Dear Teacher,

This information will show you how to help a child who is on the Feingold Diet.

Q What is the Feingold Diet?

A It isn't really a diet; it's primarily about eating real food -- the way people used to eat before manufacturers discovered how to increase profits by using synthetic chemicals in place of food.

Q What chemicals are avoided?

A We cut out synthetic dyes, artificial flavorings, and 3 preservatives; most of these are synthesized from petroleum. We also eliminate fake sweeteners like aspartame (Equal) and sucralose (Splenda).

Dyes Make Food Look Better than it really is.

Fake flavors are much cheaper than real ones.
Preservatives make old food appear to be fresh.

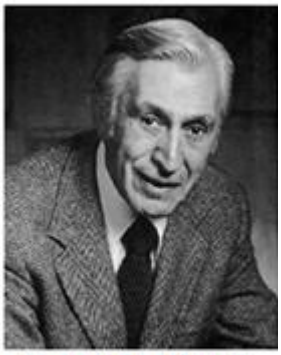
In addition, some people need to avoid or limit certain natural foods. We refer to them as "salicylates." We show families how to do this. Happily, there are many healthy and delicious foods that are not problems for most salicylate-sensitive people.

Q Why are these additives eliminated?

A They have been found to trigger many behavior, learning and health problems. These may include asthma, tics, seizures, headaches, hives, ear infections, distractibility, aggression, defiance, and what is now being called ADHD. Our article "Color Johnny ADHD" will introduce you to our work. It is included In this material.

Q What is the Feingold Association?

A We are a volunteer nonprofit organization composed of parents and professionals who have seen the dramatic help our children have experienced from the program. We share information and help other families test out the diet in their homes. We chose the name "Feingold" to honor the doctor who pioneered this work and profoundly helped our families.



Ben F. Feingold, MD

THE LANCET

Additivies increase ADHD-like symptoms in normal children.

McCann et al., 2007

Q Does research support the Feingold Diet?

A Yes, there is a large body of research that shows the harm from eating petrochemicals.

The 2007 McCann study showed that these additives do not only affect children with an ADHD diagnosis, but that most children will show the characteristics of ADHD if they consume enough to them.

As a result of that study the European Parliament now requires food that contain such dyes must carry warning labels. Here in the US major food companies are beginning to respond to consumer demands and remove the worst of the additives.

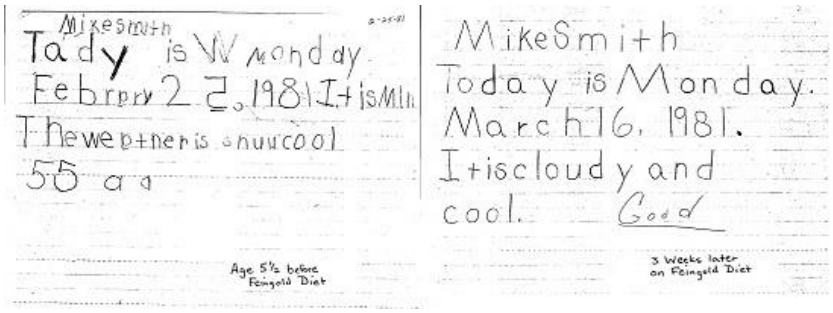
In the past 50 years the amount of petroleum-based dyes in American food has increased by 500%

Q How do synthetic food additives affect the brain?

A Some of the additives have a chemical structure that is similar to the neurotransmitter norepinephrine. Additives like artificial vanilla flavoring (vanillin) can act as "counterfeit neurotransmitters" and play havoc with the delicate electrical and chemical processes that must take place for a brain to work well.

Jason was just learning to write. The top image is his school work on a normal day. The sample under it was written after the school was treated with pesticides.

Here are samples of one child's response to the Feingold Diet. The paper on the left was written by 5 ½ year old Mike before the diet and the second one was 3 weeks later with the only change being his diet.



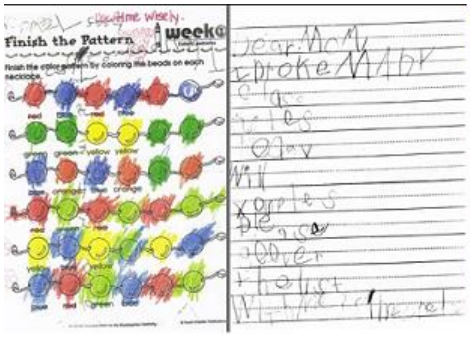
Foods in the Classroom

If you normally provide foods or food rewards, the child's mom can provide you with a list of treats and snacks that are free of the worst additives. There are foods of all types available.

The child's parent can provide suggestions taken from the Feingold Association's extensive *Foodlist*. Many parents volunteer to be the shopper for times when food will be offered or when projects require food.

We encourage members to give the teacher a "stash" of natural snacks to keep in her desk for times when a treat is given out.

We ask teachers not to make a "big deal" over a child's need to avoid certain additives.



Non-food treats are a great option! A growing number of schools are discouraging food treats and there are many resources online that offer alternatives. Here is one of them: http://tinyurl.com/kidrewards

Smelly Stuff

At one time fragrances were luxury items, derived from plants and other natural sources, the way high quality essential oils are created today. But once chemists discovered how to take inexpensive substances -- primarily from petroleum -- and create fragrances and flavors of all kinds, the door opened to our scent-laden world.

Fragrances are added to non-food products of all types. Manufacturers believe that they provide a marketing advantage. (However, because many people experience learning, behavior or health problems from them, there is a growing market for fragrance-free items.) Scents can be found in everything from candles, to detergent, to garbage bags, to art supplies and children's toys! Air fresheners, plug-ins and scented hand soaps are often found in classrooms and lavatories. The scent travels immediately to the brain and the effects may be very fast.

Artificial fragrances can be made from the same ingredients as artificial flavors and the two are often used interchangeably. The effect is similar to breathing in gas fumes when you fill up your tank, or driving by newly-paved roads, or breathing in exhaust fumes on the highway, or living in an area with smog.

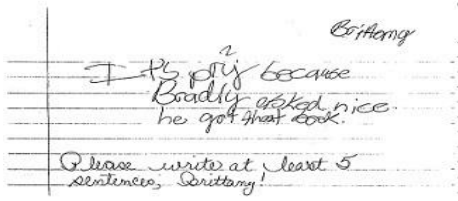
Whether you eat it or breathe it, petroleum is not your friend! Our advice is: "If you can smell it, avoid it."

Even expensive perfumes are mostly petroleum derivatives. The best option is a good quality essential oil. Some are expensive, but a little goes a long way.

Scents in the classroom

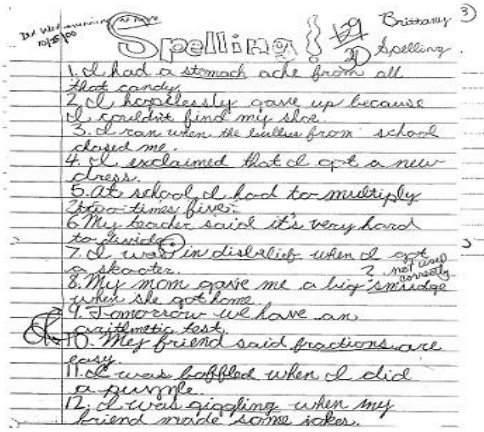
At one time schools had windows that opened, but once energy-efficient practices were incorporated in building designs, we began to learn that (in most cases) outside air is less polluted than indoor air. Ventilation systems can trap dust, mold and mildew, which is then distributed throughout the building. This is referred to as "sick building syndrome."

Brittany, a 10-year-old on the Feingold Diet, suddenly began having unexplained problems with her schoolwork. In class she was unable to focus, spell, or even think, but the work she did at home was fine. When her mom visited the class she noticed a plug-in fragrance dispenser near Brittany's desk.



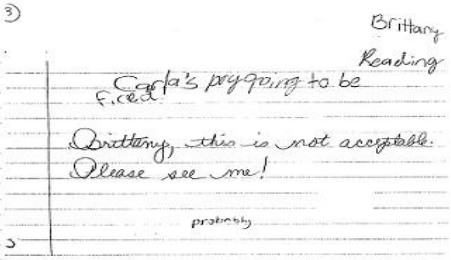
Brittany
I pry because Bradly asked nice he got that book.
Please write at least 5 sentences, Brittany!

This is a sample of Brittany's work on Wednesday, the day the air freshener was brought into class. She has written "pry" for "probably."



Brittany
Spelling
1. I had a stomach ache from all that candy.
2. I hopelessly gave up because I couldn't find my shoe.
3. I ran when the bullies from school chased me.
4. I exclaimed that I got a new dress.
5. At school I had to multiply two times five.
6. My teacher said it's very hard to divide.
7. I was in disbelief when I got a skeeter.
8. My mom gave me a big hug when she got home.
9. Tomorrow we have an arithmetic test.
10. My friend said fractions are easy.
11. I was baffled when I did a puzzle.
12. I was giggling when my friend made some jokes.

Here is the work she did at home that evening, with no Petrochemical scents!



Brittany
Reading
Carla's praying to be
Brittany, this is not acceptable.
Please see me!
probably

Back in class on Thursday, Brittany again is suffering from the toxic chemicals in the plug-in. The plug-in went into the trash!

Dry Erase Markers

These can be even more troublesome for teachers, who frequently use white boards and strong smelling markers.

Q Where does that smell come from?

A It comes from the chemicals used, which can include: Butylacetate, Diacetone Alcohol, Ethanol, and Methyl Isobutyl Ketone. Health problems that have been attributed to these chemicals include: Irritation of eyes, skin and throat, headaches, drowsiness, blurred vision, light intolerance, dermatitis, nerve damage, hearing loss, central nervous system depression, corneal damage, weakness, exhaustion, coma, destruction of red blood cells, blood in urine, vomiting.
[Source: Healthy Schools Network]

Seek out markers that advertise they have little or no smell and are made with safer ingredients.

Dyes on the Skin

Dyes on the skin are absorbed into the body, and can pose a problem for sensitive children.

One of the best ways to help a child avoid absorbing the dye in paint or other art supplies is to first apply some Gloves in a Bottle to his hands. Many Feingold families use this white lotion as a barrier to protect the skin from various chemicals, and the parents should be able to provide it. Latex or plastic gloves are generally too large for a small child. If your student is not too sensitive, it might be enough for him to simply wash his hands as soon as he has finished painting.

Science projects for the Classroom

Seeing is believing! The effects of food additives on animals and plants is a dramatic teaching tool!

From Alyssa's wheat berry experiment to Taylor's Fuzzy Brained Mice, Feingold children have been teaching both children and adults about the effects of food additives on living things. For details on the projects, visit: www.feingold.org/sciencefair.html