



April 20, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Furious

Monday I challenged you about the payment for your health habits coming due, sooner or later, depending on what they are. Today, it's about your children. They need leadership. They need to have someone help them make better choices—not make the choices for them, but teach them and give them the opportunity to choose.

Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution is attempting to work with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to help provide those choices, and they're blocking him at every turn. Sure, it's reality television and we see only what the producer wants us to see. Conflict attracts our attention without a doubt. But it's criminal not to provide the opportunity for better choices. As long as it meets the government guidelines, comes in at the same price, why would we not want healthier foods available for our children?

Granted it's a big job. The LAUSD must serve 122 million meals a year that cost no more than 77 cents each and meet federal guidelines, and that's a hard job by anyone's standard. They say they're barring Oliver because they want to avoid the drama and conflict that comes with reality TV. And how's that working out for you? At this point, they've got all the drama and conflict without Oliver's expertise in improving what kids are fed.

I've asked this before, but do you know what foods your children eat at school? Putting broccoli on the menu day after day may meet guidelines, but is it doing anything for kids besides teaching them to hate broccoli? When you combine nutrition education with better choices in the lunch room, you provide the opportunity for them to learn to eat healthier. It will never be 100%, but it's better than just offering tater tots every day because it counts as a vegetable and kids will eat them. If that's the best your school can do, it's time for you to get furious and do something about it. Because either we pay this price now or we'll have a generation of obese diabetic pre-teens whose lifespans will be shorter than their parents and grandparents. If that doesn't make you mad, I don't know what will.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

P.S. Late-breaking news: LAUSD is now reconsidering their stance and may meet with Oliver. Better late than never.

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