sources from one organization, company, or website. He pulls evidence from a lot of other sources. It holds a lot of information and hits a lot of key points throughout this book.

Thomas, Amy. Personal Interview 21 November, 2017.

I interviewed my mom. She has raised 3 children and is currently raising her last one.

This essay is about toddlers and sugar. So, I thought why not ask a mom what she thinks.

She has 4 kids, a 27-year-old, 24-year-old, 19-year-old, and an 8-year-old. She has a lot of experience on toddlers. I wanted an inside on parents and I feel like that was the best for my essay. Gives the audience information and somewhat of an opinion from another mom. Gives the essay a little more of an edge with speaking to an actual person. It also informs the audience very well.