

Info condensed from “The Big Fat Problem” (*Queen of Education* -- Jossey-Bass)

Lesson #7 Students needed to understand the connection between what they eat and drink and how they feel and behave and think

They need to know that aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal) is a dangerous chemical that can interfere with brain function and actually causes people to gain weight because it creates metabolism problems. If you've been drinking diet sodas and gaining weight or having headaches, that may be the cause. Even if you think I'm crazy, please go to my website and read the research under the link Why I Don't Eat Aspartame. www.louannejohnson.com

Students need to know that our bodies cannot process high fructose corn syrup and it can cause mood swings, depression and fuzzy thinking. It's in thousands of foods and drinks and companies use it because it's cheap. Most scientists now believe that artificial sweeteners and high fructose corn syrup have a direct relation to diabetes and obesity. They disrupt our bodies and our brains. For a really good explanation of this, I'd suggest reading the book *UltraMetabolism* by Dr. Mark Hyman

He writes: artificial sweeteners make your body produce insulin by making it think sugar is on the way. As a consequence, your body tells you to eat more sugar to balance your insulin level. You end up with excess insulin and you eat more to take care of the problem. This pattern disrupts your appetite control system and can lead to insulin resistance. He also writes:

...When natural fructose found in fruits is processed into high-fructose corn syrup, it is absorbed more quickly than regular sugar and enters your cells immediately. It doesn't require the help of insulin the way glucose does. Once inside your cells, it becomes an uncontrolled source of carbon. Basically, this means high fructose corn syrup makes your cholesterol level shoot straight up and makes your metabolism show down. And it is the major cause of abnormal liver function in this country.

If you have seen those commercials lately where one person says, what's wrong with high fructose corn syrup? and the other person can't answer, here's the answer: It slows your metabolism, raises your cholesterol and creates fat in your liver.

Food manufacturers know this already. But high fructose corn syrup is cheap and it makes us eat more, so we buy more food. So, they have no motivation to stop using it. But we are the customers. If we refuse to buy products with high fructose corn syrup, and tell the managers of our grocery stores why we aren't buying those products, they will eventually clean up their act.

One more thing about sugar: if you are concerned about diabetes, you might try agave nectar which comes from a cactus. It's similar to honey but has a very low glycemic index.

OK, one last thing. Kids need to know that recent studies in schools and prisons confirm that simple nutritional supplements and vitamins can reduce aggressive behavior by 40 to 50% and that Essential Fatty Acids have a huge effect on our brain function and behavior.

There is a link to this info on my web site and a chapter in Queen of Education called The Big Fat Problem, so you don't have to try to write this down. I heard a British scientist at a conference in Germany. Her research team had been studying the US diet, trying to figure out how our diet differs from that of other countries, because we are so fat and we use 90% of the world supply of ADHD drugs. The European researchers concluded that the Americans eat too much of the wrong kind of fat.

There are two kinds of Essential Fatty Acids – Omega 6's which come from plants such as corn.

And Omega 3 & 9 which come from fish, seeds, nuts, etc.

In order for the brain to function optimally, the ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 & 9 should be 2:1. Our brains can handle a ratio of up to 20:1 without any problems. But after 20:1 we have problems.

[GOOD FATS]

Good fats include butter, canola oil and cream which all have a ratio of 2:1

Then we have yogurt at 6:1, soybean oil at 7:1, and olive oil at 11:1. Our brains are still fine [p.s. I would recommend cooking with virgin coconut oil or organic cold-pressed canola oil, and using olive oil for low heat and salad dressings, etc.]

[BAD FATS]

But then we have corn oil at 56:1, sesame oil 144:1, margarine & diet spreads 371:1, sunflower and safflower oil at 632:1

The problem with these high ratios is that too much Omega 6 EFAs can inhibit or stop electrical activity in the brain

[TOO MUCH OMEGA 6]

So, when I am appointed Queen of Education, I will issue an edict that says we have to feed our children decent food, even if it costs a few dollars more, because our children deserve better than they are getting.