

## From out-of-control to calm

Aurelia was 5, just starting kindergarten, when we found the Feingold Diet program.

We knew a conventional school setting would not be accommodating to her eccentricities, which is one of the many reasons we decided to homeschool. However, we were having so much trouble with Aurelia's behavior that homeschooling wasn't working either. In fact, living with a hyperactive, over-reactive, defiant, aggressive, anxious daughter had become too chaotic to manage.

Family relations were so negative I knew something had to change -- and trying one more parenting approach didn't seem promising as we'd tried so many already. We desperately needed help, and I came across Feingold one night when searching Google for "help for 5 year old with ADHD."

I felt hopeful immediately.

The idea that food could be the cause of Aurelia's behavior problems made so much sense to me because it fit in perfectly with her history. As an infant she had serious food intolerances. She was 100% breast-fed, and I had to follow a vast elimination diet the whole time because she reacted to so many foods in breast milk!

Every pediatrician I saw thought I was totally crazy and completely dismissed my food sensitivity worries.

### Salicylates!

We watched "Signing Time" when Aurelia was a toddler, and one of her favorite songs was "5 A Day" about how you should eat a combination of 5 veggies and fruits every day. Well, the veggies weren't happening, so we relied on fruit for most of those servings. What a mistake! Her favorites were strawberries, grapes, raisins, apples,

raspberries, blackberries, cherries, peaches, and blueberries. We'd been shoveling these in as fast as her pincer grasp could grab them! I cringe now when I think of it -- if only we'd known then!



Aurelia had great fun holding a baby dwarf Nigerian goat on a field trip with a homeschooling group last summer.

Using information available on the Feingold website and from the book, *"Why Can't My Child Behave?"* we started cleaning out our pantry even before we received our membership materials. We had been on the Feingold Diet for one week when we had our first confirmation that food did definitely play a part in her behavioral issues. We had what we thought was a "safe" vanilla ice cream for dessert on a Friday night, and suddenly we had this rubber ball of a kid whirling and bouncing wildly through the living room. She could NOT control her body -- it was out of her own control! My ever-the-skeptic husband looked at me and said, "Well, I'm convinced." I was so relieved to have him on board!

### Aurelia's symptoms

When we filled out the Behavior Concerns Checklist that came with our membership packet, we were flabbergasted. We marked "YES" to 37 behavior concerns on the checklist at the time we began the program. We needed some help! After following Stage One 100% for 12 weeks, we marked "yes" to only 7. That's 7 total! From 37 behavioral concerns down to 7 -- that's a huge change!

She came to realize that the animals she loved so much were afraid of her because her behavior was so wild.

In the 16 months since we started the diet, we've seen wonderful changes in our daughter. Aurelia walks instead of running in places like the library. She says, "Okay, Mommy," instead of arguing and screaming over the most trivial things or simple requests. She enjoys playing with her younger sister and says nice things to her. She thinks about how other people feel. Her emotional meltdowns have diminished, and she is much more resilient and handles frustration more easily. She's less anxious generally and chews her fingers much less than before. She's now willing to wear socks and try vegetables. She is so much more cooperative. Homeschooling is a joy!

Feingold has improved the lives of our pets, too.

We've always had to run interference between Aurelia and animals because she just couldn't control herself around them. She'd get overexcited and chase and grab for them.