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## Where did my sweet little girl go?

As she began to eat what is generally thought to be “normal” food,  
Jessica’s behavior changed dramatically.

Her mom Debbie writes, “As an infant and toddler, Jessica was an easy spirit. I could take her anywhere and know that she would be a good little kid.”

But as she approached age four, this beautiful little girl started to turn into a little monster! Her behavior pattern was perplexing. She could go from crying to laughing in a matter of 30 seconds. Jessica stayed up until 10 p.m. and was awake the next morning at 6 a.m. She was unable to sit still, talked unbelievably fast, and could not pay attention or follow direction. My formerly sweet little girl was mean to the other children at the daycare, and none of the many different types of discipline I tried even fazed her.

I would ask myself, “Is this how all four-years-olds behave?” No! Jess was a lot wilder than most kids her age. When I talked with other people about her behavior, some told me that I was not disciplining her enough. Others thought she was getting too much sugar, and others said maybe she’s hyperactive and should go on medicine.

I doubted this program could change my little monster back into  
her cute self again.

Jess’ grandmother suggested I try the Feingold Program, saying, “Just try it, what can it hurt?” She had first-hand experience with the Program because Jessica’s dad was on it thirty years ago. As I swapped stories with her, it became obvious that Jessica’s symptoms were very similar to her Dad’s when he was a child.

I ran out to the library and borrowed Dr. Feingold's book, *Why Your Child Is Hyperactive*, the book my mother-in-law had read many years ago. It gave me a better understanding of what chemicals can do to our bodies. I searched the Internet to see if I could get more information about this program. There it was — a complete website dedicated to this effort — [www.feingold.org](http://www.feingold.org). I immediately ordered a membership package so I could get all of the materials.

She could not pay attention or follow directions.

Despite my enthusiasm, I still had doubts that the program could change my little monster back into her cute self again. But I was willing to try anything to get Jess back on track, so I headed out to the grocery store with my Foodlist book. My first trip to the supermarket took about two hours because I became so engrossed with reading food labels. I was amazed to learn that red dye is added to cocoa mix, that marshmallow fluff has blue dye and that yellow coloring is added to some breads and baked goods. Unbelievable!

Since Jessica was enrolled in daycare I had to find a way to control the food she ate there. Along with her lunch I packed enough snacks and fun stuff that I knew she would enjoy eating while her daycare friends had their red punch and pre-packaged artificial crackers and cheese. I set up a meeting with the daycare provider and explained both the Feingold Program and the changes I expected to see in Jessica's behavior. She and I would work together to monitor my daughter's progress. At home I dedicated a kitchen cabinet to snacks that Jessica could eat any time she wanted.

Lo and behold, within three weeks I started noticing a change in my daughter. She would sit down during dinner and pick up her toys after being asked only one time. A friend noticed that Jess' speech was clear and slower.

Now, after more than a year on the Program, I have no doubt that food additives triggered those earlier problems, and I am proud that I made the effort to try this program instead of heading down the medication path.

I have my sweet girl back!

Jessica has asked a few times, "Why do I have to be on this diet?" I explain that certain chemicals in food don't agree with her body. At 5 years of age, Jess knows the details of the diet. The rule in our house is if she's not sure, she is not to eat the food. There are many times when she gets candy from a friend or from school; she knows to bring it home and she can trade it in for Feingold-accepted treats I keep on hand.

At Halloween Jessica goes trick-or-treating and then trades in the unacceptable candy for a trip to Toys-R-Us where she can pick out anything she wants.

Occasionally, we try an unaccepted product and I usually then have two to three days with a rambunctious child. As Jess gets older, however, I can tell her to try to control herself when she is having a reaction.

Our family will stay on the Feingold Program for years to come. In addition to Jess' better behavior, I know we are all eating good food. I urge anyone to try Feingold — as I was told, “Just TRY it.”



Now Jessica can focus, learn, and make new friends.