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JAMIE'S PLATFORM FOR CHANGE

WHY AMERICA NEEDS A FOOD REVOLUTION – NOW

***"This Food Revolution is about changing the way we eat. We need to start cooking again, to make sure our children don't grow up on a diet of processed food, at school or at home, and so they won't have to battle obesity and diet-related illnesses when they grow up. Cooking is one of the most important skills a person can have and it has been proven that families who cook together eat better. A small change in your kitchen in could save the life of someone you love. America needs to do something now, before it's too late."
Jamie Oliver***

America has the biggest obesity problem in the world but it's a global problem and Britain isn't far behind. It causes bad health which shortens lives, and leaves families grieving for loved ones. Obesity affects nearly one in five children. Their future is likely to involve heart disease, diabetes, and immobility.

We have lost cooking skills in the home. Young people today don't know how to feed their families. Cheap processed food in schools is undermining education and health. Government regulations aren't protecting consumer health, and industry doesn't seem to care.

But all of this is preventable. I believe it boils down to one simple answer: cooking. Cooking skills give people a basic knowledge of food and help them make more informed decisions about what to eat. Without these skills, people have no choice but to eat fast food and processed meals.

If we really want to tackle obesity and improve the health of this fantastic country, we need to tip the balance back in favor of fresh meals. We need to fall in love with real food again.

My Food Revolution is about bringing people together who care about the future of their children, about their right to good health and a proper diet. I know there are millions of people across America who care about these things and I've seen how, with a little confidence and basic knowledge, people quickly change the way they eat. This can happen all over America. We just need the support of your government, and your food and healthcare industries to do it.



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HERE'S WHAT GOVERNMENT CAN DO FOR SCHOOLS

1. Put meals cooked from fresh food at the heart of the school lunch program.

Through the federal meal program, taxpayer dollars are being used to give 30.5 million kids in America a diet of processed food. Cheap nuggets, fries and snacks have no place in the school system. Kids need real food, not additives. Government regulations should ensure that the only food available in school is healthy food and balanced meals, cooked from scratch with fresh ingredients. Raw food is only a health risk with bad ingredients and poor kitchen hygiene.

2. Find more money for better food. Across America, just \$1 per child is spent on the food in a school lunch. It costs more to buy a cup of coffee. That's not enough to put a good meal on the plate. The school meals sector cannot improve the quality of school food without more money. The £4.5 billion over 10 years proposed for the new child nutrition bill is half what President Obama has asked for. The promise of just six cents more per meal will not empower schools to make the changes that are so badly needed.

3. Make radical improvements to school nutrition standards. How can a portion of fries be classed as a vegetable when kids aren't eating enough salad and greens? People are ticking nutrition boxes. No one is looking at the actual meal on the plate. School meal standards need to restrict processed foods and make freshly cooked meals the backbone of the service.

4. Love your lunch ladies. School cooks feed the nation's children. They need recognition for the important work they are doing. Opening packets and reheating processed food has taken the skill and pride out of the kitchen. Funding is needed for training and equipment to help them start cooking from scratch again.

5. Put professional cooks in charge. Nutritionists and accountants aren't professional cooks. Bean counters don't know how to put good food on the plate. School nutrition teams need experienced caterers to run the kitchens.

6. Teach every child in America to cook. The food pyramid and nutrition lessons don't teach kids the food skills they need for life. Every child should learn how to cook at school, and when they graduate, every child should have a basic knowledge of where food comes from, and know how to make 10 simple meals from scratch. Farm to School should be part of every child's education.



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COMMUNITY COOKING NEEDS SUPPORT

Employers, local government, non-profits and healthcare must invest in community health and help people to change the way they eat.

- 1. Set up a national network of community kitchens.** Staff them with an army of culinary professionals. Get them to teach families, teachers, employers, community carers and health workers how to cook. People need to pass on their food skills to the next generation. Make cooking part of the community.
- 2. Train healthcare and social service professionals to cook.** Medics, health and social care professionals need to learn how to cook as part of their nutrition training. They work in the community to help improve people's dietary health, but many have no understanding of food.
- 3. Inspire a new generation of home economics teachers.** Home economists are a dying breed. We need them for the next generation, to work in schools and colleges, health and community care centers, on family welfare programs, and especially in poor communities.

OBESITY IS BIG BUSINESS - CORPORATE AMERICA MUST CHANGE

The **food industry** needs to take more responsibility for its customers and be more honest about its products. They might be the backbone of the American diet, but they are starting to shorten people's lives.

Here are four things they must do:

- **Introduce responsible labelling.** Food packaging is misleading and needs to be better regulated.
- **Cut out additives** that add no nutritional value to food, especially sugar and sweeteners.
- **Support cooking education** to tackle obesity and boost family food skills.
- **Appoint a food ambassador** in every office, factory, warehouse, and cafeteria to educate employees about food and teach them to cook.

The **healthcare industry** needs to invest in the health of its clients. A good diet is probably the cheapest form of health insurance on the planet. In Huntington, two local organisations are



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funding the school meal program and community kitchen. They are doing this because they believe it will improve local health prospects and lower future overheads. Healthcare should:

- Ensure food skills are part of dietary advice. Healthcare staff need basic training before they can show their patients – especially obese and post-bariatric surgery patients – how to change what they eat, especially for obese people and post bariatric surgery.
- Reduce the risk of diabetes and obesity by investing in annual health checks for families with kids.
- Fund community cooking programs to improve local health prospects and help families with dietary problems.

PEOPLE OF AMERICA HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO: JOIN THE REVOLUTION NOW!

- 1. Sign the petition on my campaign website** www.jamiesfoodrevolution.com/petition
Show government and industry how many of you care about the health of your children and what they get fed at school.
- 2. If you can cook, teach others. If you can't cook, learn how.** Pass on your food knowledge to your kids, your family, your friends. Pledge to make a meal from scratch with your family once a week. Don't let cooking become a thing of the past.
- 3. Ask your child's school these questions:**
 - What's the food like? Would I want to eat it?
 - How often are the meals cooked from fresh ingredients?
 - Exactly what is in the processed food on the menu?
 - When will you stop serving junk food for school lunches?
 - When will my child be taught how to cook at school?
- 4. Complain.** Start a letter campaign to supermarkets, food retailers, manufacturers, and fast food chains. I believe that the people of America are much more powerful than big business. Together you can challenge the food industry and demand better for your families, employees, and customers.
- 5. Know what's in your food.** Look at the label. If the ingredients list is full of things you don't recognise, don't buy it. If it has things you could find in your grandma's pantry, then do. You can make all the food in the world without these extra additives. Burgers, pizza, ribs, and pasta – the real versions don't have all of that stuff in them.



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Huntington West Virginia

Last year, I spent three months working in Huntington WV, filming my TV series, Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution. I had three challenges:

- **School Meals:** To replace the processed school food with meals that were cooked from fresh ingredients, met the nutrition standards, and appealed to the kids.

The school meals I trialed are now being rolled out to the rest of the school district.

- **Home:** To show families that cooking at home from scratch is better for them, not to mention cheaper.

We set up a community kitchen in Huntington that holds two cooking classes a day for local families. It is now being run by a local healthcare charity.

- **Main Street:** To get the whole town cooking again and show people that they do have an alternative to the processed and fast food that's invaded the American main street.

We went into churches, colleges, workplaces, the local fire station, and as many places as we could think of, to teach as many people as possible a few quick and simple meals. That has changed people's lives.

In Huntington I learned that obesity doesn't just affect one person, it affects whole families and communities. One teenage girl I met has already lost both her father and her uncle to obesity. Another has been told that, unless she loses weight, she will not live to see 30. Doctors told a young mom I worked with that unless she changes the family diet, her 13 year-old son will develop diabetes. A local funeral home director in Huntington says that most of the deaths among 25 to 35 year olds are now down to obesity.