

Can we wire children's brains to not crave junk food?

September 23, 2014

PBS:

A study published in *Psychological Science* says it is possible to train children's brains to resist craving junk food.

The cognitive strategy was developed by researchers at Columbia University, who took MRI brain scans of 105 children, adolescents and young adults while they looked at images of “unhealthy but appetizing” food. The participants rated each picture by how much it made them want to eat it. When asked to visualize the food far away, as well as focus on the shape and color (versus imagining the food up close, in addition to its taste and smell), researchers saw a 16 percent drop in response, i.e., cravings.

The study also revealed that even when using the strategy, kids' food cravings have a higher baseline than adults, meaning they are much more powerful. Analyses of the MRI scans found this is potentially linked to a less developed prefrontal cortex — an area of the brain that regulates self control.

Read the whole story: [PBS](#)