

# Food additives and childhood behaviour

[Food & Diet](#)



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As parents are becoming more cautious of the things they are giving to their children, they are starting to question whether the food and drink they provide is safe to consume with close to every food and drink product containing additives. This essay is aimed at looking at what additives are and what they're used for, how they affect behaviour and what parents should be aware of. Food additives are man-made chemicals that are used to enhance colour, flavour and texture. For more than 30 years additives have been added to food to keep them fresher for longer.

Food additives are divided into 16 different categories depending on their function (refer to Appendix A). Even though there are additives designed to make food healthier, a large majority of additives are added with the intention to make food more aesthetically pleasing and have become much less plant based and much more synthetic. A study of 277 three year old children over a period of a month regarding the possible link between dangerous food additives and colours to abnormal behaviours in children. Caryl, Email, accessed 5th Sept 2012). A number of additives such as Annatto, anisyl formate, a-ionone & ethyl heptanoat which all have been related to other behavioural problems like, irritability, hyperactivity, sleeplessness, defiance and hysteria. These additives are most commonly found in products like baby yogurts, custards, margarine and processed foods which are mostly consumed by younger children.

In June 2011, Aldi publicized the reformulation of its exclusive brands cutting out the additives sunset yellow (E110), quinoline yellow (E104), carmoisine (E122), allura red (E129, tartazine (E102) & ponceau (E124). All six colourings have been linked to hyperactivity by a test conducted in the UK in

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2007, after the changes Michael Kloeters, Group managing director Aldi stores, stated “ we chose not to wait for it to legislate in Australia as we believe the findings are enough to demonstrate it is the right thing to do,” he said. We are reformulating all ALDI foods containing these six food colours and either replacing with natural alternatives, or not adding anything at all.

As additives are more common in food and drink than ever before the genres of additives (colours, Emulsifiers, thickeners, anti-caking agents, etc) are bracing of into vast amounts of numbers and letters which is very confusing o keep a track of when choosing what to buy, when looking at a pre-packaged stir-fry ingredients list one might see things like; thickener (1422), acidity regulators (270, 260) and flavour (415), unless your carrying around a huge book of all the additives and their properties you'd be lost. This is the cast among many parents, they don't have time to research additives so they don't bother to check labels and then harmful additives could be affecting their children.

Although there are a select number of additives that are needed in food production, there are many used just for aesthetic purposes or because it's cheaper for a company to produce a product containing artificial colours and flavours rather than using its natural counterpart, such in the cast of strawberry flavouring - instead of using real strawberries which is flavoursome and full of natural vitamins and goodness and a little bit more expensive over 50 chemicals are used to produce an artificial strawberry flavour with little to no nutritional goodness.

Since the additives are so confusing when it comes to names, parents should shop at stores that have outlawed troublesome additives such as Aldi or <https://assignbuster.com/food-additives-and-childhood-behaviour/>

maybe to carry around in your purse or wallet an additive card which can be found online, these handy cards have all the additives that have been proven to affect child behaviour clearly printed on the card which parents can be kept in their purse or wallet which they can check to see what they are buying.

Overall it has been proven that additives in foods and drink can be harmful to children, can cause behavioural defects and parents should review what they are purchasing and giving their children to keep them happy and healthy.