"How Should We Reduce Obesity in America?"

Obesity is a health problem that is growing rapidly in the United States and other parts of the world. In this country, it is epidemic. About one in three Americans is obese.

It may be natural for people to gain at least a little weight later in life. But that is no longer the issue. The problem today is that by the time American children reach their teens, nearly one in five is already obese, a condition all too likely to continue into adulthood.

This issue guide asks: **How should we reduce obesity in America?** It presents three different options for deliberation, each rooted in something held widely valuable and representing a different way of looking at the problem. No one option is the "correct" one, and each option includes drawbacks and trade-offs that we will have to face if we are to make progress on this issue. The options are presented as a starting point for deliberation.

Option 1: Help People Lose Weight

Take a proactive stance in helping people lose weight--persuasion and education by families and doctors, and the establishment of consequences by employers and insurance companies. Losing weight is a personal decision but it is one that affects all of us.

Option 2: Improve the Way Our Food is Produced and Marketed

Although our food system does a good job of keeping the cost of food low, many of the resulting products are both very unhealthy and very enticing. We need to get better control of our food production system, including how foods are marketed to us, and ensure more equitable access to healthy foods.

Option 3: Create a Culture of Healthy Living and Eating

This option would promote overall, lifelong wellness by making sure our children start learning to make better choices as early as possible. This option also calls for reshaping our neighborhoods and buildings to help us get more exercise.