

## Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

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### ("violence", "violent", "aggression", "aggressive" keyword only)

#### [1518] "Hubby is now on board and has made amends... with flowers!!" (January 2019)

My daughter is sensitive to dairy and when I first noticed I told my husband. He didn't believe me and gave her a whole cup of milk then experienced her full **aggressive** meltdown. It took seeing it for himself to realise... after that I had his support and understanding – Tanya

#### [1511] 621: Autism / ASD "aggressive behaviour" (December 2018)

Our boy had **aggressive** behaviours come out when he did the glutamates challenge when he was 2. He scratched me, but me, growled like a tiger and threw a kids chair at me. Parmesan cheese, soy sauce, salt and vinegar chips were the worst. Then the bread in Australia always has vinegar in it ????????♀♂. We make our own bread. He has got better over last 5 years but we still make bread products and avoid salt and vinegar chips like the plague.

We did systematic challenges under supervision for salicylates, glutamates, benzoates (with sunscreen too), amines and ribonucleotides. He reacted to all of them. Had a massive ribo rash. We initially found out because he was hospitalized twice with breathing issues when he was a year old. He was on strict Failsafe for 5 years. Is diagnosed with sensory processing disorder and executive functioning disorder and born with a low immune system. I always say God gave him to me to learn all about these things so I can help students in my classroom (Year one). We're just finishing a year travelling the USA in an RV and have kept him on his diet as much as we can. He did Distance Education this year for school and continues to get high grades – Tina

#### [1506] Amines: regarding chocolate – facebook thread (November 2018)

Yes for me. Rage, **aggression**, anxiety, disturbed sleep – Ruth again

#### [1464] Diet for sleep and anxiety issues- facebook thread (September 2017)

The DD we started the diet for had primarily issues surrounding anxiety. When she's FS the anxiety is almost non-existent. Comes back for her with too many sals, amines results in **aggression** and glutamates pure nonsense and irrational. The specifics for everyone are different but yes, huge difference and a great sleeper after diet started too once we got through the elimination and withdrawal – Kerry

#### [1437] Amines: take challenges seriously – facebook thread (May 2017)

Mission Abort!

Mission Abort!

Amines challenge status: EPIC Fail!

Who knew a banana, some cheese and chocolate could have such an extreme reaction!! Aggressive behaviour, terrible language, not listening to instructions, excessive bed wetting. Basically a little devil moved into my son and went nuts – Natalie

We lasted 3 days until I called it off, OMG, huge meltdowns, aggression and behaviour. My son is 7 and there was already talk of being expelled from school because his behaviour was so extreme. He is a different child on FS. His response to amines was huge. – Zoe

My 3yr old was aggressive, started heading banging and literally throwing his whole body into the wall. Trashed his room. Hit and kicked us to the point we had to physically overpower and restrain him. He was a devil child. Scary stuff!! – Ashley

#### **[1420] ADHD diagnosis and failsafe - facebook thread (December 2016)**

Yes x 3. ADHD and loads of other diagnosis! When my boys somehow get food or drink with preservatives, colours, flavours it is 6 days of worse behaviour, reduced concentration, even more hyper and aggression! The older 2 are still medicated but have now weened off Concerta! If I hadn't been introduced to Sue Dengate's book Fed Up 8 years ago I know our family life would have been so much worse and our home would of been wrecked. Also because of aggression would have our own bed reserved at the hospital! – Tru

#### **[1417] Salicylates removal avoided anti-depressants for 11-year-old boy (December 2016)**

Today I saw an 11-year-old boy who had been so depressed and anxious that the paediatrician had prescribed anti-depressants. Everyone was at their wits' end - there had been quite a rapid onset over 9 months or so of bedwetting, violence at school, terrible anxiety and sadness. We delayed starting the anti-depressants until he had tried salicylate exclusion and 4 weeks later, he sat in my consulting room laughing and smiling. All bed-wetting had ceased and mood was back to normal. He said to me "I am not going to eat those salicylates ever again- they make me feel so bad"! His mum said, "I have my beautiful boy back" – from a supportive GP

#### **[1378] 160b: feedback from annatto petition 2 (January 2016)**

160b effects children's behaviour and not for the better. How do I know this? Because I have witnessed and a number of occasions now my well behaved daughter turn into a hyper active, defiant and aggressive child within 2 minutes of consuming products within 160b in it – Patricia

My children react to 160b with aggressive behaviour, sleeplessness and depression – Jennifer

Thank God we connected annatto 160b with our (then) 4yr olds head bashing and aggression, shudder to think where we'd be if we hadn't removed this entirely from his diet – Carmel

#### **Violence, anger and self-harm**

160b affects my son. He says it is like a switch flicks in his head and he can't stop – Julie

I have 2 daughters that become violent and angry after consuming 160b – Rebecca

I have a daughter who reacts badly to annatto 160b. Anger, sleeplessness, slapping her own head repeatedly when angry and not coping: all due to this additive, which is in so, so many food products. Please listen companies, and use alternatives! - Mel

Eating foods coloured with annatto 160(b) causes irrational anger and increased impatience in my 35-year-old self, so I'm not surprised that it causes such self-harming behaviour in children. I would love to have a greater variety of dessert products available to myself and my family – Keira

My child reacts with **aggression** every time he consumes annatto – Susie

I'm signing this petition as my 3 children react **aggressively** when they ingest Annatto (160b) - Alison

I see my children turn into monsters when they eat 160b – Kristina

My children react to 160b, it makes them angry. We don't buy \*any\* products which contain it – Daryl

My kids go crazy for up to five days after eating things containing 160b. We've avoided it for years now as the consequences were just awful and profoundly affected – Elizabeth

Discovering the cause of our daughter's opposition and **aggression** when she was around four was life changing for us. Who would think that a "natural" ingredient could cause so much angst. To this day I can guarantee if she has 160b I will get a call from her teachers the next day. Please remove it - we only buy peters icecream without 160b. Would love to be able to buy your products but not worth the reaction. – Maryjo

My son acts so insane when he accidentally gets annatto that I have to keep him home and send everyone else out of the house for three hours. He races around like a maniac, climbs people, laughs hysterically, talks rapidly, is completely defiant. I read labels very carefully. My daughter and I have both put products back on the store shelf as if it might bite us if we see annatto in the ingredient list and I was considering buying it.

That's because it might just cause her brother to bite her. He's broken her skin open after ingesting annatto, once in vanilla ice cream, and once in white cheddar crackers.

Our daughter is like Jekyll and Hyde after eating anything with Annatto in it! She crawls on the ground instead of walking, babbles incessantly, has epic meltdowns (kicking and screaming). – Michelle

My son Riley's ODD completely disappeared over a 2 week period after removing this chemical from his diet. – Robin

My son too reacts to Annatto 160b. Within 5 minutes of eating food with this additive, he becomes hyperactive, **aggressive** & violent. Please remove this additive from your ice cream! – Nicki

**[1377] 160b: compulsive hair pulling or trichotillomania (January 2016)**

I have been aware for a few years that my daughter's behaviour is severely affected by annatto (160b). She becomes loud, aggressive and irrational (cries and tantrums at the drop of a hat and cannot be reasoned with).

The past few months she has been becoming very anxious and has been developing a habit of pulling her hair out, and running it through her teeth, numerous times a day. It has been increasing fast, and I could see she was unable to control it.

I was starting to stress about it and think about the impact this may have on her life, long term. Then I had a lightbulb moment- annatto- it had slipped back I into her diet.

I immediately talked to her about this, cut it from her diet and within a couple of days it had drastically reduced. It has now been a week. Still reducing. She is much more relaxed and just generally calmer in herself - Carla

**[1352] 160b annatto: feedback from petition 1 (September 2015)**

My child reacts to 160b!!!! It makes him aggressive and hyperactive. It amazes me that it is still in use when there are known alternatives. Please change! - Kelly

160b effects children's behaviour and not for the better. How do I know this? Because I have witnessed and a number of occasions now my well behaved daughter turn into a hyper active, defiant and aggressive child within 2 minutes of consuming products within 160b in it – Patricia

I'm signing because 160b makes my daughter aggressive and hyperactive – Rachael

I have 2 daughters that become violent and angry after consuming 160b – Rebecca

Annatto is one of the main things that I need to keep out of my son's diet, he cannot control his temper when he eats something containing it and is generally cranky and violent – Kristy

My children react badly to 160b. I will not buy any product with 160b. It isn't worth the days of aggressive behaviour – Raelene

Annatto makes me irritable and snappy. It makes all four of my kids aggressive and shouty and nasty to each other. We do not buy any product that has it in, and I believe it should not be used at all- there is no need for it to be added to food – Natalie

My 4 yr old daughter reacts with aggression to 160b. So I will never buy products containing it. There are much better alternatives and I let my friends know about them too - Melinda

My daughter reacts to 160B, at 10 months old she would bounce her head off our tiled floor and was all round violent and aggressive. Even now at 3 1/2 if she starts acting out we look back at what she has eaten and 160b is always the culprit – Jennifer

I'm signing this petition as my 3 children react aggressively when they ingest Annatto (160b) – Alison

**[1343] His behaviour has gotten a lot better already (July 2015)**

I came to your talk a week ago. I already knew that my son reacted badly to colours (annatto 160b, brilliant blue 133 and tartrazine yellow 102). Much to my dismay the next day was his 4th birthday and at 12 noon my dad bought him a cinnamon donut as a treat. At 2.30pm my son had a major meltdown - screaming, aggression, severe defiance to the point he managed to undo his seat belt while I was driving and jump over and try and hit me laughing almost hysterically. This lasted for a good 3 or 4 hours then he crashed and lay almost in a glazed eyed stupor for an hour then reignited for defiance at bed time. This more than anything has convinced me that he has food intolerances. A friend of mine with a similar child is ready to try also so we are going to support each other through this with the hopes that we can both have happy healthy children.

Two weeks later

I just wanted to let you know how our food journey is going with my son and his behaviour. We saw our Dr last week to get a referral for a dietician and the Dr was very sceptical but the nurse was supportive and helped me get into see a dietician not the one I wanted on your list but one who visits once a week. She was brilliant she knew all about you and the fed up website she had your book and was very excited to work with a child that has possible behavioural issues with food, as she normally works with adults at the hospital.

Even before this I have mostly been following the failsafe diet and his behaviour has gotten a lot better. We still have moments and I can mostly put that down to my own fault as I have fed him something that I knew I shouldn't. It's very hard to go to the movies in a group and not let him have popcorn when everyone else is eating it. - by email.

Sue's comment:

1. What's in a cinnamon donut that could cause a massive meltdown? Dunkindonuts list cinnamon (high in sals) and ... annatto extracts (as you've already discovered, worse than artificial colours for some people). No wonder your son reacted! See annatto 160b factsheet

**[1334] 123 amaranth: "butcher's ink stamp on leg of lamb" (June 2015)**

Food additives and associated behaviour symptoms from 4 years old onwards. The same boy, now aged 6, is now settled on the correct diet.

160b annatto, high salicylates, glutamates and MSG - observed behaviour: defiance, prolonged tantrums, aggressive (out of character), poor concentration, irritable, difficulty settling at night for up to one week.

123 amaranth red food dye on butcher's ink on leg of lamb - observed behaviour: unusual behaviour, difficult to settle, loud noises in this child and his 8 yo brother for a few days, tantrums, teary for 2 weeks.

320 BHA synthetic antioxidant - observed behaviour: defiance, difficulty settling at night for up to 2 weeks.

The above observations were made over two years by a General Practitioner without using a dietitian - Helen GP by email.

**[1333] 160b: Six year follow up on Annatto 160b story - possible serious mental health issues in a 16 yo (May 2015)**

As a toddler, my son had spectacular, but introverted tantrums, where he threw himself at the floor and howled like a dingo. The best solution was to drop a heavy blanket on him, and leave him to it, until he went to sleep. If I intervened with a cuddle, reassurance or any form of stimulation, the tantrum escalated.

At pre-school he took himself to bed crying after every single birthday party, and went 'crazy' when we took him camping. He was often hyper sensitive to clothing labels, music (especially classics in minor keys) and visual distractions. His peers labelled him a cry-baby, and his pre-school wanted to keep him back from school. Later, his primary school teachers suggested he had ADHD, was somewhere on the Autism spectrum, and a 'difficult, anxious' child. We went for testing which showed generally moderately delayed development, so we did occupational and literacy therapy.

I assumed the birthday party issue was linked to food, and cut out all artificial colours and preservatives. This led to a big improvement. The breakthrough came because he ate toasted Kraft cheese sandwiches (it melted really well), a couple of hours before Wednesday swimming lessons (where he went to pieces), but not on Saturdays (with the same teacher). I worked out the only difference between those lessons was the cheese beforehand. When I cut out the cheese he was more cooperative and had a longer attention span.

I searched the internet to find out if there was such a thing as an "allergy" which changed a person's behaviour, and found your website. I recall reading about Annatto, head banging, yellow foods and inconsolable toddlers, and thinking "Some of that sounds familiar". That shred of knowledge led to a diet review, and the discovery that frankfurts, pizzas, Kraft cheese, madeira cake and 'fruit juice' contained Annatto, which might explain his post-party meltdowns. Our camping treat was powdered custard, and our lunch time staple was processed cheese, which could explain the camping craziness. 'Special' afternoon teas were fish fingers on toast and toasted cheese sandwiches. Annatto in everything!

I think he was about 4th grade when we succeeded in cutting out Annatto. His behaviour steadily improved. When we slipped up and he was accidentally exposed, the teachers could tell, and so could he. He still had a mild 'language processing disorder', but was now able to contribute effectively in class, and make friends. He felt the difference, and was keen to avoid annatto by checking all his food.

He came home from school camps and said 'there was nothing to eat' except fruit, bread and vegetables. That was true because the breakfast cereal, juice, cheese, ice-cream, custard, crumbed meats, some chips, and some afternoon tea cakes, all contained Annatto. No wonder his first camp was a disaster! Now, we all had some level of control over Annatto.

SIX YEAR UPDATE

At this time I wrote to you regarding my son, and his reaction to Annatto. I often wondered if we really were on the right track, and if I made a biased assessment of his sensitivity. Thought you would be interested to hear an update, as he is now 16.

Two years ago he had a 'blind' reaction to Annatto. He was interstate at a Scout Jamboree, and recorded as Annatto sensitive for his dietary requirements. Due to very hot weather the Scouts were provided with all sorts of foods and fluids to encourage fluid intake. My son was provided with commercial package fruit and jelly cups, unlabelled but touted as "natural" which he assumed was OK. After a couple of days, his friends were so concerned at his tears, agitation and aggression, that a group of them fronted the leaders and took him to First Aid. There, his records were reviewed, and the person seeing him saw his Annatto sensitivity. He diet was reviewed by a nutritionist who was on site, and who found the unlabelled jelly cups contained Annatto. He had time out, and compassionate attention from his camp mates, but was still out of sorts a few days later when he came home. Nonetheless, it was nice to have an independent event and diagnosis.

He is a different person without Annatto, now getting academic prizes, citizenship and service awards, and a school Gold medal. Before, various teachers had written him off as difficult, ADHD, and even autism spectrum. There is hope for desperate parents!

Thank you for helping us through Fed Up! Without your site information, and guidance on elimination, I am certain he would have been diagnosed with serious mental health issues by now.

I do wonder what is happening in the mental health, prison, and medical institutions. During a recent visit to the Children's Hospital he was offered custard with Annatto and cheese with Annatto. How many troubled teens, or even geriatrics, are undiagnosed Annatto reactors, who are then institutionalised, and fed a diet containing Annatto? How much is Annatto sensitivity costing Medicare and our legal system?

Thanks for your web site, it makes convincing unbelievers so much simpler! As I say to my son, there are no excuses for bad behaviour, but it certainly helps if there is an explanation. - Anne, by email

### **[1330] "basking in the lack of oppositional defiance" (May 2015)**

This evening I came home to find my husband reading bedtime stories to my 5yr old son and 2yr old daughter, they were both snuggled in quietly absorbed in the story. It has taken my son five and a half weeks to recover from a dairy challenge that he failed on day 3. Three days of milk = 5.5 weeks of angry, oppositional defiant child. My daughter made it to day 6 of the challenge before becoming completely incontinent and we ended up putting her back in pull-ups 6months post-toilet training, I haven't ventured to take these away just yet, I am too busy basking in the lack of oppositional defiance. My husband says I am getting my hopes up too soon, but yesterday was pretty good too, and we haven't had a single ODD day in the last 6 weeks. Prior to this that I either wanted to be far, far away, or arrived home from work to a full account of angry aggressive, oppositional behaviour. Food intolerance is so very cruel and has a huge impact on quality of life for so many of us on here.

My husband and I used to (only half) joke about how we'd best just pick out a juvenile detention centre instead of a school for my son, his behaviour was so off the wall. I can hardly believe we

figured this out in the nick of time, and feel so lucky that we were able to address the larger part of it prior to him starting school. The challenges are horrible, but they are very much "controlled" reactions compared to full-blown diet behaviour.

We should all be acknowledged for our outstanding level of diagnostic skills, many of us have succeeded where many qualified health professionals have failed! - Ursula

Comments from failsafers:

It's huge, isn't it? Different things have made my son **aggressive**, oppositional, flighty, unable to sleep and incontinent - Stephanie

### **[1327] Salicylates and the changing face (March 2015)**

I could not resist sharing these photos of my little girl about 2.5yo pre-diet. On the left is the face we saw most days, all day. On the right is her now, the new girl. She has just started school and her teachers have said how great her behaviour is in class. So, for those just starting this journey of discovery, keep up the good work, be patient and good results will come.

The Pre-diet girl showed signs and symptoms very similar to severe ODD, ADHD, with anger, over emotional, anxiety, inability to concentrate on a task, several tantrums a day with each lasting anywhere up to 45 mins, self harm , irritability, **aggression**, frustration, laughing when inappropriate, waking screaming and going to bed screaming, very frequent wees (incontinence), aching limbs at night, blocked nose/sinus, itchy skin (no rash) sleep disturbance, lacking energy, sensitivity to touch, sounds, smells (Sensory Processing Disorder). We changed her diet just prior to her 3rd birthday and within two weeks we saw a completely different child. Even her little face changed. She became a calm, normal, loving, happy, intelligent, creative child. Her behaviour changed to what we would call normal 3 yr old. The odd tantrum, but not lasting long. The other issues she was also dealing with, just about disappeared or were greatly reduced ie sensitivity to sound/touch, aching limbs at night, incontinence, making toilet training possible. If they returned, we knew that we had gone over the salicylates threshold. We stick to a diet with her of low/mod sals. Knowing her diet, we can sneak in the odd strawberry or other higher sals foods here and there. No preservatives, additives, msg, artificial colours for her where at all possible. She is my third child, first child from second marriage. My other two children have no issues like this. Oldest has lactose intolerance. Youngest from second marriage has lactose intolerance too. Having ulcerative colitis now at 44, I realise that I had my own food sensitivities as a child and continue as an adult. I admit though, that we have not done strict challenges - Jan on facebook

### **[1325] 160b: Annatto and frightening headbutting (March 2015)**

My 7yo son headbangs and headbutts with annatto. Actually he generally becomes a right little monster with it. I avoid it like the plague. I sometimes will allow other additives in small amounts if I absolutely have to, but I will not allow annatto under any circumstances after the last episode with it.

When did he first start head banging? He never was a child that had particularly bad behaviour. I only took all the additives to see what would happen, and now that he is additive free, I get

exceptionally bad behavioural spikes with additives. Some additives he can tolerate small amounts of, and some there is now pretty much a zero tolerance level, eg sodium benzoate in medicines. He didn't really head bang as an ongoing thing, but on occasion in the middle of a tantrum or when he was particularly frustrated he would do it at the age of about 2 or 3. He also appears to be gifted, I am thinking of having him assessed. It had stopped until I saw the annatto effects in January.

Which products (e.g. yoghurt, ice cream) have you noticed are a problem? I have only seen a reaction that I am absolutely sure was due to annatto involving headbanging once, and that product was Magnum Minis. As soon as I attended your talk last year, I stopped my kids having additives, especially colours, immediately. I did give him ice cream once that had annatto, and we had some issues at school on the Monday, but he had also had artificial colours, preservatives and flavour enhancers that weekend (we were away and I thought it would be ok for the weekend, discovered I was wrong!) so I can't be sure that he did react to the annatto then. There was no head banging after that weekend, but he did punch someone. That appears to be a reaction in him to flavour enhancers and preservatives as a general rule though.

How did you first realise that annatto was causing the problem? He has been additive free since July 2010, and this reaction happened in January 2011. He had had no other additives other than the annatto. He has not had annatto since, and the behaviour has not repeated.

Why do you say that "I will not allow annatto under any circumstances after the last episode"? My aunt gave both my kids a Magnum Mini after lunch, just the plain chocolate and ice cream one, which I had not given them since starting additive free. My son was ratty and annoying that afternoon, but I put that down to being tired, as we had had an early start flying from Sydney to Adelaide. That night she allowed them another one after dinner. The next day, I was at the supermarket, and my son and daughter had a disagreement about something, and he just lost it and headbutted her, followed by headbutting the shelves and the floor of the supermarket, and proceeded to follow me around the shop screaming at me, and headbutting several shelves along the way. No amount of talking or threatening of punishment had any effect. I told him that I was leaving and walked out of the shop, and about 5 minutes later he came screaming out looking for me because he realised he had no idea where he was, and he headbutted my leg. I physically restrained him in his car seat and waited 10 minutes for him to stop thrashing and screaming. He was generally painful for the next 24 hours. He had not behaved like that since he was 2. I knew there was annatto in the magnums, but I thought a small amount would be OK, which clearly it wasn't. I bought chocolate coated ice creams which didn't contain the annatto, and there were no further issues. He has not had annatto since, and we have not seen any behaviour like this again. He really hurt his sister, she had a bruise for a week. He had never ever headbutted another child in his life before then, and his sister is half his size. I'm not willing to risk that again, so I check everything that could possibly contain annatto before he has it, yoghurt, cheese, ice cream, margarine etc.

Any further observations? Flavour enhancers make him **aggressive**. Preservatives appear to remove his impulse control. Artificial colours make him hyperactive and **aggressive**. But none of them make him behave the way he did after the annatto. After that episode, I would rather give him any other additive than annatto. I can usually overcome issues that the other additives cause, but not the annatto.

I only did the diet to see what would happen. He wasn't a particularly badly behaved child, he was challenging, but he could be gifted, so challenge is part of that. Now that I have stopped the additives, I can see the sorts of problems that other people have, because he appears to be rather sensitive to them now. He is a more calm and reasonable child, and is certainly better behaved than most kids I know. His behaviour didn't stand out compared to the other kids before, but it certainly does now, he is much better than other children, and I can see the effects of the additives in other kids now that I didn't see before.

Another interesting thing I noticed when I stopped the additives is that he lost over 2kg in weight in about 6 months. He was a small, skinny child to start with (he was 19kg when I started the diet, dropped to 16.7kg, and now is 19.4kg), and the weight just fell off him. It took him a further 6 months to catch it back up, and he eats like a horse, and has done since I stopped the additives.

Thank you for everything you do, you are amazing - Alice (report received December 2011)

### **[1323] Salicylates and sleepwalking (March 2015)**

I have a 5yr old daughter who is intolerant to natural foods. She becomes **violent** when she eats carrot and it can last for a few weeks on and off. She also cannot tolerate most fruits and unlike the **violence** from the carrot she acts drunk when she has fruit. We now limit her vegies, only give her bakers delight breads as we found she reacted to the vinegar from the supermarket breads and we have her on failsafe butter too.

Since changing her foods we have a happy child who is now more relaxed, we can now speak to her without her going off. She is calmer and much nicer child.

We have noticed that when we feed her something with salicylates she also sleepwalks very badly. Another thing, before we changed her diet she had ear infection after ear infection. I had her to an ear specialist who thought she needed an op but now looking back since changing her diet she only has an infection as often as a normal child - Mel (report received August 2011)

See factsheet on sleep and story collection on sleep issues

### **[1312] 160b annatto: One-liners (March 2015)**

She was only 10months when she started reacting I couldn't believe such a small baby could be so violent. – Jennifer

All I know is that my 5 year old cannot tolerate this at all, bed wetting, **aggression**, risky behaviour like running out in front of cars and just all round horrible naught behaviour of course a huge amount of food had this reaction but I have found 160b one of the worst for him (microwave popcorn oh good Lordy it's revolting the reaction) – Debbie

My 11 month old would bounce her head repeatedly off the tiles she was **aggressive** punching walls etc snacking kids twice her size at daycare. At only 11 months old I was so scared that she had some really issue but cut the 160b and she is an angel - Jennifer

### **[1300] Chlorine and behaviour/health issues - facebook thread (February 2015)**

My mr 2.5 is like an annoying mosquito after swimming lessons. We are total elimination diet (2 years now), gluten and dairy too. We have found a magnesium chlorine pool better- he is super violent if he goes near a public chlorine pool. I find an Epsom salt and bicarb bath as soon as we get home helps a lot but it is not immediate. I schedule our swim for 11.30, we come straight home and bath. I let him stay in as long as I can "practice his swimming". He is normally exhausted so I shove some lunch into him- I won't lie, occasionally this is just toast in the bath . Then he will normally have an early afternoon sleep. Wakes up much much more manageable. He is still more busy and poor concentration but less tears and tantrums – Emma

**[1295] Amines: "I'd love Failsafe to become common practice in my country (December 2014)**

After four years of incessantly visiting medical professionals in two different continents (yup), I stumbled upon the FEDUP site while researching MSG and food dyes "snide effects", as I had empirically determined their nocivity ("ability or capacity to cause harm") to my kids.

My 12yo daughter has begun Failsafe two months ago.

She's today mostly free of her blinding incapacitating migraines, sleep apnea, general brain fog and learning difficulties, mood swings, heartburn, bad joints pain, which turned her from a dancing, swimming and Tae kwon do competitor into a foul-mooded, sleepy, couch potato, etc... we are currently moving on to tackle her autoimmune Hashimoto, with a very positive outlook. This is the girl that underwent isotopes checks, CTs, MRIs and countless blood tests... the girl we were kindly advised "would not have a really 'normal' life" unless she took medications meant for epileptic and schizoid patients (and how "normal" is that?).

This WE I challenged her with amines (slow cooked meat and chocolate) without waiting for your book to arrive... bad idea all over and she's been home since. But at least we remember it used to be "like that" all the time.

Needless to say, her endocrinologist, gastrologist, ENT, and neurologist, are for the most part dismissing my enthusiasm, or even the causal link with the dietary change. But hey, we don't need them so much any more. Our beloved, pediatrician is convinced but adamant that he can't offer parents such a "hard" diet to follow lest he be dubbed a dangerous extremist. And it's for people like him, and the dozens of families he could help, that I'd love Failsafe to become common practice here.

My 7 yo son has gone from a "Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" personality, which included plain meanness, virulent on-and-off, ODD, and actual **violence**, followed by heartrending bouts of crying and heavy "drugged" sleep, to showing the world and his school the all-around nice, bright kid I knew he was, and his honors roll presence is exactly correlated with his "sticking by the Failsafe rules" periods. Our asthma inhalator sits unused for weeks already. Son's jaw- grinding, bedwetting, sleeves munching, and shouting all kinds of weird "war cries" at the most unbecoming moments, his bouts of self-hitting, his nightmares, are a thing of the past (did I say "thank you" already?). For him too, the amines challenge was... let's say premature - family from France

**[1299] Do amines make you emotional? - facebook thread (February 2015)**

Yep, and irritable. I get even more emotional and aggressive if I have salicylates – Linda

I am emotional therefore I eat amines (chocolate) lol. My daughter goes silly and aggressive and does things without thinking through like jumping off and over couches and chairs and what we call bull at a gate behavior! - Shay

**[1286] ADHD: “three weeks on failsafe and all his symptoms have stopped” (November 2014)**

My son has been on ADHD medication for 5 years (he's now almost 12) - while it served its purpose in the beginning, in the last 12 months he'd been aggressive, had a racing heartbeat and severe verbal and physical tics. Two weeks off his medication and three weeks on failsafe and all his symptoms have stopped and his teacher says he's more focused in class. I wish I had of been informed of the diet option before being told medication was the only solution. What's safer for our children? Dosing then up in medication (even if it is working) or changing their diet. I almost feel I was a lazy parent for taking the easy medication option without even looking at possible alternatives - Larissa

**[1273] What has failsafe meant for you and your family? (August 2014)**

Our 12 yr old son was diagnosed with high-functioning autism, and we'd experienced over 15 school suspensions between year 1 and 2 due to periods of uncontrolled violence. Since we found the Failsafe diet 7 years ago, our lives have turned around, and it is so easy to love him, including his wicked sense of humour and self-confidence - Natasha

**[1257] Separated parents and failsafe - thread from facebook (February 2014)**

We have the same issue. It's impossible but at least my stepsons' mother values "natural" foods. But her refusal to believe in Twin One's MAJOR amine intolerance is ridiculous. She TOLD him to eat the chocolate cake then complained she didn't want custody of him because he was too aggressive and violent. Got nowhere with dietician letters etc. Mediation not an option either. SIGH it's hard. Shawna your suggestions are great - Megs

**[1251] Maybe alcohol's not the problem –‘brain snaps’ due to additives (January 2014)**

I was sitting at home, reading about 'alcohol-fueled' violence in Sydney, while listening to my seven- and five-year-old having a Category 5 tantrum outside as they recovered from the preservatives and artificial flavourings and colourings they'd been plied with at family holiday functions.

Then I had what may or may not have been a Eureka moment. I'm sure someone has brought this up before, but it could it be that ingredients other than alcohol in beer, wine, spirits and mixed drinks could be at least partly responsible for the so-called 'brain snaps' which have led to recent violent and tragic incidents?.

While I was contemplating this, I was drinking a 100% natural, preservative-free beer. I do this not because I like spending the extra money or think it gives me street cred. I do this because I've had some terrible experiences with some mainstream beer and mixed drink brands. I have had what some might term brain snaps, not leading to any violent behaviour on my part, but certainly reckless

in terms of self-harm. I've also had massive headaches and allergic reactions from these drinks and, when I've told other people about this, some have described exactly the same symptoms.

I'm not saying everyone who drinks the same products would have the same reaction, just as preservatives and colourings affect my kids more so than others we know, who can scoff every candy cane on the Christmas tree and still remain so placid and angelic, perhaps they should be used to decorate the top of it.

I'm also not saying that alcohol should be disregarded. Even if other ingredients are only a factor, the alcohol obviously lowers inhibitions and reduces the ability of adults to moderate altered moods and feelings of unease - bringing them back to the unfiltered child-like state of my two, who don't have the skills or the desire to curb their tantrums and will start fighting, sometimes physically. Or it could be the interaction of these alcohol and these chemicals creating an altogether different situation. I'm no scientist so that's just speculation.

Then there is the question of what impact the snack foods being eaten with the alcoholic drinks might have. And this is before we even bring in other factors like caffeinated alcoholic beverages, other drugs, the ingredients of high-protein dietary supplements and steroids.

Or perhaps I'm completely wrong and it's just a coincidence that I'm blowing out of all proportion. However, I'm thinking if they're serious about doing something to reduce these **violent** incidents, they would be as keen as anyone to ensure they're targeting the right ingredients and that the right approach is taken. – Michael, NSW

Sue's comment: While we certainly agree that additives in drinks, mixers, snacks and fast foods can contribute to temper outbursts and removing them would be a giant step in the right direction, this particular issue is complicated by the fact that all alcoholic drinks except gin, vodka and whisky are very high in natural salicylates, amines and glutamates. I can't see the general public wanting to embrace a message that says "drink only gin, vodka and whisky - and don't mix your vodka with tomato or fruit juice" although for a certain proportion of the population - possibly the ones in the news – this could make a huge difference. It would be good to see more awareness about food intolerance at an earlier age so that people know what affects them long before they get to legal drinking age.

See also story [304] "Last weekend I assaulted my wife and did horrific damage to her face ... I had been drinking most of the afternoon, then consumed two strawberry sundae tubs of icecream ..." Was it artificial colours or the very high salicylates in strawberry flavouring or both? We don't know, but this story illustrates what Michael says, that a combination of alcohol plus food intolerance could be potentially lethal read more.

#### **[1234] One-liners (October 2013)**

After 10 days of withdrawal symptoms, our son stopped his 3 years of rage and ceased his incontinence, night pains and **violence**. A neighbour saw him sitting still and eating dinner and was so surprised by the calm picture that she asked if we had started training him. Ha ha...gotta love disinhibited neighbours. So thank you to you and Sue. Many many thanks – Elizabeth

**[1229] 160b: Massive meltdowns (facebook thread, October 2013)**

I don't know about the health complications all I know is that my 5 year old cannot tolerate 160b annatto at all: bed wetting, aggression, risky behaviour like running out in front of cars and just all round horrible naughty behaviour of course a huge amount of food had this reaction but I have found 160b one of the worst for him (microwave popcorn oh good Lordy it's revolting the reaction) – Deborah

My 11 month old would bounce her head repeatedly off the tiles, she was aggressive punching walls etc smacking kids twice her size at daycare. At only 11 months old I was so scared that she had some really bad issue but cut the 160b and she is an angel - Jennifer

**[1199] Some reports on low salicylates (June 2013)**

We've noticed a HUGE difference in our son's temper tantrums and violent tendencies! - Julie, NSW

They can come and study my violently sal intolerant kids. At 6 months, one of my sons cried for 8 hours after eating a small serve of mashed pumpkin. Even tiny amounts of mod sal foods like carrots and sweet potato brought on massive rashes and stomach aches. Wish sceptical people could see this stuff – Veronica

**[1194] One-liners (March 2013)**

I have to tell you your books and DVD have been a Godsend! We've noticed a HUGE difference in our son's temper tantrums and violent tendencies! We have told everyone we know about you and your research. Thank you! - Julie, NSW

**[1159] Hoping for something better and I believe I have found it (October 2012)**

I have a five year old who has epilepsy as well as well as host of behavioural and learning problems. From reading your book I think he may have a food intolerance problem because he gets sick when he eats pizza or hot chips. I can't get in to see a dietitian for the elimination diet for five months. At the moment I have eating only from the shopping list in your book. It has only been 5 days and I think I can see an improvement. I am worried about the medication that he is on (Tegretol) as I have read that it can cause some of the aggressive behaviour that he exhibits. I have looked through some of the other medications used for epilepsy and it doesn't seem that any them would be suitable.

2 weeks later: I have had had my son on the diet for about 2 weeks now and have good success. The last 3 days he has been wonderful and I am hoping that it continues. I borrowed your book (Fed up with ADHD) from the library and love it.

Next day: I took my son to his paediatrician yesterday. We are changing him from Tegretol liquid to white Epilim tablets which seemed to be the one with the least additives and hope it all goes well. We have had 4 really good days now, the best he has ever been. I don't think his doc could believe the difference in him because all the time they have only ever offered medication for his behaviour which I refused hoping for something better and I believe I have found it. – Sonia, by email Feb 2007

**[1125] Conduct Disorder -hitting/kicking/swearing/yelling/pushing - gone (September 2012)**

It's been about 6 weeks now that we've had our son eating failsafe. In fact, the whole family to different degrees. Our soon to be 5 yo son was diagnosed with Conduct Disorder over a year ago, however the behavioural problems have existed for two years - hitting/kicking/swearing/yelling/pushing etc. Considerably **violent** and unpredictable outbursts. We've been to see all kinds of people, Paediatrician, Psychologist, the Children's Developmental Service, more recently a Psychotherapist. All this has cost us a fortune and made some difference, although not significant and not consistent.

This last weekend has been one of the best we've had in two years, we have our beautiful, kind and gentle son back. The change is significant. At his kindy, ALL the staff have noticed, not just his own teachers. If only we had looked more closely at his diet two years ago. Thank you, thank you, thank you - Megan by email.

**[1103] Amines make him angry and **violent** (February 2012)**

I'm a mom to a very amine sensitive teen boy and your books, website and DVD have been a big help to us. I think without the knowledge you imparted through your books, there's a good chance my son would have become a **violent** young man, because under the effects of amines he gets so angry. But, with the diet, he can enjoy life and we can enjoy him! – Kelly

**[1090] "Our lives no longer revolve around tantrums" (January 2012)**

I have been working on failsafe eating with my four year old daughter who has extreme behavioral issues - tantrums, oppositional, **aggression**, etc. We completed the elimination phase, and have been doing some trials. Her behavior improved greatly during the elimination phase, however, on each of the trials the old behaviors have returned. She seems to be extremely sensitive. There are very few food left on my list that are okay for her. Her diet consists mainly of rice, rice milk, chicken, white potatoes, green beans, pears ... She goes to preschool and I pack her snacks and meals for her. It is difficult to do it on such a limited diet. Since we are in the US, the products that are on your failsafe list are not available to us. Our sanity is more important than a varied diet for her - but right now I feel frustrated. I have your book, "Fed Up" and that is what helped me get started with the elimination diet but I don't know how to find a dietician that would support the failsafe diet. Many dieticians here in the US don't believe in foods affecting behavior. (We recommended joining the failsafeUSA group)

Update three months later ... My daughter is like a different person on this diet - thank you so much for all you have done to share your information. She is a much happier person, and our lives no longer revolve around tantrums. Not to mention that her skin has improved a great deal and she is no longer constantly itchy. I have also been able to add more safe items to her diet. I am glad that you have been able to spread the word in schools in Australia and wish that the same thing could be done here. – Elise USA, by email

**[1086] 319: tantrums "it was like the devil had taken him over" (December 2011)**

I thought I'd share with you a recent experience I had with my son, when overnight my gorgeous, fun loving, cheeky little man turned into an absolute monster, having tantrums left right and centre. Not

his usual 2 year old tantrums but full-on aggressive, angry and really scary tantrums, it was like the devil had taken him over. He was really irritable, he couldn't sit still and wasn't listening to anything I said, he was throwing things all the time and just being grumpy, angry and outright horrible. After a few days of this I started to think that it was something more than the usual 'milestone' / wonderweek stuff, it was really disturbing, not to mention very difficult to deal with. Anyway to cut a long story short I started to think if he was eating anything that he didn't normally eat that might have caused him to behave like this. I remember that I had just changed the brand and type of cracker that he eats for his snack. On closer investigation of the ingredients of this biscuit and a bit of google work (thanks to the Fed Up website) we found it had vegetable oil with antioxidant 319 in it, which can cause irritability, learning difficulties and children's behavioural problems! Bingo! That had to be it; it was the only thing that we could think of that was new in his life that could make him change so dramatically, so quickly. So those biscuits (Ritz sticks for your information) went straight in the bin and my lovely little boy returned, just like that - his nice behaviour returned as quickly as the horrible behaviour arrived. I couldn't quite believe that something so small could have such a big impact. It was amazing and very disturbing.

Anyway after this experience I became intrigued in food additives and frantically began reading and researching and quite frankly I couldn't quite believe what I was reading. I have always been pretty careful with the food I feed my kids and try to have minimal or no processed food in the house but I am disturbed to find that these antioxidant additives (and other nasty additives) are added to things that you would think would be pretty harmless and healthy, like crackers, bread, yoghurt and butter/margarine.

I've never really been keen on being obsessed with reading food labels but this experience was so powerful that for the sake of the health and wellbeing of our family we have now gone additive free and it is hard to describe just how much it has changed our lives. Generally speaking things are better all round, we're less irritable, there's less niggling and nagging, and less frustration and shouting, our household is so much calmer and happier. Also I have noticed that both of my boys skin has improved dramatically, they have always suffered from eczema, not badly but enough for it to be noticeable, three weeks into being additive free it has almost cleared up completely, it certainly can't be a coincidence!!!

Even though it was a terrible week to live through in a way I am so happy that we had the 319 experience so that our eyes were opened up to the world of additives and just how powerful they can be. A big thank you to Sue and all her passionate helpers for making this information available and for all your hard work in spreading the word, you really have changed our lives (for the better!) – Anna from SA by email.

#### **[964] One-liners (October 2010)**

My child (on coloured antibiotics) is like a kid on speed today - screaming and yelling, hitting her sister, breaking trees and generally being violent and frustrated at every little thing. I'm taking her off the medication in the hope she will get better on her own as the alternative is not pleasant for anyone, herself included. – by email

**[1072] The Amine/Salicylate dilemma (September 2011)**

It was great to have the opportunity to meet you at the Brisbane roadshow. It felt like I was meeting my all time favourite rock star. I was quite awe struck. Listening to you speak motivated me to keep my son going on the food plan.

After the presentation, I made an appointment to see the dietitian you recommended. It was a lengthy trip but well worth it. For the next month we are transitioning my son to a gluten and dairy free diet, increasing his protein and calcium intake (protein has been difficult as we are vegetarians) and stopping the soy products as well. I agreed to allow him to try some chicken (your suggestion) and white fish. As our dietitian pointed out, it's a trial. Some children improve, some remain the same but at the moment it's a question mark regarding my son's behaviour. We started the transition last Thursday and the Vitasoy Rice milk, added with a teaspoon of icing sugar (dietitian's suggestion) has been a huge hit. Calcium intake no longer a problem.

To be completely honest I was hoping she would tell me the Amine/Salicylate dilemma was all rubbish so I could go back to living on Easy Street and feed my son all his favourite behaviour changing foods. When I asked her opinion she merely looked at me and asked what were my results from the challenges we had done. **Aggressive**, out of control behaviour with Amines and restless, silly behaviour from Salicylates. Not just my observations but also that of his Kindergarten (he is there for his second year). No more said really.

Thank you once again for all the effort you have put in regarding food intolerances. – Liz, Qld

**[1046] 319: Four weeks of hell from 319 (TBHQ) in gluten free bread (from submission to FSANZ 2006)**

Our six year old son is intolerant to many preservatives, colours, flavours, gluten, dairy and food chemicals. Unless we control what we feed him on his very restricted diet, he reacts behaviourally and cannot learn at school or go forward in his treatment by his paediatrician.

Earlier this year, we were giving our son a gluten free bread mix which states on the packet, "preservative free". We had reason to trust this product because it was listed on the 'safe shopping guide' issued by the Australian Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, supplied by our dietitian.

This product was wonderful with it being so versatile in producing pancakes, bread, crumpets, wraps and pizza bases all from this one mix. Our son was able to enjoy more variety without feeling deprived. Once I increased the dose of this product for our son, i.e. pancakes for breakfast, French toast for lunch and a wrap for after school, within a day he displayed explosive behaviour and was unreasonable.

We did not suspect foods as it was listed as safe and the company was a reputable company.

We rang our paediatrician who advised us to cut down on his supplement. After a week there was no change, even at school our son's teacher was noticing a big difference in behaviour and learning. The paediatrician advised a blood test, another week passed for the results which in turn came back within normal range. Only then did we suspect foods. The Food Intolerance Network always advises

their members to check products containing fats or oils for hidden synthetic antioxidants. I rang our supermarket to double check if there were any changes in their sunflower oil that we use, and they advised there were none. I then rang the bread company and spoke to their Quality Operations Officer. I asked if there were any synthetic antioxidants in their product in question, he said he was pretty sure there wasn't. We insisted that he double check because we were at wits' end and we were ready to have our son's head scanned because he was so **aggressive** and erratic in his behaviour. The man rang back in shock and was very apologetic, because the oil which was supposed to be 'pure canola oil' as stated on the ingredients list, in fact had synthetic antioxidant 319 in it.

We were relieved but angry, our son was put through four weeks of hell, not to mention us as well, because he could not control what he was doing, and it took well over a week for the affects to wear off. We had our good boy back and he even said, "Mummy please don't give me bad food any more"!

When our son has had foods with hidden synthetic antioxidants in them, we consider the reaction our son displayed as life threatening, for example, when our son becomes enraged with fury, usually over something trivial, he has run out onto the road. Another time when I was driving down the mountain on hair pin bend roads, enraged, our son got hold of my hood on my jacket and was pulling on it while I was doing my best to manoeuvre the car down the road without hitting the guard rails and going over the cliff. We believe that these antioxidants should at all times appear on the label. – L....., NSW (Thanks to this mother, Laucke's gluten free bread is now free of nasty antioxidants)

#### **[1037] 320: Unlabelled antioxidants in vegetable oil (from submission to FSANZ 2006)**

Our very **aggressive** five year old improved dramatically on the elimination diet. We were quite surprised and relieved that he passed most of his challenges except for a few additives such as artificial colours. However, after several weeks of excellent behaviour, he gradually deteriorated to the stage where he was uncontrollable, breaking windows and punching others. We were at a loss to explain the downturn. Eventually, we found the culprit - unlabelled BHA 320 in vegetable oil used in a gourmet garlic paste that we had started to use more frequently. There was no effect when it was eaten occasionally, but it caused catastrophic results when used every day. – reader from the NT

#### **[991] Speech: Diet got rid of disfluency and stutter (March 2011)**

My 5 year old son has suffered from disfluency in his speech since he started to speak! He was an early speaker, and was putting sentences together very early, but would always talk in a very monotone evenly paced voice, a trait we are now told is quite common with kids who have auditory processing issues. We have recently had him diagnosed with a 'severe' figure ground problem. [the louder the background noise, the more trouble he has in processing what he hears - his actual hearing is perfect] I put 'severe' in italics, because he was tested at a time where he was not baseline; at a time where other factors were in play. Both the audiologist and the speech pathologist had other explanations for the stutter, which was most common at the beginning of sentences. Once he got started, the speech was more fluent, but still monotone.

The speech pathologist said his brain was moving faster than his tongue. He had an amazing grasp of language at an early age and his tongue would catch up with time. We discussed techniques in 'smooth talking' and 'bumpy talking', but aside from that the advice was that he would grow out of it.

The audiologist said that the processing difficulty could be linked to the stuttering as a delaying tactic while the rest of the information becomes accessible.

I don't disagree with these experts, but as time has gone on, I am convinced that other factors are more responsible for these symptoms than either of the explanations above.

We noticed, over time, that sometimes his stutter was worse than other times. A noisy environment always made things worse, supporting the figure ground hearing assessment, but at other times there seemed to be no obvious contributor. Tiredness, we thought? Perhaps new developmental stages?

We had already suspected that colours and preservatives made him 'high' and had eliminated all of those anyway. I made most things from scratch and bought very little processed food.

In about April of this year, we happened upon the 'Fed Up' information. We had just had about 3-4 weeks of hell at home. I was tearing my hair out and the tension in our house with the behavioural problems was unbelievable. His stutter was so bad, that it would take him 3-4 minutes to get through a simple sentence. I was trying to be patient and not draw attention to it as the speech pathologist had told us, but it was not only driving me mad, but for the first time, it was really bothering him. " Mu..Mu...Mu...Mu...Mum..... l....l ....l....l....l.... wa....wa. wa...wa..... Uh, what was I saying mum? " If I'd put in every stutter, it would take up more than a page! Upon reading various fact sheets on the website, I had an epiphany! I had put dried apricots in his lunchboxes for the 2 kinder days and 1 day care day a week for about the last 3-4 weeks. Just 3-4 each time, but I cut them out immediately while I kept researching.

Within 4-5 days of removing apricots [and no other changes], the stutter had improved, but was still apparent. After another week, other people started noticing the improvement.

That was the beginning. While the stutter had not vanished at this point, it was enough to make me convinced that there was something to all this 'intolerance stuff'. We got more serious, and finally started to see the gorgeous little boy that we knew was in there somewhere. The aggression all but disappeared, the frustration and the stutter were much improved but there were still times where things would go downhill again.

After hearing Sue talk, I decided to get much more serious, and undertook the complete elimination diet, including the elimination of dairy and wheat. Prior to starting, I spent about 2 weeks trying recipes, building up my pantry items, stocking the freezer etc. I believe that if I had not done that, I might have given up, fallen in a heap and put it all in the too hard basket. The changes in the household were amazing. I was spending a couple of hours extra in the kitchen every day, but with the elimination of wheat [I am convinced] I had the extra energy to do it. A week in, and his stutter had all but disappeared. It was as if he had suddenly grown up an extra year or two. He took

adversity in his stride, he shrugged his shoulders instead of clenching his fists, and any remaining disfluency in speech I felt was because of habit rather than anything else. His voice became more interesting, his pitch patters varied and I am sure that he coped with noisy situations better. All of the 'autistic' tendencies which we had seen for years were improved. He read social cues better, spent much less time with his fingers in his mouth, coped with loud noises better; generally it was an amazing difference. His kinder teacher, who has watched this process with interest, remarked that it almost looked as if we had sedated him!

We are lucky in a way, to have a son who reacts so quickly and obviously to things. It makes identifying problems a lot easier. During our salicylate challenge, he went off the chart for silliness, and the stutter got worse. During a course of antibiotics for a bad bacterial skin infection, he got **aggressive**, angry ... and the stutter got worse. Every time we have slipped up with food, the stutter gets worse. It is our main indicator that something is amiss.

I have no absolute proof. I am not a scientist. I am not a speech pathologist. I am a mum - plain and simple. But I know my boy. I know who he is and who he isn't and these past 7 months I have watched him like a hawk. I know when he is up and I know when he is down. And I am absolutely convinced that his disfluency is directly connected with his diet. I am not saying that the diet is fully responsible, but added to other issues that he has, the diet is what has made the difference for him. A year ago, I was so worried that when he starts school next year, he would be teased because of his stutter. Now, I know that while we will always face issues with diet and behaviour, at least at baseline, he won't be that different from any other child.

And of course, I will be eternally grateful to Sue, and all who contribute to the Fed Up website. Without it, life would be a great deal more difficult. The one thing I am thankful for, is that I never let things go. If I had just listened to the experts and not used my brain and my intuition, then who knows....- Kylie, by email

#### **[990] Behaviour & diet: extraordinary tantrums gone (March 2011)**

First of all thank you for being my saviour!! My 4 year old little boy had been getting increasingly worse in his behaviour and we had pretty much become isolated due to his extraordinary tantrums that lasted anything up to 2 hours 3 or 4 times a week. I never knew when they would happen and it was normally as soon as we met up with friends in a play centre he would become **aggressive**, loud, uncontrollable and impossible to calm. Many times I have left a shop or playcentre with him folded under my arm, kicking and screaming, biting anyone or anything that came in his way.

We had already been seeing a paediatrician as he was also under weight and under height for his age. They hadn't found anything wrong but his blood tests were not quite right either. I was getting desperate and he is starting school next Thursday and I couldn't imagine what they were going to say!!

Until 'Fed Up'..... We have been following the elimination diet (mostly) for the last 2 weeks with dramatic results. We have not had any tantrums for 10 days. He is a pleasure to be around and he is sleeping much better. We are not there yet, but so much better. I can't quite believe he's the same child!! - Fay, UK.

#### **[964] One-liners (October 2010)**

We have been following Failsafe eating for three months and it has made an enormous change to our 5 year old boy. Pre-diet he was very **aggressive** and had developed a range of tics, now all the tics have gone and his lovely, funny nature is shining through. So far the challenges that have affected him have been dairy and salicylates – Karen, by email

#### **[947] An open letter to the Health Commissioner in my state about pharmaceutical labeling (October 2010)**

I'd like to bring to your attention the outcome of my 3 1/2 year old daughter after taking Cephalexin or commonly known as Keflex. My daughter is intolerant to artificial colours, flavours and preservatives. The reaction should she eat foods with them in is the following:

- Lots of **violent** anger, frustration, screaming, yelling, temper tantrums off the scale
- Throwing objects, hitting people, hitting herself
- Will not listen to otherwise normal instructions
- Sleeplessness, very unsettled at night

This is exactly what happened after 4 days of taking Cephalexin (chemart brand) of Keflex..... My problem is that because in Australia it isn't legal for pharmaceutical companies to list their ingredients on the bottle/box it is very hard for the consumer to know what they are feeding themselves and their families. I had to ask the pharmacist, who looked it up for me, but lo and behold no numbers just a bunch of foreign chemical names, some of which I was able to decipher and found them to be detrimental to my daughters intolerance.

How come a packet of lollies can manage to fit a list of ingredients on it, but a big bottle of medicine can't .... I find it negligent of the pharmaceutical companies and the Australian Government to not tell the consumers what they are taking.

Why does children's medication have artificial colours and preservatives in that aren't necessary in a bottle that has an expiry of only 30 days anyway - it's really really bad and something needs to be done..... I refer you to this page to see how many people are affected..... Medication factsheet

Why doesn't Western Australia take a stand and enforce much needed changes on these pharmaceutical companies... some of the additives are banned in some countries - doesn't that tell us something? – thanks to Tiffany

#### **[892] Wild and extremely **violent** behaviour due to undiagnosed coeliac disease (February 2010)**

Three years ago I stood in the bookshop with 'Fed Up' in my hand debating whether to part with \$20. Your book has repaid itself a thousandfold. I send my heartfelt thanks.

My youngest son's problems are a long saga, suffice to say that eliminating additives and low amines as suggested by your book provided the answer for some time. Then at nearly nine, out of the blue, he had some sort of breakdown. The teacher suggested Asperger's but he soon became worse - quite autistic, wild and extremely violent. He was off school for three months. The doctors I approached turned their backs on me. I couldn't believe it. I can only think they thought that as he already had a disability (Central Auditory Processing Disorder) it was part and parcel of the condition and didn't realise how extreme his behaviour was. I insisted that he be screened for a variety of degenerative diseases, but they came back negative.

Finally realising that no one else "gave a stuff", I turned back to your book. If it was diet before, then maybe, it's diet again, I thought. I tried eliminating salicylates, he got worse; I tried wheat, no change; I tried dairy no change. Eventually I tried eliminating both dairy and wheat and he improved.

He spent two years on a wheat free, dairy free, no additive, careful about amine diet and he could manage if he had a small dose of Ritalin 5mg breakfast, 5mg at lunch as well. Our lives were back on track, he was progressing at school, having a go at different sports, and excelling in his favourite sport. But it was all because of the ritalin - and diet.

Without the medication it was still like living with a drunk - he could be fun sometimes, but more often silly and tiresome, and aggressive too often. I always felt that the child that he had been was still there deep down, intact and undamaged, although why I believed it, I don't know. In November when he turned 11, I contemplated the thought that maybe he did have irreversible minor brain damage, but I couldn't accept the notion.

Then, by chance ("Mum, I don't want Rye bread this morning, I want Rice cereal") we realised it was the GLUTEN. I never suspected it, because I'd known a baby who nearly died of coeliac disease and the symptoms were quite different from my son's. I followed up your footnote in Fed Up and read Professor Duggan's article in the Aust. Med.Journal. My son was diagnosed with Coeliac disease a month ago and I am absolutely delighted by his response to the gluten free diet.

As you can see I am much indebted to you. It was only fine reading of your book that has helped me tease out my son's difficulties. I shudder to think where he'd be now (at a special school, I'm sure) if it hadn't been for your persistence in acquiring all this knowledge and for passing it on - Anne, Qld

**[875] Onset of depression, aggression and hyperactivity in a 6 yo linked to school canteen food (November 2009)**

My six year old son was diagnosed with asthma/allergy at 2 years old. Several medications were diagnosed for him. Not wanting to go down this path I consulted a naturopath, who managed his condition with vitamins and restricted diet. But this year upon starting school my normally bright, happy child became depressed, aggressive and hyperactive. A pattern of school canteen usage emerged at which point I requested a list of ingredients for some of the things he was buying. To my horror, the slushy he was ordering contained two artificial colours and two preservatives (benzoate preservative 211 and potassium sorbate 202). The lady who runs the canteen said that this product is known as an AMBER school product. Apparently you are allowed to sell it in canteens as long as you do not have too many other AMBER products on the menu. – Leesa, by email

**[868] Extreme screaming: from terrible to angel (November 2009)**

You have saved my son's life quite amazingly. He is a completely different child. He has gone from terrible to angel.

I saw your DVD and was amazed at the story about a toddler who used to scream for long periods of time. My son is 3 now and had been screaming extremely since he was able to start eating. He would scream and hit and become very aggressive and defiant. I tried absolutely everything and I have had quite a bit of professional training in managing behaviour and still struggled with him.

I am sure that if I did not see your DVD he would have ended up on some kind of horrible medication and under some private psychiatrist. I could just see him being exactly like the juvenile offenders in the DVD or worse but he is now a normal child and a perfect angel.

I am so surprised at how much difference it has made, this diet really works if you just do it properly. It is really hard at first to know what to put on sandwiches etc ... but it gets a lot easier as we go along. I never really understood diet affecting behaviour before and thought it was only really applicable to those who just persisted to feed their children fast food all the time. - Charmaine, Perth WA.

**[858] 282: crumpets with 282 changed my sweet two year old into a monster (November 2009)**

I have a 6 yo son who is intolerant to additives. 282 in particular changed my beautiful sweet then 2 year old into a monster. Luckily, because he was basically born with eczema, I had been very careful about introducing foods. I started giving him crumpets for breakfast when he was 2. He would be fine after eating them, however when he woke from his sleep he would be screaming and hitting me, very violent and uncontrollable. I initially thought it was hunger, as I found that when I gave him something to eat he would calm down. Anyway, to cut a long story short, I found out about 282 (in all crumpets and some breads) and cut it out completely. He was normal again!! – Michelle, NSW

**[802] One-liners (June 2009)**

"We have been following failsafe since November last year and the changes have been wonderful. If there is an occasional slip-up then we know about it! My son doesn't have violent tantrums any more. He still gets upset over things, but we can reason with him and he calms down quickly. My daughter doesn't wet the bed unless she has salicylates so we can minimise that." - Alison, NSW.

**[801] 202: Potassium sorbate makes my son clingy, crying (June 2009)**

I have a 6 year old son who I already knew was intolerant to some foods. He has periods of eczema (which we have been able to control with his diet) and we have avoided these things for years. Luckily, because he was basically born with eczema, I had been very careful about introducing foods. I started giving him crumpets for breakfast when he was 2. He would be fine after eating them, however when he woke from his sleep he would be screaming and hitting me, very violent and uncontrollable. I initially thought it was hunger, as I found that when I gave him something to eat he would calm down. Anyway, to cut a long story short. I found out about preservative 282 and cut it out completely. He was normal again!!

On and off over the years I discovered other things that affected him, so I added those to my list of things to avoid. A few months ago we went over to Europe. When we came back he went back to school and started getting very clingy, crying and not being able to read or write properly and was not able to concentrate. I have had trouble with these symptoms on and off over the 1½ years. I mentioned this to my friend, she gave me your book and I started an additive free diet.

After about 1 week everything had improved dramatically. I waited about 4 weeks before I introduced additives, one a time ... He reacted to 202 (potassium sorbate) in a drink of juice by crying and becoming clingy. He had it at dinner time, then had trouble getting to sleep. The next day he was very sensitive and cried a lot and hid in his room when our visitors arrived and would not come out until they had been there for several hours. He got better after he had his lunch (which he ate by himself in his room). He then came out, but didn't talk much and sat right next to me. He only had it the once, as I did not want to make the situation worse. He can drink fresh juice with no problem. - Michelle by email

### **[782] Morning sickness and other symptoms in mother and children due to diet (June 2009)**

We only found out about "Fed Up With Food Additives" when Maternal & Child Health nurse suggested we look at a possible problem with food chemicals for our youngest child's (14 months) eating disorder. However, now that I think about it, I was violently ill during my pregnancies after eating high salicylate foods - particularly broccoli, cucumber and citrus fruits – even the smell of these foods would make me queasy.

My IBS symptoms have cleared up since I have reduced the number of high salicylate foods in my diet (I was doing it for the kids so also have adjusted my husband's diet and my own). I used to think I was doing the right thing by eating a huge fruit salad every day, and wondered why my digestive system was so messed up. I have also suffered from a hives-like rash all over my thighs for the past few years and couldn't work it out - I now have long rash free periods after avoiding dried fruit as much as possible, as well as msg, yeast extract, 627, 635 etc. We avoid additives as much as possible but occasionally I slip up and we really notice the effects now.

My 9 year old daughter seems to become very vague and forgetful with amines - especially cheese - and we have found our 3 year old son to react badly to glutamates - he becomes quite **aggressive** and uncontrollable. The other thing we have noticed is the effect of colours - my daughter becomes very silly and hyperactive - for example, today she had a 'slushie' at the local shops that a family member bought for her - tonight she is jumping all over the house, falling off chairs, making silly noises and facial expressions etc. But I'm sure you've heard all of this before!

I have found the effects on my kids particularly interesting, as when I was a child, I was unable to have food with MSG (I got severe migraines including vomiting) and red-coloured foods/cordial made me vomit badly. Thank you so much for really making a difference to our lives. – Michelle by email

**[717] Oppositional defiance: violence settled (February 2009)**

Thank you for your wonderful work, time and love you have put into helping families like ours. Truly if I had not found your book, I believe that my husband and I would have split up and gone our separate ways as this stress was just too much for us. We got no help from doctors or specialists at the Royal Children's Hospital. Our 17-year-old who is doing year 12 this year is living with his grandmother as living with us was not possible due to our other son's impossible behavior. My sister who is a Primary School teacher visited us a month ago and said that if I do not medicate this son, he will not be able to go to a school. His behaviour was so bad. My husband and I still have marks on our bodies from his bites.

He was violent, kicked and hit us. We had to put him in the bathroom as it was the safest because any other room was trashed. We needed time out sometimes. After a week on the elimination diet, family and friends asked if I had sedated him. His behavior had settled so much. He still is not there yet, however we are now on track and I can see light at the end of the long tunnel.

Also may I recommend the ladies buy the DVD to show your men as they will rarely read the book. Watching an hour of a DVD is more comprehensible to the male brain. That is how I got my husband to finally understand our son's behavior and to support what I am doing with him. He now has the book in his van and every spare moment he has, he reads it. He has even told his family and his work mates about this. You would think that he was the one to have worked out our son's problems. Never mind, as long as he is with me on this everything else does not matter – Irene, VIC.

**[711] Heart symptoms from benzoates, bread preservative and sulphites (December 2008)**

My 14-year-old son has Aspergers syndrome. He experiences arrhythmia and severe heart palpitations every time he consumes any additives 211, 282, 220 etc. If he has been free from these additives for over two weeks then he will get away with the first exposure and then it accumulates and gets worse. We saw a heart specialist and he found no problems, just blaming it on anxiety. He also gets more aggressive and violent once it accumulates... like Jekyll and Hyde. Sadly it is so hard to convince and be believed by doctors and his psychiatrist that these additives affect him. – Therese, by email

**[701] A nitrate reaction to supposedly nitrate-free organic ham (November 2008)**

My children have severe intolerances to preservatives and colours but not amines. I have been going very well, until the last couple of days when my children started yelling, hitting, slamming doors and just generally being violent with horrible mood swings.

I had purchased ham from my usual shop a few days before. I had asked if they had any of the nitrate-free ham, as I couldn't see the one I normally buy from the deli. The assistant identified a particular one as nitrate-free, explaining that they had changed suppliers and the price had gone up. I pointed out that the deli label stuck into the leg of ham said organic (I know organic doesn't always mean nitrate-free) and asked if she was sure it was nitrate-free. She said it definitely was. So I bought it. The kids had a bit that night, and a bit each day since. By yesterday they were both shocking, particularly my 3 year-old daughter, who had had more.

Today I went back to the shop to check. Someone else was on the deli counter. I asked if they had any nitrate-free ham. Before he could answer, I said is that it there, pointing to the one I had purchased. He said no, that the nitrate-free ham is not being stocked anymore. I told him what had happened and he apologized. I told him how severe the reaction has been and how that my children will be like this for a week now. I was told I could get a refund for the ham I purchased. - Michelle, Sydney [Note that ham is not failsafe due to amines. However, it is suitable for people who have passed their amine challenge. See Failsafe shopping List on the website for sources of preservative free ham. Remember you can use CTRL F to search for <nitrate-free ham>]

#### **[700] One-liners (November 2008)**

I have finally finished all the food chemical challenges. I found that I am not intolerant to salicylates though I am extremely intolerant to amines. It was a huge relief to find out where all the **aggression** came from. – by email

#### **[682] I was pushed to control cry my son (September 2008) [COURAGE AWARD]**

I just wanted to tell you about the startling difference we have seen in my son since removing salicylates. He is now 18 months old and the difference is profound - removing apple alone reduced nearly all of his night wakings, and removing avocado and corn as well has stopped his moodiness, screaming and irritability. His reflux is more under control and he no longer screams during the day and most especially at night. If he does we know it means either he or I have eaten something we shouldn't by accident. I've also determined that he reacts to a lot of additives as well. 160b produces **aggressiveness**, defiance and screaming within 24 hours. I now have a really happy well behaved little boy. I was pushed to control cry my son due to his poor sleeping, but I knew something deeper was wrong. I'm SO glad I went with my gut instinct that it was food related. – Taryn, Vic

#### **[670] Behavioural reaction to medications in hospital (September 2008)**

Recently my failsafe 6-year-old son went into hospital to have grommets in and his adenoids removed. Right up until he went into the operating theatre he amazed us with his great behaviour and how he dealt with the whole process. The minute he woke up he was so **aggressive**, rude, would not co-operate and was back to our little monster again. We couldn't wait to slink out of the hospital with him and get home. The next day he was still agitated and demanding. Do you think the anaesthetic and medication he received for this procedure could cause these sort of reactions? I know kids do react to going into hospital etc but the change in him from before and after was so dramatic I just have to wonder if it could affect him. – by email, NSW [General anaesthetics are usually OK but medications before and after the procedure can cause bad side effects. You can discuss this with your anaesthetist beforehand, see the free introduction to Friendly Food on [www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/Allergy/default](http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/Allergy/default)]

#### **[659] WOW! Big turnaround in three weeks (September 2008)**

My son started kindergarten this year and was at the principal's office within weeks. He had stabbed his classmate with a pencil, he had run away on a school excursion, been incredibly rude and obnoxious to teachers and hit other children. He was defiant, easily frustrated, blamed others for

everything under the sun, he was aggressive with his siblings and parents, socially he was not improving either.

After the disastrous start to school I picked up your book which I thought was going to just talk about colours and preservatives and could not put it down. It made so much sense and I just had that gut feeling we had found a possible solution. We started failsafe eating almost immediately and we made many errors but finally worked through those. Before the diet he would have avocado, banana and berries in his lunch and he would come home to spinach and tomato lasagne!!

During the diet my son slept and slept and slept. His behaviour improved very slowly but once we were in the third week we noticed a big turn around. One morning he surfaced at 8am, his bed had been made, he was dressed and he was calm, polite and happy.

When he returned to school for term two his teacher and school counsellor were in disbelief. During the whole of term two he did not even once have to go to the time-out beanbag in his classroom. WOW! He has started to make friends and has picked up some awards along the way.- by email

#### **[625] Anxiety attack in an adult from Nurofen (February 2008)**

My husband has had a serious tooth ache on the weekend. He has taking Panadol and needed more relief, so I gave him some Nurofen. Well, within 5-10 minutes, he was irrational and aggressive, along with a huge anxiety attack. He then took some more two days later with the same reaction. – by email

#### **[621] 319: Four weeks of hell from unlisted 319 (TBHQ) in gf bread (February 2008)**

This product was wonderful with it being so versatile in producing pancakes, bread, crumpets, wraps and pizza bases all from this one mix. Our son was able to enjoy more variety without feeling deprived. Once I increased the dose of this product for our son, i.e. pancakes for breakfast, French toast for lunch and a wrap for after school, within a day he displayed explosive behaviour and was unreasonable.

We did not suspect foods as it was listed as safe and the company was a reputable company.

We rang our paediatrician who advised us to cut down on his supplement. After a week there was no change, even at school our son's teacher was noticing a big difference in behaviour and learning. The paediatrician advised a blood test, another week passed for the results which in turn came back within normal range. Only then did we suspect foods. The Food Intolerance Network always advises their members to check products containing fats or oils for hidden synthetic antioxidants. I rang our supermarket to double check if there were any changes in their sunflower oil that we use, and they advised there were none. I then rang the bread company and spoke to their Quality Operations Officer. I asked if there were any synthetic antioxidants in their product in question, he said he was pretty sure there wasn't. We insisted that he double check because we were at wits' end and we were ready to have our son's head scanned because he was so aggressive and erratic in his behaviour. The man rang back in shock and was very apologetic, because the oil which was supposed to be 'pure canola oil' as stated on the ingredients list, in fact had synthetic antioxidant 319 in it.

We were relieved but angry, our son was put through four weeks of hell, not to mention us as well, because he could not control what he was doing, and it took well over a week for the affects to wear off. We had our good boy back and he even said, 'Mummy please don't give me bad food any more'!

When our son has had foods with hidden synthetic antioxidants in them, we consider the reaction our son displayed as life threatening, for example, when our son becomes enraged with fury, usually over something trivial, he has run out onto the road. Another time when I was driving down the mountain on hair pin bend roads, enraged, our son got hold of my hood on my jacket and was pulling on it while I was doing my best to manoeuvre the car down the road without hitting the guard rails and going over the cliff. We believe that these antioxidants should at all times appear on the label. – by email, NSW [Thanks to this mother and the helpful people at Laucke's, their gluten-free bread is now free of nasty antioxidants]

**[611] 160b: Migraine, headbanging and violence from annatto 160b (February 2008)**

Through the elimination diet and challenges we found out that annatto 160b causes a severe reaction in our 7 year old daughter. Symptoms include migraine, loss of fine motor control, head banging, violence and aggression, screaming and yelling, loss of rational thought and temporary memory loss, beginning 24 hours after ingestion and gradually diminishing over two weeks. Luckily for us (and by chance) I seldom purchased products containing annatto prior to the challenge, I shudder to think where we would have ended up if she had been consuming annatto regularly all her life. – reader, Qld

**[599] Anita's speech: a 10-year-old tells her school about food intolerance (November 2007)  
WINNER OF THE COURAGE AWARD**

Near the end of 2006 I was getting sick and tired of all the kids at my old school ripping me off and teasing me for being on a 'diet'. In October I had a school project to do, something that we were passionate about. I asked my teacher if I could talk about the diet. So I spoke in front of 380 children, parents and teachers at Maitland Public School. See my speech below.

Parents, Teachers and Classmates,

In June 2005 mum put myself and my brother on a diet as I was very hated and always getting into trouble and even being called 'Hekyl and Jekyll' by our school counsellor. No matter how hard I tried, I could not seem to behave better.

At first we hated the 'diet' because we couldn't have our 'normal' food and we did not like being teased some of the kids at our school, some of you did not invite us to birthday parties because of the diet. We soon realised how much better we felt and how much better we were behaving, the food wasn't that bad, it was really good and good for us, so we both decided that when people ripped us off we would say 'We are not on a diet, but an 'Adventure', we are not made to do it, we choose to because it will make us healthier'. So everyone in our family and friends call it our Adventure, not a diet.

On the adventure we have found that I react to Amines as well as the artificial stuff and especially 160b, and my brother reacts to Sulphites and the artificial stuff as well. Mum also found that I get

very sick when I eat stuff with 160b which is advertised as natural, which I guess it is but they do not tell you it can make you extremely sick. When I eat these types of foods, I get very irritable, cranky, aggressive, violent, black bags under my eyes and sometimes would bang my head against things to try and make the pain go away. I do not mean to do this but I cannot stop myself from doing it.

I have not had and neither has my brother any problems since June. It feels so much better to be able to control myself and not get into trouble. I know that some people especially teachers I have already upset, and sadly I know no matter how hard I try or how good I get, you will not change your thoughts about me, so I have decided with my mum, dad and brother to move to the new school that is being built, just around the corner from our house to start a new 'Adventure' and hopefully will make new friends and people will accept me for who I am.

We cannot believe that the big companies are watching out for us, because they aren't, if they were, they would not be putting all of this stuff in our food when it makes us sick. They are more interested in getting money, which is wrong. Once you start looking at what is in our foods, it will make you sick to think that is what we are putting into our bodies.

Just by cutting out the additives, preservatives and natural things like 160b, you will see how much better you will feel, not just for us kids, but the adults as well. Our Adventure really has made a huge difference. Give it a try, it is a lot of work to make sure you don't eat the bad things, but if you have the support of your family and friends, it makes a great difference.... My brother and I are very lucky, we have mum, dad, grandma, grand-dad and our church all supporting us. Church, Before & After school care phone mum when they are having 'party' days and mum makes something that we can enjoy.

Parents, all you are pretty much doing is going back to basic eating like my parents and grandparents used to do not that long ago. We are all tired, but mum & dad both work full time and can manage to do this for us - to make us healthier. The more people that do this then the quicker the big companies will click and realise we won't be buying their unhealthy food.

Thank you for listening. I hope it makes a difference.

#### **[596] From 'severe inattentive ADD' to 'normal' due to diet (November 2007)**

In 2006 my quiet 7 year old daughter was diagnosed by her paediatrician as having severe inattentive ADD. He offered Ritalin to help the symptoms. I was not comfortable giving her this as a first step because in the 2 weeks since our last appointment I had read 10 books and scanned the net. A common theme kept coming up. If your child has an intolerance to a food group there is a likelihood of more than one intolerance which can lead to behavioural issues. I felt I had to investigate this before trying medication because we already knew she had a dairy intolerance as a baby.

I chose to follow the Fed Up elimination diet by Sue Dengate. Following are the results when food groups or additives were re introduced.

\* Colours - anger followed by tears, inattention, lack of concentration, memory loss, head banging and rocking

- \* MSG/635/Glutamates - nausea and stomach cramps
- \* Benzoates - aggression
- \* Antioxidants - 310-312, 319-320 - nightmares and trouble going to sleep and staying asleep
- \* Propionates 282 - bedwetting and daytime bladder control issues
- \* Dairy - nausea, stomach cramping, diarrhea, inattention, fatigue
- \* Soy - stomach aches

It has been 14 months since adapting to my daughter's dietary needs. She has been reassessed for ADD with a normal outcome. Her school work has progressed. She is able to concentrate. She can tie her shoes, hold a knife and fork, remember her phone number, ride a bike, and skip a rope. She is able to follow multiple directions and hold attention to the task at hand. She has friends. We have also discovered she is a budding artist.

Through dietary changes we helped many of our daughter's physical and behavioral issues including fatigue, tearfulness, emotional outbursts, inattention, lack of short term memory, lack of application at school, bedwetting, vaginal irritation, rash, insatiable appetite, imbalance and clumsiness (she could not ride a bike, skip, hop), nausea and stomach cramps.

My daughter did not need medication. She has food intolerances. As grandma said 'Whatever you are doing keep doing it. She is a different child' - Trudi, NSW

#### **[575] Vocal tics, word and phrase repetition due to salicylates and additives (September 2007)**

When Chris was born he was a big, boofy boy. For the first six months of his life he was a placid, calm, happy child. At six months, he changed to being very, very active, fidgety and demanding. Looking back at that time, three things changed – he started long daycare, solids and formula. I also remember very clearly that his face changed as big dark circles and creases formed under his eyes. He was labelled 'naughty, disruptive, hyperactive and violent' by daycare when he was only 10 months old. He was walking at that stage and continued to escape from the childproof room, or to snatch toys from non-mobile babies.

Since that time he has been variously diagnosed by health professionals as having Tourette's Syndrome, the hyperactive type of ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and others. Whatever the term, the symptoms are the same, including unmanageable behaviour, poor impulse control, loud voice, vocal tics, word and phrase repetition and lack of empathy.

Coupled with the behaviour has also been a range of other medical problems including croup, asthma, headaches and stomach aches, unexplained temperatures and eczema. Chris also suffers from glue ear and for the last four years has had grommets inserted every winter to enable him to hear clearly. (As I know now, these are all indicative of food intolerance.)

Last year I took Chris to a paediatrician, looking for a solution to his constant illness rather than his behaviour. The doctor took one look at him – he was making duck noises and running in circles around the waiting room – and diagnosed food intolerances.

We went home with a complex list of foods to avoid. Although his health improved, his behaviour seemed to become worse, as it always has in summer. Just before Christmas, I found the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital's elimination diet for food intolerance. This diet was stricter but far more logical than the one we were using. It worked by identifying the chemicals that people react to, then the foods that contain them. Interestingly, the research showed that most people with food

intolerance react to the salicylates in fruit. I had been loading Chris up with cherries and nectarines in term 4. No wonder his teacher was ready to send him to Alcatraz late last year.

I switched the family to the RPAH elimination diet during the holidays. Gradually, as we removed foods from the diet and found acceptable replacements, Chris' behaviour improved. Living with him became easier, there were less sibling fights, and when he did misbehave it was easy to use normal parenting techniques to modify behaviour – something that had never worked before.

By the end of the summer holidays, I finally had a calm, reasonable, sensitive child, who was able to play at other children's places without causing mayhem, would look at people when talking, and would allow other people to talk without interrupting. Amazingly, Chris was keen to stick to the diet, having realised how good he felt.

First day back at school and I had lots of positive comments about how calm or grown-up Christopher seemed. A good start to the year. However, as I write this, I am back to having a child who runs around making chicken noises, uses a loud voice, is prone to crying and is **violent** and **aggressive**. What happened? He got to school and started to cheat. He ate chocolate cake, m&m's, muesli bars and lollies. For him, even the smallest amount results in a reaction. It is like being on a trip – he can't control his behaviour, and trying to discipline him has no effect.

So what do I need, or more importantly, what does Chris need? He needs the support of the school community to assist him to stay on his diet – he needs recognition for the fact that he does suffer from food intolerances – he desperately wants to feel in control of his life, and he likes feeling calm and relaxed, so please, please, please don't feed my child, or encourage him to cheat. - by email, Sydney

#### **[539] Possible autistic spectrum if not failsafe (January 2007)**

My husband and I have two lovely children. We have been through the whole thing of oppositional, erratic and **violent** behaviour and for us the worst part was insomnia and extreme restlessness at night. No-one ever got a rest. This all was cured with the invaluable assistance of your books, and a profound response to the elimination diet especially for our youngest child who is a 7 year old girl, Lily. She is extremely sensitive to everything – salicylates, amines, chemicals - you name it. Our son is affected, but not as badly.

At times I have wondered if Lily perhaps has Aspergers, or is somewhere on the autistic spectrum, but we had her assessed at age 4 (after being failsafe for three months) and were told that she is

bright, possibly gifted, and that she can be extremely anxious because she is clever enough to be able to think about things and therefore worries about things. We prepared her very carefully for school and so far have had no problems - until this month.

Twice this month Lily has lashed out at school, due in part to chemicals. She started swimming lessons every day and the other thing was a class party with heaps of bad food which no-one helped her to avoid. Today she has been "red-booked" and placed on detention for the second time, for hurting someone. The school counsellor who was called in told me "there are NO studies that prove that food intolerances are in any way related to behavioural disturbances". She went on to tell me that it was all in my head, and that it is coincidence that withdrawing a food substance or chemical would have a positive effect on our daughter. She then proceeded to tell me that Lily probably has Aspergers and that the paediatrician probably didn't want to tell me that. I am feeling so enraged. She hasn't even met Lily.

We follow the failsafe lifestyle to the letter, and are eternally grateful to you and your family for sharing your stories, and for your tireless work. Our family wouldn't have survived without Fed Up and how some one can say the things that this counsellor said belies belief. Our son who is now 13 is easily able to make good food choices and knows only too well what bad choices do to him. He was shocked at the response of the school counsellor. My husband - who was a total sceptic

4 years ago - was absolutely livid with that school counsellor. He knows how bad it was here, and how much work I have put in to making our little family happy and calm. I guess we will just keep soldiering on and spreading the word, but this person nearly got the better of me. – by email, NSW (see comment on this story at [552])

#### **[466] Swimming pool chlorine triggers oppositional defiance (November 2006)**

Part one: In the last five weeks our son's ODD behaviour has been getting steadily worse. A lot of the time he is fine (with flashes of naughtiness), and then BANG, major, **violent** tantrum. I have just gone over the diary fairly meticulously and noticed that exactly five weeks ago he started swimming lessons in the local swimming school. The very next day after his first lesson, I noted that he seemed to be a bit irritated, and was a bit irritated on a couple of other days that week.

The following Saturday, after the lesson, I noted that he seemed grumpy, but it was short lived and reappeared off and on a couple of days later. By the Tuesday we had a screaming tantrum (unheard of for weeks and weeks). From there on the irritation was there much more often, and every couple of days he would be in timeout, mouthing off (ODD raising it's ugly head).

The last three weeks have been not good for him (or us) and this morning, I could see it coming on before school and sure enough we had a huge tantrum, where he was threatening to hit me with the toilet brush (he was timing out in the bathroom), he was being really nasty calling me names etc and was out to hurt me. When I got him to school (he had calmed down and was really sorry by then), I had to warn his teacher. I was thinking of taking him out of school until he calms down again, or at least until we find what is causing this.

Could this all be coming from chlorine? Usually after the swimming lesson we would take him to the local pool next day to practice so there's a double dose. He has always swum in our spa and his cousin's pool with no ill effects, however is it possible the swimming school and public pools would be more heavily chlorinated than the normal backyard one?

(Sue: It is common for ODD kids to react badly to chlorine, and yes, the chlorine level in public pools is usually much heavier than home pools. Some people get around it by having the child wear goggles -you can easily absorb toxic chemicals through your eyes - and shower immediately after leaving the pool. Others prefer to swim in fresh water swimming holes, the sea, salt water pools, or low chlorine pools.)

Part two: another look at the diary shows that for the last three weeks we have had a major tantrum on the afternoon following the lesson and then again the next day after the local pool - the reason for the behaviour was staring me in the face, and I didn't see it as I was looking for food triggers.

I have looked back further in the diary, where it showed the last real tantrum was during the last school holidays. I had noted that he had been at the local pool that morning, and lost the plot in the afternoon, so I don't think I need any more proof than that! I wish I had twigged earlier, I kept looking for food reasons. I'm really pleased it wasn't food. – by email, NT

#### **[448] 282: Identical twins react differently to bread preservative 282 (August 2006)**

Since food intolerance runs in families, I would expect identical twins to be affected by the same food chemicals, so when this mother wrote about the reaction of a twin to the bread preservative, I asked whether the other twin was affected. You can see her answer below. This is an excellent illustration of how parents are more likely to identify behavioural reactions to food chemicals and to miss other types of reactions. Yet usually if one member of the family is affected, others will be affected in different ways.

I am the mother of identical twin girls aged three and a half. I have discovered that one of my twin girls reacts **violently** to the preservative 282 in bread and since my girls were 18mths old have been purchasing bread through Baker Delight with great success. Recently for the first time in two years she was eating preservative bread on holiday and went off her head. Screaming, tantrums, the whole nine yards so to speak ... later ... When you asked does my other girl react differently, I really had to sit down and think about this one. Yes I suppose she does. It seems to me that her ability to hold her bladder disappears while being affected by 282, that is, she says she needs to go pee, then her pants are wet. Off 282 for a few weeks, mentions she needs to pee in the middle of grocery shopping, I have time to quickly finish off shop then get trolley through the checkout and then get to toilet. A big difference. At home now she will need to go, but can keep playing for about 2 – 5 minutes whereas if she is eating 282 and needs to pee, she will pee on floor on the way to bathroom. – by email.

#### **[447] 'Fear of the dark' really a food reaction (August 2006)**

We started the diet nearly a year ago for my son, a sweet 5 year old who would become an **aggressive**, extremely hyperactive and an emotional monster nearly every day. I saw you on A

Current Affair and after taking muesli bars and sultanas (which I had thought were healthy) out of his diet I noticed most of his **aggressive** behaviour disappear.

After that we started the full diet and not only did our son become an angel, we noticed that our daughter was a very strong amine reactor, becoming uncontrollably emotional, depressed and 'full on', as well as having frequent nightmares and bedwetting. Unfortunately since we have moved 2 months ago our son has gone backwards fast, I now think as a result of amines in meat from new butchers. It is so upsetting to see all the progress disappear, and he has had HUGE problems at school this term. I have traveled back to our old butchers to stock up on meat and am started to see some improvement after one week.

The biggest shock for me however, was when I recently discovered I was a food reactor!! I was a junk food addict and would eat about 5kg of chocolate a week. I can't believe now I had so many symptoms, and I never even put them together as symptoms, let alone found the source of the problem! I was getting migraines, I constantly had a headache behind my eyes, I felt very faint and disoriented, had stomach pains that felt like needles - usually after eating lollies, and I was always bloated - something which really upset me.

The weirdest thing to attribute to food however was my extreme 'fear of the dark' as I called it. I would be terribly scared of the dark, I would think that my mind thought it could see little people and things out of the corner of my eye, even though I knew they weren't there, I would open my eyes every 10 seconds while trying to get to sleep, just to check if there were monsters or robbers there, and every time I closed my eyes all I could picture in my head was horrible things that would scare me. I was a bit worried I was starting to go crazy, then I stopped eating chocolate and didn't even notice all these symptoms disappeared.

It wasn't until I splurged on a whole chocolate cake over two nights that I discovered what had caused these problems. After eating the cake I was completely on edge. I couldn't sit down for ten seconds without turning around to make sure there were no monsters or robbers behind me. Eventually I had to sit with my back to the wall so I wouldn't think there were things behind me. That was the last time I ate chocolate, and the thought of ever eating it again scares me! – by email.

#### **[418] My son is a state ward (May 2006)**

My son 14 is a state ward and has been for 18 months. His behaviour at home was **violent**, **aggressive** and surly to such an extent that my safety was threatened. He had damaged property, harmed pets, broken my bones ... He was 12 when he went into care and this behaviour had gone on since the age of 7. He tried to kill himself a number of times, initially playing chicken with cars, starving himself, much self harm behaviour and nearly succeeded last year when he cut an artery in his leg.

I tried to get help for years only to be told that I was a bad mother. I was accused of abusing my son so many times it wasn't funny, even dragged before courts for it. They didn't get it. I was the one with the bruises and broken bones not the kid. He was never diagnosed with any disorder. All behaviour was put down to an incident when he was 6 and a teen tried to molest him. I had seen

him lose touch with reality and even respond to voices - at 8 years old. School suspensions started in grade 2. His school had a sign that other children would file out of the classroom on a pre-determined signal ... I could go on and on.

He became a state ward after a particularly bad incident where I ended up with concussion but to get him off me I had to bite him ... therefore proving what a **violent** mother I am.

I got your book Fed Up from the library and read it over the weekend. What a revelation to me.

He has just been diagnosed as a possible coeliac. He has always had some intolerances and his sister had GI probs and lactose intolerance too. Both have not done well away from what they ate at home, which on reflection was low gluten and low additives.

Well, at the moment the lad is keen to clean up the diet, at least the gluten part, but I think it is too late to mend our relationship.

I should have done more research and figured out the food connection earlier. I did make food connections, from when he was very young. He was lactose intolerant, had trouble with other foods. He was also a bedwetter until nearly 10. He always had gut problems. We noticed if he had certain foods he would be worse, even his family day care parents learnt the hard way about the foods. His doctors knew this, the psychologists knew this but NOBODY made the connection. Even now the only reason he got checked out was I pushed and after a few incidents in the unit I raised Duty of Care.

Anyway at least I have hope now. Hope that he won't end up in the justice or mental health system. Hope that he can get back to a normal school. Hope that maybe one day he can come home to visit. This system he has ended up in is not used to bright kids and he is in a school for not so bright ones. Meanwhile he has learnt heaps of bad behaviour from others ...

I can see that failsafe foods have been your work for years and indeed you work very hard to get the word out. What I can't understand is why more people don't suspect food problems in behaviours with kids. How many more families have to go through what we have been through?

So Sue if any of our story helps other families or professionals please go ahead and use it. You don't have children for other people to raise. I should count myself fortunate I still get a say as I am still a guardian but it is difficult and if the connections had been made when I first suspected them none of this need have happened - reader, Vic.

**[415] The only good thing to come out of this ... we are now absolutely convinced it's his diet (May 2006)**

Since we are going on the diet next week, we let our son have some things that we haven't allowed for a long time including bacon, tomatoes, ham and a doughnut. This morning I had a raging child, who was refusing to go into his classroom and throwing punches at me. Since we have cut a lot of nasties out of his diet he has not been **violent** at all until this morning! The only good thing to come of this is now we are absolutely convinced it's his diet that's causing the grief. – reader, NT

**[408] Hyperactivity, bad mood swings, violent behaviour (March 2006)**

My 9 year old nephew 'suffered' from super hyperactivity and very bad mood swings for most of his life which was very stressful for all his 3.5 school years. His violent behaviour, which only ever occurred at school, included pushing over desks, tearing up paper, pulling phone connections out of walls, pulling plants out of the garden and hurting a teacher when being restrained. They would ring his Dad to come and take him home. He visited many medical specialists, was finally diagnosed ADHD and prescribed adult doses of drugs with no improvement.

Over the last six months he has been failsafe while being homeschooled and there was an incredible difference within two weeks. In four months he covered nearly 12 months school work and is improving rapidly. He has always been quick to lose his temper at home with his brother and sister but since he started on the diet we have not seen him angry. He actually had his head slammed in a car door recently by his sister's friend. It must have really hurt and his eyes watered but his response was "It wasn't your fault, Poppy". We were all amazed. He is now a healthy, happy little boy with a great sense of humour. It is frustrating to say the least that so much of the trauma this little boy and his family went through was to do with food additives. by email, Qld

**[403] 210: Benzoates are his worst enemy (March 2006)**

My 4.5yr old son has been our biggest challenge. All his problems are proving to be food related – it's amazing. His issues are aggression, ODD, poor impulse control, argumentative, continual congestion and ear infections (2 lots of grommets), continual rashes, blotches, sore tummies, burning anus, bloating, bedwetting etc, all of which are being controlled now by diet. We had been giving him decongestants, antihistamines, nasal sprays and antibiotics since the day I stopped breastfeeding him at 6 months ... He was a wild little boy but we've now found out that benzoates are his worst enemy. His nose his dry now and needs no medication. – by email, NSW

**[356] One-liners (Nov 2004)**

Our yellow colouring (102) challenge was like going back to the dark ages – my daughter was moody, angry, cried for nothing eg. being told to move, stop screaming etc, she was aggressive, confrontational, "raaahed" at me and her sister, spat and threw things at us, cut off her 2 year old sister's hair and woke next morning still in a bad mood. - WA

**[304] 'I assaulted my wife' (December 2003)**

Last weekend I assaulted my wife and did horrific damage to her face. I have deep regret, humiliation, shame and remorse for my actions. I had been drinking most of the afternoon, then consumed two strawberry sundae tubs of icecream. I did not check the brand so I cannot be certain that the food colours contributed to the way I acted. Although the alcohol is obviously a large contributor, in the past I have never reacted violently after drinking alcohol. However, from the ages 18-25 I experienced panic and violent moods, then I started to look at my diet. Cordials with artificial colours especially red had been a part of my diet and I noticed a link. Since then I have avoided food colours where ever possible, however I simply overlooked the strawberry sundae as I love desserts

and was having a good time. I think I have stumbled on to the cause for my actions, but I am not sure. - Graeme, by email

### **[279] I joined the boys on the diet and we have been strictly failsafe (September 2003)**

Thank you for your four very informative books. They are wonderful and a great support along with the failsafe email groups and newsletters.

We went failsafe for our son when he was born five years ago and both children have been sort of failsafe since then. However, increasing errors and too many salicylates over the last two years (due to lack of support when we moved) resulted in increasing periods of out-of-control, **aggressive** and defiant behaviour in our son. For the last three months I joined the boys on the diet and we have been strictly failsafe, after finding your website and other books (I only had Fed Up previously). Life has been wonderful - except for catering socially.

I have gained lots already from 'my failsafe bible' (your cookbook). Thank you for your thousands of great useable ideas, we drink a mug of soup a day like suggested in one of your books to keep up our vitamin intake and have all been healthier as well as 'better behaved' people since being strictly failsafe.

If you would like a European contact, or more specifically Sweden ... I am happy to help out. It's great having regular contact and updates, and the email groups to pose questions and ideas to. - Faye (our failsafe contact in Sweden)

### **[271] Autistic sound sensitivity improves on diet (June 2003)**

We discovered failsafe over a year ago when my son Liam was four. Ironically, because of the failsafe internet support group he was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome a while later. He used to hate loud sounds and either shut down, cringing in a corner with his hands over his ears, or more often, he rose above it with the most **aggressive** behaviour and loudest noise he could muster. One time I had the blender on for one minute and he screamed and threw a chair across the room, quietening down as soon as I turned it off. This has dramatically reduced now. It was not instantaneous with the introduction of diet but somewhere in the course of last year it improved. I have found that this is the improvement which most intrigues other parents of autistic kids. Liam still doesn't like loud noises such as fire alarms but he is content to hold his hands over his ears.

For Liam, the diet has been like unfogging his brain and allowing him to catch up where he is delayed, mainly socially and in his emotions. But the most interesting thing was watching his drawing develop. When he first started Kindy, he drew like a two year, all scribbles. After he started the diet, his drawing just took off and in a matter of months we watched him improve to above his age level. Literally every week there were new dimensions. It was so exciting and a very visible reminder of how the diet now allowed him to develop.

Liam is gluten, dairy and egg free as well as failsafe and he has soy only once every four days. I could not say he is perfect, but he is light years ahead of where we were. - Caroline (finb and Failsafe discussion group)

## [225] Andrew Driffield's quest for gold (November 2002)

My name is Elizabeth Jenkins and I am Andrew Driffield's Mother. It sometimes feels as if I have always been known as "that's Andrew's Mother".

Andrew was a beautiful but exhausting child. He went to sleep at a normal time ... then woke about 1am and stayed that way until about 5am, then dozed till about 7am. As he got older he would climb out of his bed, and head straight for my side of the bed. He would lie there quietly in my arms, only needing the security and warmth. Until he was fifteen years old this remained a habit. My memory of these events is a blur as by the time he was five, exhaustion had replaced recall.

Andrew's only word was "Mum" until he was about four. His language was so obscure that I had to translate even to his father. He was destructive. He destroyed toys, other children, and household furniture. To do any housework that would have taken my eyes off him for a second, I had to lock the doors and windows. I vividly remember the day guests arrived at the front door and Andrew left unnoticed by the back door. The panic started as we realised he was not amongst the visiting children until a phone call from the local supermarket let us know that a little blonde haired boy was riding the rocking horse in the entrance. When asked how they knew whom to ring, they said that he was being guarded by a small black dog called Benjie who was wearing his identification. Horses and dogs remain a big part of Andrew's life to this day.

When Andrew was five we went to a Specialist Unit. He was tested and we were observed as a family unit. Andrew evidently passed but I failed. I was told I was overprotective, and I needed to allow Andrew to discover consequences for himself. That afternoon he wanted to ride his bike with the other boys - and he was hit by a car. From then on I decided I wanted a live five year old, not a dead one.

Andrew started on an early intervention program at Newcastle University where he attended a unit with one-on-one teaching for the morning and then returning to the public school for the afternoon classes. It was a disaster. It was the beginnings of 'integration'.

They failed to see how children who are already different do not gain acceptance by being treated differently. In one year he learnt to write his name 'Andrew' with difficulty. They were still claiming that he was just a slow learner and would catch up. My observation was, had I had a monkey in the same circumstances, I would have had the same outcome. The public school wanted to expel him. He was disruptive, angry and **aggressive** - and he was only in first class.

A Steiner School had opened in the region and after five minutes of hearing their philosophies I sent Andrew. It was like rain and sunshine on a small plant. He thrived. He learnt to listen, he learnt to speak and the **aggression** gradually decreased. Andrew was now nine years old and still a handful. I eventually took him to a pediatrician, left him in the waiting room, and told the doctor I was there under false pretensions, that I'd come as a stressed adult, remembering I was still to blame for all his behaviors. Andrew was brought in, and off he went - over the desk, under the desk, etc. As luck would have it, the pediatrician had just attended a conference run by a leading Sydney professor who had described Andrew's features and symptoms to a T. We were sent to the professor in Sydney, who ordered blood tests and announced that Andrew had what he called a fractured X

chromosome. He said that when enough children registered similar symptoms it would be given a name. That was in 1983, prior to the genetic testing available today, and the recognition of FRAGILE X.

At this stage Simon, Andrew's older brother, started riding horses, and I was instructing at pony club, so I enrolled Andrew as well because he was always wandering off and worrying me. I threw him up on a horse just to know where he was.

He had a natural ability, and somehow the horses seem to know that they had to protect him. It was also the only animal that Andrew could hug and not cause a decapitation.

Andrew tried harder than anyone I know, and still does. Riding put Andrew on a par with his peers, so when he got upset about not being able to read and write like other kids, we were able to point out that if they tried to ride they would probably fall off - everybody had something they were good at and could do well, and his was riding.

Andrew became Pony Club rider of the year in 1986, runner-up in 1987.

Andrew who still couldn't read or write, managed to learn dressage tests by walking on the lounge room floor from letter to letter and learning it by pattern, followed by replica in size to the real thing he walked, trotted and cantered around on his own two feet, THEN he graduated to four hooves for the real thing. He also learnt to find and remember his way around a cross country courses. For this we photographed Andrew and his horse jumping each jump at the practice day, put them into a small album, and it was his bedtime story for the two weeks prior to the competition. He also learnt to remember show jumping courses. He had the very best of coaches and everyone liked him, because he kept trying and never gave up.

In the late 80s my first marriage broke up and Andrew and I moved to Darwin and it was here that I met my new husband Stephen Jenkins.

One of Andrew's goals was to attend 'normal' high school and eventually he did. Darwin High School had a wonderful Special Education Unit, headed by an incredible women, Lauren Tinapple. She remains a devoted Andrew fan to this day, and has always been there for me in the disastrous times. There were times when I felt we had pushed Andrew past his capabilities, as he didn't seem to fit into an acceptable mold. His expectations exceeded his abilities, and my heart ached on many occasions. Even though he was teased and made fun off, he is glad he did it, and developed yet another strength of character. Through various government employment options Andrew tried many jobs, some of which were total failures. He was happiest when he went to the Katherine Rural College and did a six month Jackaroo course which they then extended into a 'work experience' for an additional six months as he needed extra time to learn. He eventually got a live-in job with a family in the middle of the territory for six months before the wet season set in.

Andrew is so driven, and one of his goals has always been to ride for Australia in the three day event just like his old pony club friend Matt Ryan does. It was hard to say to him or find a way of saying that it would be very hard for him to be selected, but that did not deter him.

Andrew was accepted as student at the NSW Equestrian Centre with Heath and Rozzie Ryan, who had been his instructors since he was seven. He lived, breathed and rode horses with the best for six months. He finally realised that this goal may be a little too hard to reach. In 1997 it was suggested that Andrew join Riding for the Disabled. As his abilities exceeded all the students, Andrew became an Assistant Coach at RDA and loved helping all the children to ride and benefit from the experience.

In the October of 1997 Andrew rode as a member of the Northern Territory State Team at the RDA National Championships. He was now riding and competing against others of similar disabilities. Andrew started to shine, placing 2nd in his first National competition, coming closer to his goals.

To allow Andrew to reach his full potential, and access regular coaching, we made the major move to South Australia. Since then he has improved each year, and in 1999 was selected on the RDA National Squad. He is now among the top riders in Australia and hopes to be selected to represent Australia at the next World Championships.

This is quite an achievement especially when his Grade, Grade 3E for intellectual disability, is not recognised at international competitions, so he rides against able minded, but disabled body riders in Grade 3, a grade above his, and riding against the likes of Julie Higgins who won double gold at the Sydney Paralympics.

By far the most significant change in Andrews's life has been our discovery of Sue Dengate's book FED UP in 1998. Through use of the Fed Up diet and avoiding all intake of natural and artificial chemicals that Andrew reacts to, his mind is clearer, and he is able to control his actions and tempers. As he says, he hates it when he eats the wrong foods because it makes him feel bad and depressed. Before discovering the diet we had some hellish times, including major temper tantrums which in the main were triggered or caused by the wrong foods. Andrew is 6 feet tall and very strong and broke his Step-father's ribs one Xmas, while giving him a Xmas morning hug, so if he is in a food related temper tantrum, beware.

Andrew still aims to reach his goal of representing Australia and is hoping for selection onto the Australian Paralympic Team.

Andrew was recently assessed by a leading psychologist, and has a measured Full IQ of around 65 and an Overall Adaptive Functioning cognitive measurement below the 1st percentile, so it is amazing that Andrew is not doing what a specialist once told us was all that was possible, to expect nothing more than having him working in a sheltered workshop doing repetitive tasks. Although eligible for a full disability pension Andrew has foregone it to work 5 days a week on a recycling truck so he can afford to reach his goals and keep his mind and body active instead of sitting at home watching TV.

If there is one phrase that says it all about Andrew it is these words from Calvin Coolidge: Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. And without the fed up diet, he certainly would not be where he is today, in mind or ability.

### **[217] Saved him just in time (October 2002)**

About 3 months ago I wrote you a very short letter explaining my 5 year old's diagnosis (severe ADHD/severe Anxiety Disorder/ ODD) and asking for a brochure. Well, thanks for the brochure and the very nice note you sent back. You were so confident that RPA would "sort him out" that it really lifted my hopes incredibly and helped me stick to the ultra elimination diet he'd been put on.

You were so right - I (and his brother, my friends, family and school) saw changes I never thought I would see. Basically this diet has saved him just in time from starting at a special school for behaviour disorders. By mid second term - pre-diet, in Kindergarten - he had been suspended 7 times for **violent** behaviour. Since the diet, he hasn't even been sent to the Deputy. You were very perceptive in the letter you sent - yes, life had been absolute hell - there is no other way to describe it. After I received your letter I bought "Fed Up" and read it in 3 nights - that gave me even more hope. Thank you so much for all the work you do and the fantastic web site - I just can't get enough of it. If I ever come to Darwin I owe you a big thankyou hug! - by email, NSW

### **[214] No answers from specialists (October 2002)**

I read the last two newsletters on your website and was amazed with the information. I am just starting to look at food additives/preservatives as our 6 year old son has difficult behaviours at times. We are vegetarian and eat a healthy diet but we have noticed these behaviours increasing since starting school...he is restless, has difficulty concentrating, can be anti-social and unable to share, **aggressive** (punching himself) and teary...however, this is not all the time...he can be calm, delightful and co-operative one day and then highly emotional the next. Specialists have no answers for us re the cause but after him having his first Redskin a few weeks ago and some Arnotts Family assorted cream biscuits (another first) he just went crazy and was angry and **aggressive** for the following 3 hours. – email

### **[210] Every day is a good day (October 2002)**

My apologies for not getting back to you sooner - I've been too busy baking and talking to all my friends about my success. My son (aged 4) has come along in leaps and bounds. He is no longer vague, irritable and **aggressive**. He is able to concentrate on activities and control his own behavior when he becomes upset (he is becoming better at this each day). I find him more articulate and involved in our family life which to me has been the greatest plus as I feel like I have him back.

My husband and I both feel our sense of wellbeing and energy levels have improved. Personally I haven't felt this good in years. Every day is a good day and I no longer have to put things off until I have energy enough to cope.

My stomach is no longer bloated and I too feel I can concentrate and motivate myself more. A couple of friends have been so impressed with my son's changes that they are also going failsafe. I have to agree with one comment made on your web page - your next book needs to be "How to Tell Friends they Need to go Failsafe". My tongue is getting sore from biting it as my tact is well known to be kept in my big toe.

Thank you again Sue I really appreciate your work over the years. Your research has made your arguments as sound as any article in a nursing/medical journal I have read. Unfortunately most of us have been programmed to believe it has to be objective and scientific to be believable. I am now a supporter and all the proof I need is when I see my son smile and I know it's all worth while. - by email

### **[155] A Brush with Pizza Snack Biscuits (June 2002)**

My sons are severely food and chemical intolerant. Their diets are severely restricted, just to enable them to cope with day to day life. Their adherence to the restricted diet literally enables them to survive. We avoid additives in food at all costs, and we avoid chemicals wherever possible as they affect the boys equally to the wrong food choices. They are aged 6 and 3.

My eldest son has commenced school and is in Year 1. Considering his dietary challenges, he copes with food and school incredibly well – but there have been and will always be the occasional slip ups. Pressure from peers is already impacting and will continue to do so as he journeys towards adulthood.

Late in the Kindergarten year, he was with some team mates after a Teeball game. He was eating his customary rice and drinking plain water whilst the other kids were tucking into soft drink and a box of pizza snack biscuits – the kind people might eat with dip. He was fairly unfazed as he is used to it, but the problem kicked in when he had finished – still hungry - and the others still had plenty to eat. He resisted their offering and the temptation to indulge until they reached the bottom of the box. It was then that he succumbed to the hunger and I daresay, the curiosity, (he has never eaten them before!) and he ate some crumbs from the box – less than would cover a 10 cent piece. He later remarked that he didn't even like how they tasted!

Within 3 hours, the reaction started. He was due to go to a birthday party – I always stay with him for moral support because he can't indulge in what others enjoy at parties – and as we arrived, the rot began to set in! He was no longer able to communicate with me in the way he usually would. His responses to questions were more a grunt than a reply. I had to physically manipulate his face to make eye contact with him and get his attention – and his eyes were wild!

He generally perspires freely even though he is only 6, but now he was perspiring profusely. His shirt, hat and shorts looked like the ones on Pat Rafter after a 5 set Final – and this is truly without exaggeration. He was soaked. He was moving in an agitated manner- his actions were jerky rather than smooth, and he was lashing out at things and people. He became surly and very defiant. He was irrational when compared to his usual behaviours. He hurt 4 friends at the party in 4 separate incidents whilst playing tips on and around some playground equipment. I had been observing and intervening – there was nothing malicious, but he had lost his finesse and the ability to be able to judge the other kids level of involvement. He had become face blind – oblivious to their anxiety and distress, and unable to see that they wished to cease the game. His need to continue the game was insatiable.

For the first time ever, these kids were actually scared of him and what he was doing, and they thought he had hurt them on purpose. He was at this point doing some real damage to the fragile

relationships he had worked so hard to develop. The area the party was conducted in was also open to the public, and my son managed to get into 3 fights with slightly older boys he had never met before. In each instance, both parties were equally at fault, however the new children seemed to take an instant dislike to his overall behaviour and this was the impetus for the conflict. He was now unable to make good judgements about his actions and he took offence at the situation. Instead of altering his behaviours to become more socially acceptable, he lashed out and hit the other child – and so the fights began. My time was spent alternating between apologising to everyone profusely, heading his ill-considered choices off at the pass and repairing his crumbling relationships whilst helping out his inadvertent victims – his mates were suffering his horrendous reaction to flavour enhancers, flavours and preservatives vicariously.

Going home was no better – we were only two hours into the reaction and things weren't going to get better in a hurry. I tried to keep him doing things outside to wear off as much energy as I could. Something happened and he was hurt. I think he took a bump on a tooth that was threatening to come out, but was nowhere near ready just yet. The bump made the tooth a little looser and it bled. I tried to soothe him and clean the blood without his knowledge, as blood worries him. It was no use because he became hysterical. His hysteria was very different to his usual teary fussing (as many 6 year olds do when in need of TLC). He began to scream and squeal a very high pitched squeal, he was rocking and flapping, he was panicking, he wanted comfort but kept pushing me away and he interspersed the screams and squeals with frenetic pleas of 'Help me! Help me!' He was inconsolable and it took me more than 1 ½ hours to calm him down to a reasonable state. He then continued to rock and sob on my lap.

Without the pizza shape irritants in his body, I would have been able to calm him right down within half an hour and he would not have exhibited the rocking, flapping and squealing behaviours (which are found on the Autism Spectrum along with face blindness and tactile defensivity – not wanting his personal space invaded, oversensitivity to touch, pushing me away despite wanting comfort). He also would not have pushed me away after the initial pain subsided. Consequently, he distressed his baby brother and his father – the whole house had been disrupted by the ingestion of the miniscule dose of pizza shapes only hours earlier.

The next phase of the reaction involved him not being able to go to sleep, and then once finally asleep, waking all through the night. He finally succumbed to sleep at 11.30pm after his usual Catapres dose and some Panadol several hours earlier. His body was still too irritated to properly settle down. Massage was useless because now he was oversensitive to touch. Whilst asleep, he did not lie still all night. He was thumping, wriggling, tossing and squirming all night. You could not say he had a restful evening and neither did we.

He was awake at about 6 am despite his late and unsettled night and the irritated, angry behaviours commenced immediately. He had an argument with his brother over the TV that ended in a fight, because he couldn't step back and get help to sort it out without using his hands and body. He was physically and verbally aggressive and violent. His defiance was escalating and every single thing that went on in the day was a bone of contention. If we said it was black, he swore that it was white despite any evidence to the contrary. If his brother looked at one of his toys, or dared go near his bedroom door, then he hit him without even blinking. I spent this day diverting, refereeing and

taking my son out of the house to separate everyone and try to reduce the exponentially increasing stress levels. Bedtime was no better tonight either.

He also began to exhibit physical symptoms today. He now had patches of eczema under his armpits – these only ever appear when he is reacting to something – he had a pre eczema scale – like ichthyosis - all over his torso that he constantly scratched at. He had heartburn, his belching increased, he had wind that you could hear in his digestive tract, he had ‘allergic shiners’ (large dark circles under his eyes), he had greyish skin tone, he had a red burn mark with skin peeling off his behind from the irritants passing through his digestive tract and burning him as it went. There was nothing I could use to relieve his discomfort as nothing would stay on his skin. These physical symptoms would remain until his body was finally clear of what he had ingested.

Upon waking the following day, it was still evident that the **aggression** was present, although a little milder than yesterday. I managed to encourage him to have some solitary play in his room. He was still irrational and oversensitive and not coping and lashing out. By the time school began, he was in tears clinging to my legs. He was suffering terrific mood swings and his anxiety levels had really increased – he becomes very anxious when his body is compromised by the wrong foods or chemicals and this directly affects his behaviours too. I let his teacher know and organised to collect him early as I knew a whole day of school would be too much. His ability to perform his work had significantly decreased compared to the week before and he needed much more support to complete tasks. His behaviours in the playground were more frenetic and wild, but fortunately he didn't get into any scrapes that might be finished physically.

In the afternoon, he exploded again – tiredness and the pizza shapes a volatile combination. I rode a rollercoaster of **violence**, verbal abuse, screaming, **aggression**, hugs and apologies. It was all I could do to get the situation calm enough for us all to co-exist when Dad got home from work. Unsettled sleep was still an issue. This pattern of morning irritation, school, early pickup, irrationality, abuse and calm continued for another 6 days before things significantly improved. It was a hell of a long time to suffer for such a piddling amount of additive laden Pizza biscuits! Another unfortunate feature that reared its ugly head during this horror period was a return to very negative self image; calling himself stupid and an idiot, saying and believing that no-one liked him and no-one loved him, and believing that his friends didn't like him anymore either. When he has a reaction like this, he believes he is not a good person. This is a very heavy burden for such a small person, but it has been a part of his reaction pattern since he began to speak. When he was eating a lot more foods when very small - before we had pinpointed the problem (and life was hell for everyone), he would sometimes self harm and sometimes even say ‘I wish I was dead’. It is a very scary and affronting thing to hear your two year old say, "I'm a yucky person! I wish I was dead!"

I always take great pains to point out the wonderful things about him and his achievements and I try to provide lots of situations where he will feel success, but it is undermined very quickly when something like the pizza biscuit incident occurs.

Oh, and what additives were in the box? A combination of at least four glutamate flavour enhancers, some colours, added flavours, vegetable fat (that is likely to contain one of the harmful antioxidants but which doesn't have to be listed because it represents less than 10 percent of the final product),

cheese powder (also usually has added flavour enhancer in the manufacturing), spices... I think anyone reading this will get the picture!

What can be learned from this horrible but true story?

- Food additives DO hurt children.
- Food additives vicariously affect others.
- Possible reactions are many and varied. If you're lucky, you may only exhibit a few minor irritations. If you are unlucky, it will affect your whole life until you can overcome the dosage.
- Physical, mental, social and emotional health can be affected equally.
- Reactions are dose related. The more you have, the more likely you are to suffer a reaction.
- Reactions are individual, and depend on your tolerance.
- Society eventually pays for the individuals who cannot cope with the additives in their diet but are not aware of the connection: mental illness, conduct disorder, depression, drug dependency, costly and often ineffective medication to treat a sufferer's great variety of symptoms, property damage, incidents of rage, family and relationship breakdown, compensation paid to people who end up the innocent victims of others who themselves are really the victims of the food industry... All of this has a cost, whether just an emotional one, or a monetary one. Incarceration of food 'victims' is yet another cost – and one better spent in prevention and better health outcomes for all.

Many of the additives now permitted for use in our foods were not permitted as recently as 5 years ago. If we didn't need them in our food then, and they can have a harmful effect on children and adults alike, then WHY are we allowing them into our food now?! - Sheryl, ACT

#### **[150] Insomnia a major issue (April 2002)**

I have been an insomniac since I was 16. From my mid 20s it has been a major issue in my life. I have lived on approximately four hours sleep a day. I have spent thousands of dollars in trying to find the answer. I have seen naturopaths, homeopaths, medical doctors, Chinese herbalists, acupuncturists. I have been to a sleep centre where they tried to teach me to sleep. I have tried every imaginable trick to try to sleep. For three years, I stopped drinking or eating anything with caffeine. I would drink warm milk before bed. I would take a run before bed. I would read a book before bed. Have a bath before bed. You name it, I have probably tried it. By the time I turned 30, I decided that I had to learn to accept my insomnia - 'this is as good as it gets' sort of thing. In the worst scenario I would read till all hours of the morning. Having said that, I had to also accept the fact that I was tired most of the time.

I had my son at the age of 31. He was a colicky baby, a terrible sleeper. He also had heartburn at night, which his ped attributed to the fact that my son still breast fed at night, up to the age of 25 months. I never understood the relationship between breastfeeding at night and heartburn, so continued doing it. My main resource and my inability to accept my ped's advise was due to my own travels to primitive cultures, where I saw babies and toddlers breastfeeding constantly; 24/7 days a

week and these babies were NOT colicky, did not suffer heartburn. In fact, they seemed very happy, content, and rarely cried. When they did cry, it was more of a whimper rather than the cries I hear in western society.

Being a 30 something Mum, I also was fully aware of what sort of Mum I wanted to be. I had clear visions of being a compassionate Mum; this entailed no spanking, no yelling, but rather validating feelings, finding alternatives whereby both of us would be happy, and in the worst scenario just accepting that my child and I would not always agree, but I would still respect this difference rather than fight it. My son's temperament, however, tested me to the core and I failed often in living my maternal visions. Yes, I have yelled at my son, yes I have spanked him (to date, three times - he is 2.5 years old and each time I think about it, I do cringe with disappointment with the evidence of my weaknesses). My son, from an early age was high need and wanted full on hands on care, was constantly on the breast, slow to unwind, wanted in-your-face attention, constantly in my arms. In a nutshell I found him draining, and highly strung. I remember when he was only five months old, having this real desire just to throw him across the room and the reality of my feelings shocked me to my core. I am by nature sensitive to other peoples feelings, gentle, gracious, etc. I took him to a sleep centre, where the staff tried to teach me to help my son to fall asleep on his own and all I kept thinking about was "seen this movie before". I thought I was going insane; my son took two hours to unwind before he would fall asleep and when he did, he would sleep only for one hour, waking up and then would demand the breast to go to sleep again. After the sleep centre experience with my son, I decided to go by my instincts; one thing I was sure about was that I would never let my son cry it out, no matter what. Part of my reasoning stemmed from 'what if he has the same problems as me? Maybe its genetics?' another real reason for me was 'he must be waking up for some reason?'...to my mind, it may be hard to fall asleep, but once asleep, a person wakes up for a reason...so I decided that if my son woke up every hour, I would just learn to live with that too and together we would get through it. I put up with it literally till my son was 25 months old and by that stage, I am sure the night nursing was more a habit rather than a real need, ie, whatever was causing the night waking as an infant/baby, no longer existed by the time he was a toddler.

He was a very active little boy, who seemed too busy to sit for any period of time. His thoughts also were busy, talking constantly without taking a breathe. As a result, he always looked like he was misbehaving because he seemed to have no physical self control, although he was very gentle, loving and extremely aware of the needs of others. But then, he would all of a sudden display vocal **aggression**, and physical **aggression**, seeming to get pleasure in hurting. I could not understand this Jekyll and Hyde personality.

Most people that I turned to, either suggested more discipline, in the forms of spanking or severe punishment. Others suggested that I was giving him too many sweets. Others suggested that I train him at home, for instance sitting with him for ten minutes today, then fifteen minutes tomorrow. Others suggested that my son and I were too attached and he was playing on my weaknesses. Others implied that I was not a consistent mother regarding discipline. But I saw my son for the person he was. I had these real glimpses of his real personality. I thought about taking him to a naturopath or a homeopath. I resisted though because my real fear was that his behaviour would become an issue in our life like my sleeping disorder became an issue in my life. Again, I turned to

my own common sense here and decided that I preferred to accept the package rather than fight it all the time. Then I stumbled on your book at a health shop and bought it.

I have only read probably one quarter of your book. But the next day I eliminated wheat, dairy and all preservatives/additives. Within two days, the son that I only had glimpses of suddenly emerged for a period of five consecutive days ... and I suddenly found myself able to fall asleep in ten minutes. My son would still wake up, and I would still respond in the same manner, but again, I would be able to fall asleep without any problems. Day six was the day that I cried. I have spent the better part of my adult life wanting to sleep and feeling tired. I have wasted years of my youth thinking about sleep. I am at times angry and at times relieved to just get out of the woods. I just can not believe that I no longer have to describe myself as an insomniac. My son now sleeps much better, but I have realized only today that I think he is also salicylate sensitive and probably so am I. Both of us, I realize now, demonstrate aggression for unknown reasons. I can control that side of me because I am an adult, but my son is more honest with himself and his world.

Today, my son was pushed over the edge, so tomorrow, I am getting stricter with salicylate and amine side of the challenges - but I feel good about it. I know where I am going now, I have direction and that my undisciplined boy does not need more discipline. In fact in the five days that he was his real self, I had absolutely no problems. There was such harmony between us that my heart upon just writing that, is swelling up ... more importantly, it has nothing to do with my inadequacies as a mother, or my son's personality. It is all external to the problem. This makes me feel more confident than ever ...

I wanted to tell you my story and to thank you from the bottom of my heart. If only someone had told me at 16 what was causing my insomnia ... but then, I also know that my insomnia stopped me from resorting to ignoring my son's cries and if I was not going to find the motive of his behaviour and cries, I was just going to accept this boy as he was ... for better or worse ...

I have learned one thing in life and that is, that it is the worse situations that are character building and through them I can choose the path I decide to tread ... I am just happy that you wrote your book 'Fed up' and I am just happy that I chose to read it ... thanking you very very much ...

- Ingrid, Melbourne

#### **[139] 282: Bread preservative-induced ADHD (December 2001)**

I have felt compelled to write to you for some time now to let you know how successful Failsafe foods have been in our home. Our daughter, Courtney, now aged 7, was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 5. I was not convinced that the process of this diagnosis was exactly scientific so I decided to do some reading.

I read "Different Kids" and embarked on the elimination diet with the help of a dietician. We had tremendous results. Courtney's teachers were openly amazed at the change in her behaviour. With their support we started the challenges - no noticeable reaction to salicylates or amines, but a very strong reaction to the bread preservative (282) which gradually built up over a 5 day period. Once the challenge was stopped, it took 2 weeks for withdrawal. Courtney's behaviour was extremely

aggressive and impulsive and withdrawal resulted in lethargy and stomach aches. We have not been able to do any further challenges as Courtney was jeopardising the very fragile friendships she had begun to make. We will need to wait for the Christmas holidays before proceeding any further.

I have only recently read "Fed Up" and I was amazed to learn just how many children react to 282. Our dietician was surprised at our results. I am now a bit of a campaigner against food additives and recommend your books to anyone willing to listen! Our heartfelt thanks to you for helping us rediscover the lovely little girl we knew as a baby without the need for medication. - Heather - by email

**[127] Camphor laurel and Jesse (this is what parents go through) (November 2001)**

8th October 2001.

Department of Education and Training

Northern NSW

Dear Sir,

I refer to ... our son Jesse.

Jesse suffers from Multiple Chemical Intolerance (MCI). This can affect his skin, behaviour and general health. Jesse is most effected by cleaning products, food chemicals (colours, preservatives and flavour enhances), strong odours and certain plants. His reaction can be dramatic and instantaneous, or can build up over time.

Jesse is presently under the care of Paediatricans Dr M from Lismore and Dr Velencia Soutter from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. He is on the RPA elimination diet under the control of dietitians Anne Swain from the RPA and N from the Lismore Base Hospital. He has been on this for some time and the change in his health and behaviour has been quite dramatic. However, recently Jesse's health and behaviour have deteriorated which has coincided with camphor laurel chips being placed at his school. I was made aware of the camphor chips after a spitting incident involving Jesse.

On Wednesday the 12th September X from the school telephoned my wife and said that 'Jesse had spat on another child, was behaving disgustingly and swearing and that he was with him now and what would she like done with him'. X was aggressive and abrupt. The exact events as to what happened are unclear as there have been a number of different stories but apparently Jesse and another kindergarten child were in the toilets after the morning assembly. The other boy told his teacher that Jesse had spat on him. A teacher's Aid was sent to retrieve Jesse from his classroom where he hid under a table. Jesse's teacher was also in the class. Jesse called the Aid a 'fat girl' (she isn't fat) and was then taken to X and later to the Principal.

I went out to the school at 11am and was approach on the veranda of the classroom by Y. She asked if I was looking for Jesse and said that he was in the office and that he had spat on one of her children and was swearing at teachers. She was obviously rude and abrupt. Parents and children were also present undertaking 'groups' and a young girl told us that Jesse was sitting at his desk,

which he was. I attempted to speak to X but he was not in his office. Later I returned to the school to have lunch with Jesse as it was school open day.

We sat down in the assembly area where I noticed the strong camphor smell. I moved Jesse as he was becoming agitated and red faced. X then approached me in the playground area. I was uncomfortable speaking to X as there were many parents and children listening. I told X that Jesse's behaviour in the morning was unacceptable but I thought the problem was caused by the strong camphor smell as the dumping of the chips coincided with Jesse's behaviour and health deteriorating. His teacher had also made the link with the camphor when the trees were initially trimmed.

Prior to this incident the school had not been in contact regarding our son. We had made visits to the Principal on two occasions at which time we gave him letters from the Paediatrician and Dietitian (attached) and gave him a personal letter (attached) and information on MCI. This was done on the suggestion of the Infants Department. We did have regular contact with Jesse's teacher throughout the year. She was fully aware of Jesse's condition and was fully supportive. She had educated her class/parents about how food/chemicals can effect him. She even banned cleaning products from the class that she had noticed effected him. Jesse seemed to be progressing well. He was very popular having friends from kinder to year 4. He was the second child in kindergarten to be awarded the Principal's Award (which requires 25 Merit Certificates). However, things changed dramatically in a very short period of time when the Principal became involved. The staff's attitude changed from support to contempt and aggression. Those who showed sympathy were isolated. There seemed to be a constant vigil on our son and a concerted effort to discredit him. In the last month Jesse became obviously agitated and jittery at school, and became unwell. We were requested by our Paediatrician to remove Jesse from this environment immediately.

I decided to contact Jesse's preschool. They informed me that the behaviour Jesse was displaying at Z School was not displayed at his preschool. I also contacted the Northern Rivers Department of Health regarding the camphor. I was put in contact with their Toxicology Unit in Sydney who informed me that camphor laurel has highly volatile oils and is probably not an appropriate substance to have chipped around a school as it is toxic. I also telephoned Far North Coast Weeds who also said the same thing. As did the Southern Cross University who are about to commence a study on the effects of camphor laurel on humans. I also contacted the Department of Agriculture who had a similar opinion.

The next day I telephoned the Principal regarding Jesse's behaviour and the camphor laurel chips. I was met with instant hostility, impugnation and scoff. P stated that it would be impossible for Jesse to react to a natural occurring substance such as camphor laurel and that my family is using this as an excuse for disgusting and unacceptable behaviour.

P continually stated that he and the staff believe I am 'obstructional' in this matter and that complaints had been made. But when questioned as to how he would only comment that I am being 'obstructional now'. He said that I have made ridiculous demands saying that he would not remove the camphor chips for one child. He also stated that I was critical of staff, in particular X and Y (I have only spoken to each once). P would not listen to the fact that I told David I supported his actions in

handling the spitting incident. However, I was critical of the fact that the matter was discussed on the veranda of a classroom during 'groups' and in the playground in front of other parents and children on open day and very much in public. P's comment was that his school is a 'very open school'. Jesse may only be 6 but I feel that he and myself have some rights to privacy.

Also, P refused to acknowledge that I attended the school the previous morning and spoke to Y and attempted to see X after he had telephoned my wife. He continually stated that I did not arrive at the school until 1pm. I told him that I was at the school at 11am and later at 1pm for school open day and it was during this visit that I noticed the strong smell of camphor. But P simply refused to acknowledge that I was present at the school at 11am which is bewildering seeing that I spoke to several people and was seen by many more. Another child even asked Jesse if he would spit on him.

Furthermore, P was not interested in what the preschool said about Jesse. He just stated that I was abusing X. When I said I wasn't even speaking about X he said 'you are now abusing Y. I kept saying 'do you want to hear what the preschool said'. P said he was 'not interested, you are abusing my teachers, I am terminating this conversation' and hung up. The whole conversation bordered on the absurd and the ridiculous, a disgraceful imputation on a man charged with the responsibility of 520 children. Further, he seemed to enjoy a certain amount of satisfaction and gratitude from destroying the confidence and reputation of a 6 year old child.

P has now deliberately and maliciously misrepresented the contents of our conversation in an attempt to discredit our son and family. He has made the matter the topic of conversation throughout the school by both parents and teachers. He has made a young child the scapegoat of his obvious inability to understand what is normal and abnormal behaviour. P and some of his staff appear to have obvious personal issues that should not be aired in the school environment.

P has scorned and scoffed at medical advice and has shown a total disregard for the safety of a child with a disability. He has shown discrimination and prejudice towards a child and has shown a blatant disregard for confidentiality and privacy. He has been bordering on slanderous and has humiliated and embarrassed a child because of that child's disability. He has shown an absolute lack of care for a child with a disability and has viewed this disability with disdain. I will refrain from commenting on the innuendo made about our parenting skills and only say that on a number of occasions we were told that it is okay to slap your child.

My family has been associated with the Z School for over 30 years. My wife and her siblings attended the school in 1960s and 1970s and our older children in the early 1990s. It is most disheartening that this association may end because of the prejudices and ignorance of the Principal. P's attitude and actions has not only drastically changed the life of our son but has changed the life of our whole family. My wife will have to cease work to home tutor Jesse under the Distance Education programme. Jesse's Paediatrician believes that Jesse will be better off being home schooled in a more sympathetic and understanding environment as he is displaying anxiety and stress – a direct consequence of the taunts and attitude of P.

I would appreciate your comments regarding this matter and ask as to what avenues (by way of an official apology by P and legal action) are available in these circumstances. There appear to be very serious matters relating to child safety, care and welfare, privacy, confidentiality, discrimination and

defamation issues that need to be addressed. P is of the belief that he is beyond reproach because of his position. Should you require any further information regarding this matter do not hesitate to contact me on ...

Yours Faithfully,

David & Kim.

### **[126] Joe was "broken" from the time he was born (September 2001)**

Julie is a police prosecutor and a mother of nearly 4 children. When she saw what food did to her three year old son, she became an enthusiastic supporter of failsafe and a co-founder of the new Brisbane food intolerance support group.

Joseph gets up from his afternoon tea and goes and whispers to his father Steve. He wants to know if it's okay to eat the marshmallows in his bowl. He's four and he probably can't pronounce food intolerance but he knows how bad it makes him feel if he eats things he shouldn't. His mother Julie says if they hadn't found out what was wrong with Joseph when they did he would probably be in jail for murder now.

She says Joe was "broken" from the time he was born and it wasn't until he was diagnosed with food intolerance at three and a half that a solution seemed possible for the little boy. As well as being a mother of three and pregnant with number four, Julie is also a part-time Police Sergeant working as police prosecutor in Court 1 in Brisbane.

She's so concerned about the link between behaviour and food intolerance that she's undertaking independent study on the food effects on juvenile criminality as part of her Masters Degree in Justice/Law at QUT. Steve isn't sure that food turns kids into criminals but he does know what food can do to his son.

"He was like a bear with a sore head - that's how he was. He was **aggressive** to other kids and defiant to adults. Now he's responsive, his speech has improved, and his concentration span has improved.

"He can sit down and watch something on TV. He can sit down and do a puzzle or colour in."

Joseph's problem lies primarily with food colours and flavouring and reactions range from **aggression** to asthma. With careful shopping and label reading Joseph can enjoy a happy and normal life without too much imposition on the rest of the family.

There have been slip-ups on the way. The family dyed eggs for Easter not realising that Joseph's sensitivity would extend to touch. Joseph blames his mum for that asthma attack. The solution for Joseph came when a paediatrician suggested that Julie might like to read a book called "Fed Up" by Sue Dengate. She consulted a dietitian and put Joseph on an elimination diet. His life changed.

Julie is urging people who suspect food might be affecting their children's behaviour to attend a presentation by Sue Dengate ... - Julie's story (above) appeared on page 3 of the September edition of "Kids in Brisbane", resulting in a capacity crowd of nearly 200 for my presentation at Zillmere PCYC.

**[111] Cut back on fruit (August 2001)**

"Since purchasing your book "Fed Up" and reading through it last week I immediately cut back my 5 yo daughter's intake of fruit to approx. one quarter of what she would normally have. By the weekend we already saw huge changes in our girl. Her behaviour was more evened out (not so many HUGE highs and lows) and just more sensible, obliging, less aggressive and defiant - just a much more pleasant girl altogether." - NZ

**[088] Violent monster stage (October 2000)**

Please add me to your newsletter list ... we are up to week 2 of the elimination diet. We slipped up by keeping the pink marshmallows in the house. My son aged 8 found them and ate every one and now I am in day 2 of the violent monster stage !!! Thank you so much, I look forward to getting my son back one day soon. Thanks for your help and for being there when no-one else is - unless they have a drug of some sort that is ! - reader, New Zealand

**[075] "sort of handleable until he started school" - 6 yr old boy (September 2000)**

My son is 6 years old and was sort of handleable until he started school then the problems really started. He had no concentration, was violent, destructive, uncooperative and withdrawn at times. The only thing that was getting him through was that his teachers, both last year and this, are angels. How anyone could have that much patience is beyond me. ADD was questioned but a psychologist I saw said that was not the answer ... In your book Fed Up you list a number of therapies you tried for your daughter. It was like reading about my life for the last 18 months. Everyone kept saying I was so good to keep trying but what was I supposed to do? Give up, let him be classed as another unteachable kid. I couldn't do that. He is one of the most intelligent people I have met and had too much potential. Anyway someone told me about the story on ACA and I bought your book. I read it in one night as it was the first thing I had read that made total sense and fitted my son to a T. We started the elimination diet four weeks ago. I took my son off dairy. My son didn't go too well for the first three weeks. His behavior deteriorated to the point where the school actually rang me one day at lunch and asked me to pick him up as there was no point in him being there ... I must admit that I felt like there was no hope and thought that maybe he needed Ritalin. That day I picked up your book again and reread some pages. I decided to go one step further and take him off wheat. The change has been amazing. This week he actually had three "normal" days at school, finished worksheets etc. I believe he got worse because he was actually eating more wheat as I was baking biscuits, cakes and muffins. Now I use wheat and gluten free flour. We haven't done any challenges yet but will be starting next week. I believe your book and diet have helped my son and I more than you can know. Thank you.

3 months later: My son reacts to just about everything! Salicylates make him "high", amines make him "low", antioxidants build up in his system and make him "high".

But he had his 7th birthday last weekend. Some children from school attended and he was a "normal" kid with lots of friends over to play. Every parent has come to me and told me what a great time their child had. This would not have been possible 6 months ago. We did eat chocolate at the party but everything else was "FAILSAFE". He still has his moments but he can now concentrate at

school, when with the occupational therapist, and while playing basketball. I was watching home video the other night and almost cried watching my stunningly magnificent son at one and two years old and thinking of all he has been through unnecessarily. If only we had known. Matt also suffered from 'glue ear' which is also being blamed for a lot of his gross and fine motor problems. He was three years behind when he started with the O.T. In three months he has caught up 12 months. His Eustachian tubes are now clear yet the E.N.T doctors just said he was "in the too hard basket". I believe that food intolerance is responsible for most of my son's problems and that if I had known he would not have wasted four years of his life. It makes me so angry the way we mothers are treated by health professionals. There was an article in the Sunday Herald Sun magazine just recently which was an interview with a mother who said the diet helped her son's asthma. On the same page there was an interview with the head dietitian at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne saying that the relationship between health and behavior was debatable and that it really hadn't been proved. BULL!!!! ... It can be really hard (I am a single mother without a great deal of father support) but really rewarding at the same time. Laughing and crying at the same time makes life interesting. I wouldn't swap my son for the world.

**[039] "They said we would be wasting our time" using diet for ADHD and ODD (May 2000)**

My eight year old son was recently diagnosed ADHD and ODD by three different doctors. All three doctors said we would be wasting our time altering his diet and that the only thing to do was to prescribe drugs.

We didn't want to put him on drugs but my wife and I were at our wits end, our son was becoming more and more of a handful, I must admit I was about to give up and take the doctors' advice.

We bought your book "Fed Up" and started the diet. My God, the improvement was almost instant. He changed from an aggressive and argumentative little creep to a loving and caring little boy almost immediately. My wife, myself, our other two children and most of all our son's teacher are amazed. We have stuck to the diet and there have been no hassles in the home or the classroom for several weeks. Although last weekend we took the kids out for the day and bought them each a bottle of Schweppes lemonade. Within half an hour our son was back to his aggressive old self ... learned a lesson there. He now realises that some things make him cranky and steers away from them, after all, he says he doesn't like being his angry self.

Sue, we don't know how to thank you. You have changed the lives of not only our family, but the other kids in our son's classroom, who I'm sure are as grateful as we are. - concerned father, ACT

**[019] Room for improvement (October 1999)**

Email have two children, boys aged six and three. Last year we found the oldest (Christopher) quite difficult to control. He was unable to accept 'no', he was aggressive and his temper was quite short. This behaviour did not extend outside the house. Behaviour at school was marvellous and teachers could not speak highly enough of Christopher's behaviour. It was like there were two Christophers. My husband and I felt it was not going to get any better and to try to get some help before Christopher's behaviour got way out of control.

We spent approximately four months with a psychologist, using the triple p program. Christopher's behaviour turned right around. His behaviour now is so much better, though at times, I do believe there is room for improvement. While working a couple of weeks ago, I was speaking to a lady who has a son with food intolerance, she gave me a full run down. That afternoon I started reading your book (Fed Up). It took me a day and half to read it. It is fabulous. I have contacted a dietician and am seeing her in a week or so. - Mother of 2, QLD

**[003] "a godsend to our lives" (February 1999)**

"I have read your book Fed Up and it has proven a godsend to our lives and I can't thank you enough for putting your experiences in print. My daughter would have been expelled last year (1st term Kindergarten) for her aggressive, violent and unruly behaviour. Many times I sat in the principal's office in tears of disbelief as they told me about this horrid monster that was my child - I couldn't understand. GPs, specialists and paediatricians could find nothing wrong. She even attended a behavioural management unit for 20 weeks at the request of her school. Of course no-one wanted to believe that her access to a different range of food that she normally would not be given was at the same time her behaviour went off track. The school had not seen her pre-canteen.

We know that she is intolerant to additives, salicylates and amines and we are living on the range of foods recommended in your book. We have tested some foods and know basically what we can't have but have been very hesitant with the challenges particularly when reactions may occur later when she is in class. School holidays are our windows of opportunities.

The problem we now have is other children sharing food. We are approaching the school today regarding this as she ate a packet of noodles with the chicken flavour sprinkled on top yesterday and then reacted severely to the point of injuring her favourite teacher twice and being suspended for a day. This isn't the first time she has had someone else's food and although my daughter is so good most of the time, temptation is always there and luckily we have been able to pinpoint each time she has taken matters in her own hands and done her own little challenge. From this we seem to have found another problem - other people innocently undermining what we have achieved ... someone shared a packets of lollies and she came home proudly saying that blue is OK, the reaction is all here (pointing to her head). 5pm that night blue was not OK.

... I ran into a friend the other day who I hadn't seen for ages. During the catch up he mentioned the diet they are now on and even though it eliminated processed and natural foods the difference in his eldest's (4yo) behaviour was well worth it. The look of relief on his face was priceless when he realised that I truly did understand and wasn't just nodding my head ("ah, Sue Dengate's Fed Up" I said). I think it has given him even more determination to stick it through." - Alex

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