

## **Support Organic School Lunches**

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Vitamin Cottage

Our future generations need our help! The chemical-filled environment we endure daily thru air pollution, pesticides, and chlorine in water has a greater impact on our health than you might think. A study published in the 2003 issue of *Environmental Health Perspectives* (111 (3):377-382) evaluated the levels of pesticide metabolites in the urine of two groups of children and found that children eating organic fruits and vegetables while drinking organic milk and juices had six to nine times lower levels of pesticide metabolites than children eating conventionally-grown food. It is clear that choosing organic foods will make a positive impact.

Overexposure to these chemicals has caused a myriad of short and long-term nervous system disturbances, including insomnia, nervousness, irritability, forgetfulness, confusion, and depression. Studies also indicate there is a connection between pesticides and attention/focus problems, asthma and other respiratory conditions, and cancer in children. Pesticides are more harmful to children, and at lower doses, than they are to adults because of their small body size and developing systems.

Exposure occurs on a daily basis from multiple sources – commercial foods, lawn care and bug spray at home and school, carpet fumes, water, and more. There are a number of ways to protect your little ones. Buy organic foods whenever possible – including vegetables, fruits, and meats. Know the foods with the highest levels of pesticides: apples, bell peppers, cherries, grapes, spinach, strawberries, potatoes, pears, and peaches. Serve filtered water, and pack your child's lunch, so you have better control over what they eat. Finally, use natural fertilizers and lawn care at home, and get active in your child's school to improve lunch and snack options with more healthy organic choices.