

# Nutritional Lifestyle Designs

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## WHY SHOULD MY CHILDREN CHANGE THEIR DIET?

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How many times have you read an article that indicates that a change in food will improve your families' life? Then you think I would like to try this but... I don't have time, where do I start, and before you know it you have talked yourself out of even giving this good, whole, healthy diet a chance.

Food is fuel. Just as you would never put inferior oil in your car, you should find no reason to let your child ingest foods that have partially-hydrogenated fats, chemicals and dyes. Why is it that altering our food choices is so threatening? Optimum performance is our goal. If that means 'sacrificing' junk food, it is a very small price to pay.

- \* Specific good fats are essential for brain function.
- \* Studies indicate a dairy-free diet may improve asthma.
- \* Hidden food allergies, food additives, and sugar may contribute to ADD and ADHD.
- \* There are numerous books and articles stating that a casein-free and gluten-free diet may improve behavior in ADD, ADHD, Autism and other Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

All parents want the best for their children, to grow to be the most able, to have the ability to cope and learn. A child's nervous system will function better with the right nourishment.

Food sensitivities may be responsible for many physical and behavioral problems such as stomachaches, headaches, bed-wetting, excessive whining and crying, sleep problems, hyperactivity, temper tantrums, aggression, fatigue, intestinal problems, ear infections, and much more.

A reaction may occur immediately or take up to 36 hours to manifest. The best way to stop a reaction to a particular food substance is to remove that food from the person's diet. If you are saying to yourself, "I can't do that because I have other children", my suggestion is to make it a family project. For example, for the next 2 weeks we are going to eat only dairy-free foods. There should not be any food that can't be eliminated from one's diet for 2 weeks. In fact, if you observe 'withdrawal' from that particular food, that is an indicator of a problem food.

It is extremely important to keep a food and behavior diary.

What results are you looking for?

When following a strict diet, you will observe changes. The families that I work with have noted accelerated verbal skills, better sleeping, and a lessening of head banging, a lessening of toe walking and much more.

Treatment often is a multidisciplinary project. Professionals involved may include: a dietitian, pediatrician or family doctor, occupational therapist, gastroenterologist, speech therapist, pharmacist, psychologist, and psychiatrist.

No one will tell you that changing your diet is easy, but the results can be so rewarding.

Ultimately, food is fuel. If we provide the fuel our bodies truly need, the response will be positive. Parents have a great responsibility to be good examples for their children. If you would like your child to eat a healthy, nourishing diet, it would be quite helpful if you would also eat a healthy, nourishing diet. Encourage your child's school and/or day care to look at food issues and choices closely – most children adapt to what is available.