

Pure Facts

Newsletter of the Feingold® Associations of the United States



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When You Suspect a Learning Disability

Help for the child with a learning problem may be difficult to find, but it's there if you look long and hard.

Diana Moreland's son is a bright 9 year old who has just entered a program for gifted children. Like many Feingold youngsters, the diet helped dramatically, but he still has problems in a few areas.

It shouldn't be hard to find a program which would help Edward overcome his learning disability; schools which receive federal funds are required to provide appropriate services for *all* children, including those who need extra help in one area.

But like many parents, Diana found that while schools teach children the importance of rules, they don't always follow them.

A.D.D. and A.D.D.H.

At the heart of the problem is the fact that federal regulations do not consider attention deficit disorder (or A.D.D., the newest name for what used to be called "hyperactivity") to be a form of learning disability. The student identified with A.D.D., then, doesn't qualify for programs designed to help learning disabilities. (An organization in Minnesota,

named Co-Ed, is trying to get this changed; their number is 612-425-0423 or 612-755-0997.)

Typically, Diana observed, the A.D.D. child is the little girl who has difficulty with school work, but whose quiet behavior doesn't disrupt the class.

When the label is attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity (A.D.D.H.) it is considered an "emotional handicap", and the child is eligible only for a class designed for emotionally disturbed children.

Learning Disabilities

Even when the diagnosis clearly indicates a learning disability, there are still obstacles. In order to qualify for assistance, the school will probably require the child to be performing significantly below his ability. "The student who is not in serious enough trouble academically simply stays in his regular class and gets an 'F'" noted one frustrated parent.

Fortunately, this bleak picture is not true for all school systems. There are enormous differences regarding their willingness and ability to help the child with a learning problem. But if you



happen to be in an area which is unresponsive, you will need plenty of information and stamina to get help for your child.

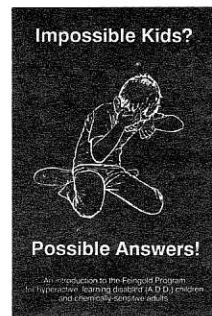
Where to Begin

The first place to begin is the county or city education office; ask to speak to the person who is responsible for the exceptional student education ("E.S.E.") program, and find out what options are available.

Continued on page 2

Feingold Videotape Now Available!

Thanks to a grant from the Feingold Foundation for Child Development, the association now has a 21 minute promotional videotape. (1/2 inch VHS)



The tape is an introduction to the Feingold Program; it is designed to give the viewer a general overview of our diet, Dr. Feingold's basic concepts, and the scientific foundation for them.

Annamarie Vertel directed the project, volunteering her time and skills. Members of the Feingold Association of the Bay Area (San Francisco) were our stars, and we are grateful to them all.

You can obtain copies of this videotape and will find many uses for them. It's a great way to introduce a friend or relative to our program. PTA and church group meetings can be centered around it — with you answering questions afterward. By donating a copy to your library or your child's school, other families will learn of the help available to them.

Does your hospital have a library of health information? How about your family doctor or dentist? Local cable TV stations air tapes such as this; would you contact one in your area?

We would like to know how this resource has helped you or your neighbors; please write and tell us.

The videotape is available by contacting: FAUS Video, P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306. The cost is \$10 for one tape (includes postage), 5 or more tapes to the same address are \$5 each (postage included).

The Feingold® Associations of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, are non-profit volunteer organizations whose purposes are to support their members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate public awareness of the potential role of foods and synthetic additives in behavior, learning and health problems. The program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors, and the preservatives BHA, BHT, and TBHQ.

Special Issue on Learning Disabilities

When You Suspect, from page 1

The term "exceptional student education" covers a multitude of individualized programs, including:

- SLD - specific learning disability
- EH - emotionally handicapped
- TMH - trainable mentally handicapped
- EMH - educable mentally handicapped

If you are dissatisfied with the information you receive from your local ESE office, contact the state ESE office, located in your state capital.

It's a good idea to make your presence known; Diana attends school board meetings on a regular basis. In addition to being persistent, be polite, reasonable and understanding, she emphasizes. School board members are concerned citizens who put in many hours for the benefit of the children, and their salaries don't begin to compensate them for their work.

Resources

Contact some of the organizations which have formed to help children with learning problems. These include:

- * Parent Educational Network (P.E.N.)
- * Parent to Parent
- * Council for Exceptional Children
- * Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (ACLAD)
- * Orton Society
- * CH.A.D.D

To find help in locating the support groups in your area, there is a clearinghouse which can provide information about the above groups as well as the many organizations throughout the country which offer assistance. Contact the: **National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps, Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013. (703) 893-6061.** Ask how you might be placed on their mailing list to receive their informative newsletter.

Groups such as these have practical information on the often complex ins and outs of obtaining services for the learning disabled child. Experienced advocates can provide you with the information and understanding you will need if you find yourself dealing with an uncooperative school system.

The I.E.P.

"Parents are not at the mercy of the school system," noted one mother. "Before I learned about the resources available, my child's school had me believing that I had no say in his education. They sent me a blank IEP (individualized educational program) form, told me it was merely a routine paper and that I had to sign it.

"I now know that the IEP is a powerful tool in the hands of the parent, and that by refusing to sign it, I have considerable leverage. I can also bring a friend or professional advisor with me when we discuss the IEP each year."

When the parent does not sign an IEP, it must go to a hearing officer, who looks into the problem. If the decision is made in favor of the school, the parents may be assessed for the costs incurred in the review. But chances are, the school will try to negotiate it



with you — particularly if you have a strong case.

Advocacy and Testing

Your state may have an advocacy board. When a parent submits a complaint the board investigates it; the downside is that their action may be nothing more than a slap on the school's wrist.

Parents can request the school test a child for eligibility in a variety of programs — from classes for the gifted to those for the retarded child. If the school does not do the testing, it might be provided by a state counseling service. You can contact the child protection services in your area for information on what's available. "There really are a great many services and protections available for the ESE child," a parent commented, "but unless you're aware of them the school may try to roll right over you."

Public Laws

The heart of this protection is the oft-quoted "Public Law 94-142", the law which requires schools receiving funding from the federal government to provide an appropriate education for all children. Currently, compliance is not required for schools unless they receive funds, but next year it will go from the status of a guideline to a law. All schools will be covered.

If you are unable to get help for your child under PL 94-142, then find out about section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-12). This is the law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of a handicap. (If the diabetic child must receive suitable food when he is in school, then perhaps the chemically-sensitive youngster can be covered as well.)

Start Early

Ideally, children should be screened when they enter school, to identify any problems as early as possible.

"The early years — kindergarten through third grade — are when a child most needs help," Diana stressed. "This is when he learns how to learn; the child learns how to read, write and count. Later years of schooling simply build on this.

"Your school district should have an ESE advisory board made up of parents, educators, members of the community and ESE consultants. See if you can find out when they meet and take your questions there."

Editorial Comment: The Feingold Program and Learning Disabilities

Advocacy groups can be a valuable resource for the parent of a learning disabled child. Its leaders will have a wealth of information about their area of expertise, but don't expect them to understand the Feingold Program. In fact, you may find that your child is the only one who is not on Ritalin.

Critics fault the Feingold Program when it doesn't deliver the "magic bullet" to quickly dissolve all of a child's problems. The same critics see no irony in considering drugs to be the cure-all, and then recommending programs for the problems the drug has not helped.

Government Reports on Learning Disabilities

In 1986 Congress established a Inter-Agency Committee on Learning Disabilities. FAUS has just received their final report.

Headed by the National Institutes of Health, and including thirteen government agencies, the committee's task was to investigate the problem of learning disabilities.

While the finished report covers different aspects of the issue, and represents the work of numerous people, one section is of particular interest to the Feingold Association. The following is taken from the section titled: "Social Skills and Learning Disabilities: Current Issues and Recommendations for Future Research", by J. Stephen Hazel and Jean Bragg Schumaker.

"The possible relationship between sensitivities to environmental substances and behavior was initially brought to national attention by the late Benjamin F. Feingold, M.D. On the basis of his clinical experience with over 1,200 cases, he claimed that children's hyperactivity and other manifested social and learning problems were related to sensitivities to certain substances in their diets....

"Following this widely publicized claim, a number of researchers investigated the relationship that he so strongly espoused. Connors, Goyette, Southwick, Lees, and Andrulonis were among the first to do a double-blind experiment with hyperkinetic children. Although they found some improvement in teachers' ratings of the children's behavior when the children

were given the controlled diet in an experimentally controlled manner, they reported no change in the parents' ratings. Since they found a significant order effect and only a few children actually showed improvement, the authors advised caution with regard to the interpretation of their results. This report, which was also widely publicized, convinced the public and many physicians that Feingold's claims

"Since the research in this area [studies of the Feingold diet] has been so flawed, it is impossible to draw firm conclusions from it."

were disproved. This work by Connors et al. has recently been criticized for a variety of methodological flaws: inappropriate outcome measures, inadequate dosages of food dyes, the type of placebo used, the type of blood test used to determine allergies, the observation period after dosage delivery, and presenter bias. Such criticism is largely unknown to the public at large.

"Although a number of additional studies have focused on the effects of Feingold's K-P diet, very few meet even minimal standards of adequate research methodology....

"Since the research in this area has been so flawed, it is impossible to draw firm conclusions from it."

Another Approach to Education

An educational option open to parents of children with learning problems is home schooling. There are many different reasons why families choose to educate their children at home, and frustration with the system is one.

The estimated number of home schooling families in the United States ranges between 120,000 and 200,000. And while all states recognize the parent's right to educate their own children, there are many differences in the regulations governing it.

How To Learn More About Home Schooling

Parents wishing to explore this option, will find a variety of resources.

* *Growing Without Schooling* is a bimonthly publication of Holt Associates, 729 Boylston Street, Suite 300P, Boston, MA 02116.

* *Home Schooling* (everything you ever wanted to know) by Karen Fogle, available from the author: 14241 N.W. Wdvl.-Dvl. Road, Suite 243, Woodenville, WA 98072 (206) 481-2228.

* Also by Karen Fogle, *Recording This Year at Home* (a simplified outline for record keeping for home schoolers).

* Another option is for the parent to function as a teacher, working through a base school. Information is available from: The Home-Based Education Program, Clonlara, 1289 Jewett Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Will the Feingold Program Help My Child's Schoolwork?

Most parents use the Feingold Program to help improve their child's behavior, and it generally does. In many cases, a change in diet also brings an improvement in schoolwork, but this is likely to be more gradual.

Even when a child responds to our program and is now able to focus and learn, there may be critical gaps in knowledge and skills. Since these children are typically bright, they can overcome this with appropriate tutoring. Dr. Feingold recommended the children receive individual remediation to make up the areas of learning they missed.

Another reason why school performance may not measure up to expectations is the fact that school is likely to be a more stressful atmosphere than home, and the chemically-sensitive youngster is typically more affected by stress of all kinds — both emotional and chemical. (See page 6 for an article on chemical irritants found in schools.)

Sometimes, a child who responds beautifully at home still has behavioral problems in school. Changing old habits can be hard, and a youngster may need to be taught the appropriate way to behave. If the student has developed a reputation, classmates and teachers may continue to respond to him/her in the old way. In this case, Dr. Feingold urged parents to give the child a fresh start in a new school setting.

While academic improvement is likely to be less dramatic than the changes in behavior, we do hear reports of "from D's and F's to A's and B's". One of our favorite successes is a young man (we will call him Brett) who was failing high school. When he was 17 his parents were advised to seek out a training program where he could find some kind of skill to learn. At this point, Brett put himself on the Feingold Program. The last time we spoke with his mother, Brett was an "A" student in college and had just been invited to join Phi Beta Kappa.

FAUS Elects New President



FAUS President, Patricia Palmer

Pat Palmer has been a Feingold volunteer since the early days of the association. She has held many positions in her local, the Feingold Association of the Northeast, as well as in FAUS.

Like most parents, Pat learned of the Program as she searched for ways to help her 12 year old son, Bob. He is now 27 years old and doing well.

The new FAUS Board of Directors:

1st Vice President - Nancy Montange, Chelsea, MI

2nd Vice President - Shula Edelkind, Atlanta, GA

Secretary - Judy Reninger, Wheaton, IL

Treasurer - Dorie Bloye, Howell, MI

Region 1 Director - Eileen Breen, West Hempstead, NY

Region 2 Director - Wendy Glass, Baltimore, MD

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Region 6 Director - Whistle Carey, Fremont, CA

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Conference - Lynn Murphy, San Jose, CA

Education/Research - Barbara Keele, West Liberty, IA

Nominating - Karen Dorries, Metamora, MI

Product Information - Barbara Ballmer, Escondido, CA

Trademark/Copyright - Tanya Small, Malibu, CA

Researcher Addresses FAUS Conference

Bonnie J. Kaplan, Ph.D., of the University of Calgary/Alberta Children's Hospital addressed the delegates and guests at the Feingold Association's 14th Annual Conference held in the Chicago, Illinois area in June.

Dr. Kaplan described in detail her landmark study on the effects of diet on the behavior of 24 preschool hyperactive children. The results of this study were published in the January (1989) issue of *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. (See *Pure Facts* for February or contact FAUS for more information.)



Bonnie J. Kaplan, Ph.D.

After certain foods and food additives had been removed from the diets of these youngsters, 10 showed a significant behavioral improvement and 4 were considered "mild responders". This yields a total response of 58% whose behavior was clearly related to diet.

While it contains many similarities to Dr. Feingold's work, the elimination diet used by Dr. Kaplan and her colleagues, was not a test of the Feingold Program.

This study is a valuable contribution to the understanding of hyperactivity; it leaves no doubt that diet plays a significant part.

Commitment and Vision

*Barbara Keele
FAUS President 1986-1989*

"An Invitation to Commitment and Vision". This is the theme of our conference, the 14th Annual Conference of the Feingold Association of the United States. Your attendance at this conference is your invitation to become involved in the development and growth of an organization. You are invited to COMMIT yourself to something you believe in. This commitment through involvement is the strength of our organization. Anne Morrow Lindbergh has been quoted as saying "One can never pay in gratitude; one can only pay in kind, somewhere else in life." This is why we are all here at conference. We are here to "pay in kind", to give of our abilities to an organization that has helped us. This is our commitment.

One cannot help but wonder about the social impact of our work after talking with successful Feingold families. We all know of the desperate, despondent parents who were relieved to find

out that it was not their parenting that caused their child's problem. Also consider the mother who told me that she was on her way to becoming an alcoholic because of the problems that she had with her child. Or the mother who confessed to a nervous breakdown.

We are committed to help these families. We need to "go forth". The publication of the Kaplan study in January and the production of our promotional videotape give us good tools to use. Now we need to plan how to use them, and put the plan into action. This is your Invitation to Vision....

I want you to study this statement:

OPPORTUNITY IS NOWHERE

What is this saying to you? Are you sitting back thinking opportunity is no where? Or are you willing to commit yourself, create a vision, and seek action, knowing that opportunity is now here?

This Conference is your Invitation to Commitment and Vision. The opportunity is now here. Let's give it our best!

Kid Food

Mary Anne Jackson has done what a lot of Feingold moms have wished someone would do: provide a nutritious, easy to use product which would appeal to young children.

Unlike many entrepreneurs, she did not decide to begin her company, My Own Meals, Inc., because of dissatisfaction with what is now available. She was not motivated by philosophical issue or personal values, although she is careful about what she feeds her own children. Mary Anne is a former employee of the Beatrice Company, until recently a huge food conglomerate. She has had a great deal of experience in the planning and marketing of food products, and wanted to run a company of her own.

Careful evaluation of the marketplace led her to the decision that what was most lacking was a quality product aimed at children ages 2 to 8. Mothers wanted a meal which would not only be easy to prepare and well accepted by the child, but which would be free of unnecessary additives such as synthetic colors, flavors, preservatives and the ever-present MSG.

What this says for the Feingold member is that the foods *we must use* are becoming the foods that a large portion of the public now *wants to use*. As the market continues to demand quality foods, the selection for our families should increase.

Veteran Feingolders have seen a dramatic expansion in the number of

"natural" foods being produced by major manufacturers. We have even told them that "the products now being introduced are the things Feingold families asked for ten years ago". Those companies wishing to stay ahead of the competition in this volatile market would do well to subscribe to our newsletter and get to know more about life without BHT. In fact, one of the major food conglomerates in the United States has done just that!

The five varieties of My Own Meals are shelf-stable; they will keep for about a year without refrigeration or freezing ("just think of them as flexible plastic cans"). They can be heated in a microwave oven or boiled in their bag.

All five can be added to your foodlist. **Stage One:**

- "Chicken, Please"
- "My Kind of Chicken"
- "Turkey Meatballs"

Stage Two:

- "My Meatballs and Shells"
- "My Favorite Pasta"

They are currently being marketed in parts of the Midwest, but can be ordered by contacting: My Own Meals, 400 Lake Cook Road, Suite 107, Deerfield, IL 60015 (312) 948-1118.

Dear Pure Facts

In the fast food guide (*July/August, 1989 Pure Facts*) you have listed Coke and Pepsi as being o.k. for Feingold members. But neither of these are on my Foodlist. I thought the caramel coloring in them is artificial.

What's the story?

The reason neither Coke nor Pepsi are on your foodlist is that the companies have declined to fill out our product inquiry form. This does not necessarily mean that a product is unacceptable; most likely the companies do not wish to divulge any secrets about their formulas.

Although the cola companies will not disclose all of the ingredients in their drinks (such as the source of the flavorings), they do provide this information. The ingredients in Coca Cola are: carbonated water, high fructose corn syrup, sugar, caramel color, phosphoric acid, natural flavorings, caffeine. Pepsi Cola is made from: carbonated water, high fructose corn syrup and/or sugar, caramel color, phosphoric acid, caffeine, citric acid, natural flavorings. (We don't know if the natural flavorings contain salicylates.)

Since many Feingold members are able to tolerate these drinks, we do not believe they contain the prohibited additives or that the caramel coloring is synthetic.

The Feingold Association recommends its members avoid diet soda, and limit the consumption of highly sugared foods such as these.

Unlike the Feingold Foodlists, we use a different standard for compiling the fast food guide.

It is not possible to conduct the same in-depth research with restaurant food that we do with brand name products. Restaurants, especially chains, rely on many different sources and they, in turn, purchase their ingredients from various suppliers.

The purpose of the fast food guide is to give the experienced member a "fighting chance" at finding foods which will be tolerated. The information on ingredients is provided by the restaurant chains.

Tim's "Whenever" Spaghetti

We call it this because it has no salicylates and can be eaten "whenever."

Choose the ingredients and amounts according to your family's preferences. Other vegetables can be used.

Dry spaghetti
Carrots, peeled and chopped
Hamburger
Onions, chopped
Garlic salt
Italian seasoning
Salt and pepper to taste

Cook the spaghetti and carrots together in boiling water; drain.

In a large pan, brown the hamburger and onions together; drain off fat.

Toss the spaghetti mixture with the meat and add seasonings.

Donna Curtis, Carthage, IL

The Feingold® Associations do not endorse, approve or assume responsibility for any product, brand, method or treatment. The presence (or absence) of a product on a Feingold foodlist, or the discussion of a method or treatment does not constitute approval (or disapproval). The foodlists are based primarily upon information supplied by manufacturers, and are not based upon independent testing.

1989-1990 School Year Calendar

Once again, Feingold members in the United States are receiving their Feingold school year calendar.



The calendar is designed to do more than tell you what day it is! It contains information on food additives, acceptable products, and hints gathered from experienced members.

Teachers, relatives, and neighbors who come in contact with your child need to understand this program before they can provide the necessary support. The calendar is a mini-course in food additives and why we don't eat some of them. It can be a good way to enlist their cooperation. You can order additional copies to give to them.

If you joined the Association after the calendars were distributed, or if you live outside of the United States you can still order one. Send your name and full address, along with a \$5 donation (U.S. funds) to: FAUS Calendar, P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306.

Next Time You're in Bahrain... be sure to look up our new diet assistant there. Her name is Mary Deckert, P.O. Box 25185, Awali, Bahrain. Phone 011-973-756142. (It's located in the Persian Gulf, adjacent to Saudi Arabia.)

Pure Facts

Editor: Jane Hersey
 Contributing Editors:
 Detroit: Karen Dorries
 Fort Worth: Carolyn Allen
 Los Angeles: Colleen Smethers
 New York: Pat Palmer
 San Francisco: Lynn Murphy
 St. Paul: Sue Maldonado

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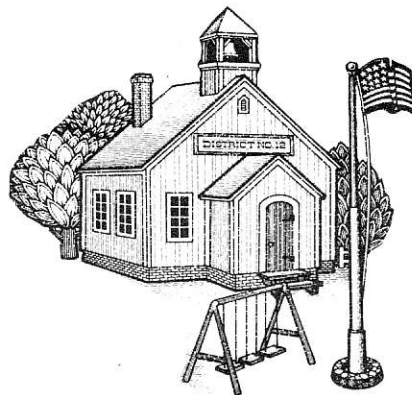
Potential Culprits in the School

The start of school is an exciting time for most children, but if you notice problems, consider these possibilities.

When a Feingold youngster comes home from school in the throes of a reaction, it doesn't necessarily mean lunches have been swapped. A sensitive child may be reacting to a toxic substance in the school building.

Most school systems use the summer months to carry out maintenance work in the buildings.

Paint (especially oil based paint) is a frequent offender for the chemically-sensitive person. Perhaps the gym floor was revarnished and that can take several months to 'gas out'. New carpeting may reek with formaldehyde for months. The insecticide sprayed throughout the school may simply be too toxic for the chemically-sensitive person.



Even that shiny new plastic lunch box or thermos can give off offensive odors for awhile.

If the symptoms diminish by Sunday, or subside several hours after your child is home, be suspicious that there could be offenders at school. You might be limited in what you can do to reduce a child's exposure to these irritants, but it's important for you both to know as much as possible about the causes of reactions; this is the first step in prevention in the future.

Just allowing him to sit near an open window may help as long as you don't have to also deal with allergies to things like grasses, pollen, etc. Fall and spring can be difficult times for people who suffer from allergies. Common allergy symptoms such as fatigue and irritability may accompany some of the symptoms of hyperactivity. If possible, try to avoid stressful situations for your child during these times.

Some children are "sick of school". Others can become sick from school.

Here is a list of some of the possible offenders to consider if you're trying to trace the cause of an unexplained reaction:

- * new paint smells
- * floor cleaning, waxing, polishing, or varnishing compounds
- * carpet shampoo
- * bathroom disinfectants
- * cologne/perfume worn by the teacher (or students)
- * science projects involving strong-smelling chemicals
- * solvents used in wood-working or shop class
- * scented stickers or markers
- * colored ink stamped on the skin
- * commercial Play Doh
- * mimeograph supplies, papers
- * fumes or cleaning compounds used on the bus

This chemical sensitivity is now dubbed "sick school syndrome", according to Sherry Rogers, M.D. of Syracuse, NY. She notes that reactions can include poor concentration, "spacey" behavior, irritability and fatigue, as well physical overactivity.

Colleen Smethers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has found a way to use what has long been considered useless — the corn cob.

A new process softens the fibrous parts of the cobs so they can be ground into a no-calorie, high fiber flour. It would then be added to baked goods.

What is great news for the farmer may not be welcomed by the many people who are allergic to corn. It remains to be seen if products made with this flour will be required to list corn as an ingredient.