

Eating sweets every day in childhood 'increases adult aggression'

October 1 2009

Children who eat sweets and chocolate every day are more likely to be violent as adults, according to new research.

A study of almost 17,500 participants in the 1970 British Cohort Study found that 10-year-olds who ate confectionary daily were significantly more likely to have been convicted for [violence](#) at age 34 years.

The study, published in the October issue of the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, is the first to examine the long-term effects of [childhood](#) diet on adult violence.

Researchers from Cardiff University found that 69 per cent of the participants who were violent at the age of 34 had eaten sweets and chocolate nearly every day during childhood, compared to 42% who were non-violent.

This link between confectionary consumption and violence remained after controlling for other factors.

The researchers put forward several explanations for the link. Lead researcher Dr Simon Moore said: "Our favoured explanation is that giving children sweets and [chocolate](#) regularly may stop them learning how to wait to obtain something they want. Not being able to defer gratification may push them towards more impulsive behaviour, which is strongly associated with delinquency."

The researchers concluded: "This association between confectionary consumption and violence needs further attention. Targeting resources at improving children's diet may improve health and reduce aggression."

More information: Moore SC, Carter LM and van Goozen SHM (2009) Confectionary consumption in childhood and adult violence, [British Journal of Psychiatry](#), 195: 366-367

Source: Cardiff University ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Eating sweets every day in childhood 'increases adult aggression' (2009, October 1) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-10-sweets-day-childhood-adult-aggression.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.