Guiding Our Children to The Truth about Health, Compassion and The Environment

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A new mom authored a vegan recipe book. She wrote a recent blog article responding to the main question she's been receiving since she gave birth to her first child: "Will you raise your child vegan?" Surprisingly, she expressed that it's more important for her daughter to have open options than to teach her compassion and principles of optimal health from an early age.

Should we passively accept our children eating everything and anything that comes their way, even if it means ignoring the truth about health, life and the environment?

As parents, are we to guide our children toward love and compassion, away from violence and oppression? Toward sickness or health? When my children were young, I knew that as their mother, I was the center of their universe, and they believed my message of truth about vegan living. My son recovered from a severe asthmatic condition through green juicing and the raw vegan lifestyle. When my children reached their teenage years and chose to experiment with non-vegan foods due to their perceived need to "fit in" with their peer group, they still had an early foundational base of knowledge as to which foods would sustain health and which would destroy it. This early information eventually brought them fully back to a vegan and raw vegan lifestyle, completely on their own. Our children need us as parents to be wholly responsible for their health now, so they can take over that personal responsibility in the future.

There is a vast commercial industry push to advertise and sell animal milk. Milks of different species vary according to how big and fast the newborn of the species needs to grow. The bovine calf grows four-times faster than the human baby, which explains why cow's milk is 20-percent protein, while human mother's milk is only 5 to 6-percent protein. Cow's milk is meant to make a calf into a 1,000+ pound cow in a year. Is this what we want for our children?

Should we ignore this truth so that our children can feel accepted by others who are ignorant of these laws of nature? Although some children may seem healthy for a while living on animal products, eventually problems such as allergies, and later, degenerative diseases often develop. The body becomes overloaded with toxins from indigestible animal foods. At a certain point, toxemia occurs and symptoms appear. The primary carrier of toxic environmental chemicals is dietary fat, especially from meat, dairy, eggs and fish. Toxins accumulate in the animals' fat cells that is then eaten by humans as animal products. Should we blindly disregard this information so that our child can "fit in?" Should we ignore the fact that animals spend part of their lives on feedlots, eating genetically-engineered, pesticide coated corn, soy and wheat? The animals get sick, so they're injected with antibiotics. Those antibiotics find their way into our children's intestines, killing their friendly ("probiotic") bacteria, and an important aspect of their immunity gets compromised.

Our children want to know the truth. When my daughter and her friend were nine-years-old, as we were driving to an event, I overheard them talking about breakfast at the girl's home the day before. My daughter had slept over at her friend's house, and told her that the bacon she ate for breakfast came from a pig that was murdered so she could eat it. The nine year old friend got angry and argued with my daughter, insisting that wasn't true, that the bacon was made at the supermarket, as this is what her mother had told her.

Should we show our children that we eat plant food of gentleness and compassion, or leave the possibility for eating animal food of violence and oppression open? Dr. Will Tuttle, author of The World Peace Diet, explains, "We cannot reap happiness for ourselves while causing misery for others." Children are so loving, pure and innocent. They feel connected to all creatures and that's why so many children get upset when they find out that what they've been eating came from an animal. There was a boy who used to visit my home frequently when my children were growing up. He happily learned the names of fruits, leafy greens, vegetables, sprouts, nuts and seeds while spending time with us. The boy loved eating all of our healthful and delicious fresh plant foods. He asked many questions about why we weren't eating hamburgers, cheese and eggs. My children responded to most of his questions, and the boy decided he would no longer eat animals. He bought a t-shirt with a picture of a cow on it and exclaimed to his parents that he was no longer eating them. The boy's parents became alarmed because they felt he needed animal protein, and they refused to let him become a vegetarian. I saw the boy was saddened that his desire to stop killing was met with consternation. He stopped visiting us, as I believe it was painful for him to accept what he was eating while seeing a more loving way of living.

Have you educated yourself on where your child gets his or her protein? There is protein in all whole plant foods. Even a banana contains complete protein. Only fractionated refined foods contain no protein, sugar and oil, for example.

Dr. Tuttle says, "There is a psychological block demanded by the action of eating animals." To heal ourselves spiritually, we must become conscious and stop harming innocent creatures. We cannot have spiritually healthy families while still modeling violence. The Golden Rule of most religions teaches kindness and love of others as the essence. How can we let our children think that a breast or leg of chicken or a piece of cheese is an acceptable food source? As a vegan since 1989, working with families in vegan and raw vegan nutrition, I see healthy, happy and loving children grow up beautifully on a vegan and raw vegan lifestyle.

Why should we teach children to care about kindness toward our dogs and cats while not caring about cows, pigs, turkeys, ducks and chickens? We teach our children history lessons on the cruelties experienced by our human relatives and ancestors. Are we not incurring the same cruel holocaust on animals and then teaching our children that cruelty to others is an acceptable part of life?

Our children's future environment is in great jeopardy. Dr. Tuttle points out: "In the past 25 years, more species have been forced into extinction than in the past 65 million years combined." He says, "We eventually do unto ourselves what we do unto animals." The documentary film *Cowspiracy,* which is an absolute must-see for every family, shows us in very clear numbers that methane gas from the livestock industry is the number one cause of greenhouse gases and global warming.

Are we going to overlook the truth about health, compassion and the survival of planet Earth so that we can eat animals to "fit in" or not insult someone? I believe the children of this new generation, more than ever before, need for us as parents to be shining examples of health and compassion through veganism. This light will guide our children to become strong leaders, who will take control in reviving our environment and respecting the creatures who share our planet.