



Tree of Life Foundation
Human School of Living Arts

SPIRITUAL NUTRITION: Vegan & Live Food Mastery

Master's Thesis Proposal: A Measurement of the Health of Organic Live-Food Vegan Babies by Susan and Philip Miller Madeley

MASTER'S THESIS PROPOSAL

A Measurement of the Health of Organic Live-Food Vegan Babies

Susan and Philip Miller Madeley

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Introductory Statement

The foundation of our thesis will be a survey to assess the health of strict vegetarian/vegan children and babies, birth until age five. This assessment will feature a focus on live-food vegans with the intention of providing evidence that these children can thrive on a diet free of animal products. It is our aim to show that they are also healthier than mainstream omnivores and contemporary vegetarians. We will also explore the variables and similarities between the vegetarian children and the vegan children in our study.

Study Defined

Health Measurements: relative weight and height, developmental markers (coordination, walking, potty, speech, intellectual), medical assessment (APGAR), appetite, emotional expression, and illness or general health stability.

Organic Live-Food Vegan: The ideal diet for our review will be those babies who are 100% organic and vegan, 80% live-foods, animal product free – dairy, eggs, cheese, milk. This ideal population may also include small amounts of organic bee products and vegan organic



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supplements as well as 20% lightly cooked organic vegan home-prepared unprocessed, unpackaged foods.

Vegan / Vegetarian: We will also include among our population babies within a spectrum from this ideal to those who may also be using small amounts of vegan organic dairy, more than 20% lightly cooked organic vegan foods, and less than 100% organic. We will assess whether these variables have an effect on the health of the baby in any way. We will also assess the variables within each particular child (born vegan, turned vegan after one year, etc.)

Babies: Our study will include newborn until age 60 months. The baby's diet variables are affected by mother's milk, thus, we will consider the diet of the mother to be the same as the diet of the baby. The study will include notes on when the introduction of foods occurs outside of the mother's milk and the amounts.

Review of Literature: This study will include a review of the literature supporting our theory and also the current thought and misconceptions behind nutrition and the health of our babies. In the review we will look at nutritional guidelines as stated by government agencies such as the US Department of Health and Human Services, and National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. In these studies we will examine areas related to health as influenced by nutrition including health statistics for the general population of children ages 0-5 years.

This will include a projection for the continuation of a longitudinal case study following 10 live-food babies to age 10.

Survey and Survey Posting: Data will be collected in a survey format with postings on the Tree of Life website, <http://treeoflife.nu/liveveganbabies>, as well as other sites promoting a vegan or organic diets and nutritional health. The survey is attached to this proposal.

References for Parents: As the research develops we will be keeping a log of online resources as well as books and health experts as



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resources for the parents in our survey. This will be one way of creating a network of health and support for our vegan families, which, we have observed to be in great demand.

It is our goal that this thesis project fills the world's ripe need for support in setting up a vegan model of wellness for children.

Political and Medical Opposition: It has continually come to our attention that world medical establishment has a view that parents who are vegetarian, vegan, and live-food, are subjecting their "unfortunate" children to an "unhealthy life." This is under the guise of medical authority however; it is based on a "belief system" and one that has no supported medical validity. This supposition is evident in court rooms all over the world which put parents on trial for neglect and abuse due to "extreme dietary values." These observations will be explored in our literature review, including sample cases in which parents have come under attack.

Major Goals & Objectives of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to bring support and validity and information to parents as they take the initiative to pioneer healthy alternatives for their babies. We want to provide these parents with a firm ground which encourages organic live-food veganism as a health choice rather than a as a belief system. There is a significant gap in the research of vegan, and more specifically, live-food vegan nutrition for children. A common belief system in mainstream is that one is violating the rights of the child to good health by subjecting the baby to this life-style. We want to dispel that myth which we believe is absolutely opposite to the truth. In exploring this portion of our thesis, we will bring specific issues to light as well as looking at some of the mythology.

Research question(s)

The specific questions that we seek to answer in this study are:



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1. What is the birth weight and height of vegan, vegetarian and live food babies in relationship to the general population?
2. What are the health patterns of vegan, vegetarian and live food babies and children in relationship to the general population? Some variables will be colds, doctor visits for illness, hospitalization, and "typical" childhood ailments.
3. What is growth rate of vegan, vegetarian, and live food babies and children in relationship to the general population?
4. How do the developmental patterns of vegan, vegetarian, and live food babies compare to the developmental milestones reached by the general population.

Purpose and Reason for Engaging this Particular Topic

As parents and grandparents it is important for us to be able to raise our children in a healthy way without being judged and interfered with in our parenting by outside observers. It is our intention to remedy the false belief that vegans are harming their children and are behaving in a fanatical way when the reality, in most cases these parents are generally more educated and seeking an original expression of health for their baby. We consider that these people, who are raising their children outside of the box, are very courageous, intelligent, and determined to create a better life for their child. This needs to be acknowledged, recognized and respected. We hope that our study will bring this integrity to these parents.

Scope and Limits of the Topic

The focus of our research will be to highlight current mainstream statistics without going into an exhaustive review. We feel that this information will be readily available for comparison as needed in the future. We will make some light references to the differences of vegetarian, vegan, and live-food children within our selection as they occur; noting any significant differences. Though this information may be within our data and may be reviewed at some other date or with an additional study in the future, we will make references to these



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differences as observations and not hard statistical data. We will also keep to 3 – 5 main criteria for comparison in this study. These will be chosen based on standard recognitions of health.

Preparation for this Topic

We will be using an online survey, attached, which will be placed in various internet resources. We also have an e-mail list of parents who want their children to be part of this review. We are in the process of developing the questionnaire and have our scope of questions developed. For children who are beyond our scope in age, we will refer to other studies being conducted by students in the Human School of Living Arts. We will also keep these parents and children in our data base for future support group activity.

Available Resources & Selected: Preliminary Bibliography

We will consult international authors and books focusing on Vegan and Organic Nutrition including the books of Gabriel Cousens, and others such as The China Study and Michael Klaper's Vegan Nutrition Made Simple. We will also consult vegan and organic consumer organizations for postings of our survey and for references, including the Vegan Society in England. We will use these resources to determine if there are any additional important pieces of data that need to be gathered in our survey.

Literature review

The literature review will be developed from internet research as well as standard medical resources. We will be aware of statistical information concerning court cases and trials for nutritional neglect. We will explore the standard medical observations of health and ill-health and which are measurable in a questionnaire survey. We will need to review current and historical studies of vegetarian, vegan and live food support for health in children. We will see how we can originate or add onto the



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current development of proof of health in children following a vegetarian, vegan, and live-food diet.

Chapter breakdown

We see this information as being presented in a structured format addressing each of the areas within the survey as well as addressing our research materials. The material will also have a chapter to support parents as well as an educational scope on organic live-food vegan nutrition for babies.

Time Schedule for Completion of the Work

We begin the thesis with this proposal and a final draft of the survey questions. This draft will be validated with a few minimum contacts for advice, including Gabriel Cousens and the Vegan Society of England. We will then post our questions for the survey and submit them for HLA review. While the survey is in process, we will create our literature review and introduction to the topic. We will submit our final thesis first draft by April 2009. We expect that our final, revised, approved thesis will be in by July 1, 2009. **(DATES DELAYED – MORE RESULTS REQUIRED)**

Rationale

The larger problem being investigated and the gaps in knowledge will be explored while the survey is in process.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

The hypothesis being tested is the validity of the organic, live-food vegan diets for babies and children and the responsibility of the parents who are choosing this life for their families. As this is a survey, it is also a sociological study which shows motivations as well as statistics. We would eventually love to take our study into a longitudinal thrust by studying those families who are adhering to our ideal organic vegan live-food diet.