

Food Allergies and Behavioral Problems:



Why Your Child Is NOT “Doing It On Purpose”.

Jaime A. Heidel

Food Allergies & Behavioral Problems:
Why Your Child Is Not “Doing It On Purpose”.

Jaime A. Heidel

These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration). The advice given is based on personal experience and is not intended to diagnose, cure or prevent any disease.

Text © Jaime A. Heidel 2010
All Rights Reserved

www.itoldyouiwassick.com

Photo © [Diane Diederich](#)

Does this sound like your child? He gets good grades in school but seems puzzled by simple directions. She speaks intelligently yet gets lost on the way to the bathroom in a new house. You often have to call your son's name several times before he turns to look at you and when that doesn't work, tapping him on the shoulder startles him out of his skin?

Your son is often preoccupied to the point of obsession with one specific topic. Your daughter talks endlessly, doesn't seem to understand the concept of listening and becomes tearful or agitated when interrupted. Some of the things she says simply make no sense at all!

What about eye contact? Does your daughter stare at others to the point of being rude? Does your son avoid eye contact and refuse to show respect?

Your first thought may have been that your child has a learning disability but tests prove he or she is actually of high intelligence! You may have then suspected hearing was the problem but those tests have come back with a perfect score. Your child often complains of stomach pain but his pediatrician tells you there's **nothing physically wrong with him**. At this point, you may have believed the cause to be an emotional disorder or chemical imbalance but the psychiatrist you've taken your child to says he can find nothing wrong either and suggests perhaps this is just "attention-seeking behavior".

Maybe he's right. The stomachaches aren't real; they're just an attempt to get attention. Your daughter is just "acting dumb" by losing her way or misplacing objects. Your son stares at others to intimidate. He just needs more discipline, right?

Wrong.

I can tell you right now that there is a **reason** your child is acting this way. There is an explanation for the staring or lack of eye contact, the stomach pain, the confusion about social cues, the easy startle reflex and everything else. How do I know?

I was this child.

During infancy, I had such severe colic I barely slept. By the time I was a toddler, I'd already begun to act the way your child is acting now. I talked very loud because I didn't understand the volume of my own voice. I stared off into space with my mouth hanging open and when touched, would jump a foot in the air and often cry or scream. When I got a little older, I did quite well in school but my awkward and often-inappropriate social behavior caused my classmates to bully or exclude me. At home, simple requests to do something

would often puzzle me. For example, if asked by a family member or care-giver to, say, “go get those blue scissors in the bathroom upstairs and bring them to Uncle Jack”, I would find my way to the bathroom but forget what I was asked to get, grab something else instead and bring it to the wrong person.

At first, perhaps like your child, I was taken to many doctors and subjected to tests in an attempt to explain my bizarre behavior, lack of social skills and confusion. They all came back negative and the final, agreed-upon conclusion was that it was all attention-seeking behavior and to be discouraged or ignored. I cannot count the number of times I was reprimanded, scolded or physically disciplined for something I’d done or said. The problem was, unlike my cousins and peers, I didn’t *learn* from the discipline because I didn’t *understand* what I’d done wrong or what was expected of me! The behavior would continue, further frustrating and alienating my family, peers, teachers, baby-sitters, etc. The discipline would become more stern but there was **no correction of behavior**.

Instead, I became frightened and withdrawn believing all adults to be insane, unpredictable creatures that would simply “go off” at a moments notice for no reason. That was **extremely frightening** and **confusing** for me as I’m sure it is if it happens to your child.

So what is it? What’s causing these strange, seemingly unrelated behavior and physical symptoms?

Food Allergies.

Yes, you read correctly. Food allergies. In particular, **gluten**. Gluten is the protein found in wheat, barely, rye and oats. Children with undiagnosed and untreated gluten intolerance commonly show these symptoms:

- **Poor coordination:** Your child may bump into and/or break things but when this is pointed out, they insist they “didn’t do it”. This is **true** for your child as he or she may lack body awareness due to the brain fog caused by gluten allergy. Your child literally **doesn’t notice** their arm or leg hitting that priceless vase that is now smashed to pieces on the floor.
- **Trouble communicating:** Your child may become frustrated when they cannot find the right words to describe something and need to resort to pointing to an object they are talking about.
- **Self-destructive behavior:** Frustration with being misunderstood and/or not understanding others may cause the child to hit or cut himself.
- **Staring:** Gluten has an “opiate” effect on the system of an allergic or intolerant person causing open-mouthed staring and disassociation. You may notice this is especially true a couple of hours after eating.

- **Difficulty in group games or sports:** Your child may appear to be “cheating” on a board game or sport when, in fact, they can’t figure out the rules despite repeated explanations.
- **Obsessions:** Your child may go on and on and on about the same subject for hours.
- **Non-sense talk:** Your son or daughter’s attempt to communicate with you comes out in a string of unintelligible sentences, causing frustration and anger in both child and adult.
- **Inability to read tones of voice and/or body language:** Your child doesn’t seem to “get it” until you’ve reached the end of your rope and begin yelling or punishing. This is because they are not picking up on your more subtle attempts at correction. After the grim set of your mouth or your arms folded over your chest has been “ignored”, you finally yell to get through to your child. The problem is, for your child the **first time** your child notices you’re displeased or upset.
- **Physical symptoms:** Stomach pain, diarrhea, constipation, chronic burping and/or passing of gas, chronic nasal congestion and/or post-nasal drip, allergies and or “vague” or “drugged” look in the eyes are all common symptoms in a child with food allergies.
- **Aspergers syndrome/autism:** Social difficulties as explained above such as lack of or too much eye contact, inability to read social cues, non-sense talk, etc. can be symptoms of gluten intolerance. Gluten intolerance has been very closely linked to autism-spectrum disorders.

“Oh my God, this is my child! What do I do?”

I have several suggestions that will make an **immediate** and **drastic improvement** in your child’s behavior if the behavioral problems are related to food intolerance.

Step 1 - Eliminate The Cause

Get your child on an **elimination diet** immediately. An elimination diet is an easy method of figuring out what foods your child is reacting to.

For **one week**, serve only:

- Brown rice (not enriched white rice which has wheat flour in it), Quinoa or Amaranth
- Fresh vegetables (excluding corn, peas and beans)
- Fresh fruit (excluding citrus and any fruit that is eaten more than twice per week)
- Organic chicken and turkey
- Bottled or distilled water

For one week, avoid:

- All processed foods
- All dairy products (use rice milk instead)
- Chocolate
- Sugar and sugar substitutes of any kind
- Caffeine in any form
- Soda or cola
- Wheat, oats, rye or barley
- Food colorings and dyes
- Bacon, sausages, tuna and any “prepared meat”
- Citrus fruit
- Eggs
- Peas, beans and corn
- Nuts
- MSG

It is **very important** that there is no “cheating” during this one-week period. The culprit food has to be **completely eliminated from the body** and chances are, if your child has a compromised digestive system, it will take longer for allergens to fully exit the body so you’re left with a “clean slate” on which to reintroduce foods.

Note: The best way to find the foods that will get you through this challenging diet change is to consult your local health-food store. Most specialize in gluten-free diets and will prove most helpful in this process.

Once the one-week period is over, you’ll want to reintroduce foods. Remember to do this one at a time. Continue to follow the elimination diet but now, reintroduce a food such as cheese and make a list of any symptoms your child has exhibited. If none, great! Two days later, introduce another food, say, wheat and note the reaction, if any. Then, try eggs. A couple of days later try nuts and so on. When you find the problem food, you’ll **KNOW**. The symptoms will return with a vengeance. Just remember, your child may be allergic or intolerant to several different foods so when you notice a reaction, remove that food from the diet, wait a day or two more and reintroduce the next food.

The most common food allergies/intolerances are **wheat/gluten, dairy, eggs, soy, nuts, citrus, sulfites and fish** so you may want to reintroduce those foods first.

Step 2 - Seek Professional Advice

If you've identified the food intolerance/allergy and know which food is the culprit, **congratulations**, the hardest part is over! What I suggest next is booking an appointment with a **naturopathic physician** in your area. You can find one here using this convenient website:

<http://www.findachiro.com/find/naturopath/>.

There is an excellent, fairly new homeopathic treatment called **Brain Protocol**, developed by doctors in Europe and North America, which has been used to successfully treat *allergies, behavioral problems, ADHD and autism-spectrum disorders*. This treatment can be used at any age. I went through the entire treatment myself three years ago at age twenty-seven and the difference it made in my ability to **make logical connections** and the **improvement** to my **social skills** has been nothing short of a **miracle**. This, coupled with a gluten-free diet made a night and day difference for others and me suffering from the same symptoms. Ask your naturopath about this treatment and both of you can decide together if this is right for your child.

Note: There is not a lot of information on Brain Protocol online, your best bet would be to contact homeopaths in your community and ask if this is something they prescribe. Though homeopathic medicine is sold to the public online, it is **very important** to work closely with a qualified naturopath and not to try to do this treatment on your own.

Step 3 - Heal & Recover

Digestive function is the **key** to physical and emotional health. If your child has gluten intolerance and/or autistic symptoms, chances are he or she has something called **leaky gut syndrome**.

In a child with leaky gut, the stomach lining is more porous than it should be, allowing protein molecules to slip through the gut and enter the blood stream where it causes an autoimmune and behavioral response. The most common causes of leaky gut are parasites, low stomach acid, prolonged chronic antibiotic use and food additives and preservatives. The best way to treat leaky gut is to introduce a **probiotic supplement, digestive enzymes** and a bulk fiber such as **psyllium**.

The probiotic will "crowd out" parasites, the digestive enzymes will help break down food and the bulk fiber will ensure more complete elimination of waste. Turmeric is also an excellent spice to add to the diet as it decreases gut permeability and helps to strengthen intestinal walls.

These suggestions have worked wonders for me and I recommend them but I am an adult and have never tried these remedies on a child so I **highly advise** seeking the advice of a naturopath or alternative health practitioner who specializes in diet and allergies before using these products.

For brands and products I have personally used and reviewed, check out the [Product Reviews](#) page on my website.

Step 4 - Additional Tools & Resources

A **chiropractic neurologist** specializes in those with difficulties in motor skills, coordination and behavior and can offer **simple, natural and effective** methods including gentle spinal adjustments to help heal your child's brain and central nervous system without the use of drugs.

Check out [Old Me/New Me](#); a comprehensive CD/MP3 program that uses imagery, visualisation and relaxation to help children suffering from the above symptoms. I have not used this myself but understand this alternative approach has excellent reviews and testimonials! Explore it for yourself.

Also, if you are interested in learning much more about the effect of gluten and other food intolerances, check out [Healthy Urban Kitchen](#). Though this program is sold for weight loss, the video testimonials from adults who have unknown food intolerances and have switched to this gluten free, whole foods diet are **startling and inspiring**. You'll learn a lot and perhaps be moved to enhance your own health through these diet changes as well!

If your child is diagnosed with aspergers syndrome and you want a definitive **survival guide**, click [here](#).

You and your child no longer have to suffer. I've been very blessed to have finally learned the cause of my own physical and behavioral problems in my twenties. My hope is that I can share what I have learned with you so your child can be healed while he/she is still developing saving years of **pain, frustration, anxiety, confusion and embarrassment**.

I wish you and your child the absolute best. Don't give up. There is hope and soon, I hope you experience a positive and wonderful change.

Many blessings to you.

Jaime

www.itoldyouiwassick.com