



# The Disconnected Kids Nutrition Plan: Proven Strategies to Enhance Learning and Focus for Children with Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, and Other Neurological Disorders

By Dr. Robert Melillo

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**The Disconnected Kids Nutrition Plan: Proven Strategies to Enhance Learning and Focus for Children with Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, and Other Neurological Disorders** By Dr. Robert Melillo

**A scientifically developed program for feeding kids with special needs--based on the popular Brain Balance Program**

Dr. Robert Melillo's Brain Balance program has helped thousands of families across the country, offering a drug-free, scientifically based method for addressing a wide range of conditions, including autism spectrum disorders and ADHD. In this new book, he presents the nutritional side of the Brain Balance Program, featuring guidelines, tips, and kid-friendly recipes based on the latest scientific research on how food affects the brain.

Designed to help busy parents feed picky kids in a beneficial way, the book will show readers how to:

- Recognize the difference between a fussy eater and a problem eater.
- Ease the sensory issues that make for mealtime mayhem.
- Identify food sensitivities using a simple elimination diet.
- Choose supplements that will help ensure adequate daily amounts of the specific vitamins and minerals important to brain health.
- Prepare delicious, healthy meals that will pass the taste test of even the most finicky eaters.
- Understand how the brain plays a primary role in many dietary and nutritional issues including food sensitivities.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

"Whether ADHD, autism, dyslexia or any number of neurobehavioral disorders affecting children, it is clear that what finally manifests represents the conspiracy of multiple events. As such, pursuing a multifaceted therapeutic approach as has been so deftly presented by Dr. Melillo offers up a welcome and efficacious contrast to the myopia engendered in pharmaceutical mono therapy."

**--David Perlmutter, MD, New York Times bestselling author of *Grain Brain: The Surprising Truth About Wheat, Carbs, and Sugar – Your Brain's Silent Killers***

"I have worked closely with Dr. Robert Melillo and the Brain Balance team for many years. I have seen firsthand the transformations in the lives of the children they serve. Brain Balance not only focuses on correcting their own unique neurological challenges, but emphasizes the whole health of each child — from their individual nutritional needs to their need for special daily activities to embracing and enhancing their family life."

**--Zac Brown, Grammy Award-winning musician and founder of Camp Southern Ground**

Praise for the work of Dr. Robert Melillo:

"A visionary new approach...These valuable clinical insights add much to our tool kit."

**--Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence***

"Clinically innovative and academically grounded...brings a refreshing, hopeful, and scientifically responsible approach to the field of childhood neurological disorders."

**--Leslie Philipp Weiser, M.Ph., Ph.D., Harvard Medical School**

"Dr. Melillo's books are a ray of hope. Jam-packed with scientifically grounded information on brain function and its behavioral correlates, they provide satisfying explanations that parents recognize as relevant to their experience. And because his work is further tied to a simple intervention program, it has the power and potential to revolutionize the field."

**--Michele Denize Strachan, MD, Behavioral Pediatrician, Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics Program, University of Minnesota**

"Dr. Robert Melillo is one of those rare individuals who can unravel the seemingly unsolvable mysteries of neurobehavioral development with wisdom, compassion, and vast perspective. His unique, groundbreaking, and research-based approach to improving brain function introduces the process of unlocking each child's potential."

**--Pamela D. Gargy, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist, Professor of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Argosy University Dallas**

*Disconnected Kids* presents an optimistic and practical approach to opening windows of exploration, connection, and learning to all children. A highly recommended exploration for parents, educators, and therapists.

**--Louis Cozolino, author of *Attachment Based Teaching***

"Dr. Melillo, one of the world's leading experts in childhood developmental disorders, has organized the best

scientifically referenced source of risk factors for autism, which all future parents should know about it. His book is a must read."

**--Datis Kharrazian, DC, DHSc, MS, MNeuroSci**

"Dr. Melillo presents a very clear and educational view of how a child's brain grows, from the bottom up.... This is without any doubt an amazing theory that will stimulate a great number of research protocols."

**--Dr. Calixto Machado, MD, PhD, FAAN, President of the Cuban Society of Clinical Neurophysiology**

"Dr. Robert Melillo has unraveled the mysteries of brain organization and translated what we know into simple, practical therapeutic regimens to allow all of our children to reach their unlimited potential. He has produced a message of hope for parents of children, with clear, consistent, and significant results."

**--Prof. Gerry Leisman, Director of The National Institute of Brain & Rehabilitation Science in Nazareth, Israel**

#### About the Author

**Dr. Robert Melillo**, the creator of the Brain Balance Program, is an internationally known chiropractic neurologist, professor, researcher, and expert in neuroscience, neurology , neuropsychology , rehabilitation and childhood neurological disorders.

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### **START-SMART BREAKFASTS**

*All* children need a nutritious breakfast to stimulate the brain into learning mode, so don't sell this meal short. Ideally, it should contain a healthy balance of protein, healthy monounsaturated fats, and complex carbohydrates, potent macronutrients that are crucial for cognition. It's the perfect way to start the day.

#### **GRAIN- FREE GRANOLA**

Makes about 5 cups

2 cups raw, unsalted sunflower seeds  
2 cups raw, unsalted pumpkin seeds  
1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut  
1 cup pecan pieces  
½ cup coconut oil, melted  
½ cup honey  
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
½ teaspoon sea salt

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
2. In a large bowl combine the seeds, coconut, and pecan pieces.
3. In a small bowl combine the melted oil, honey, cinnamon, and salt. Mix well. Pour the liquid ingredients over the dry ingredients, stirring with a wooden spoon to make sure all the dry ingredients are coated.
4. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Divide the mixture between the two baking sheets, spreading it around so the pieces do not stick together, and bake in the preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Cool for 30 minutes and store in an airtight container.

## **SLOW-COOKER BROWN RICE PORRIDGE**

Makes 6 servings

1 cup short- grain brown rice, rinsed

5 cups water

2 large Granny Smith apples or 1 large Gala apple, cored and cubed

¼ cup raisins

¼ cup unsweetened shredded coconut

½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Pinch sea salt

Combine all of the ingredients in a slow cooker set on low, cover, and cook for about 8 hours.

**Variation:** For an even creamier breakfast, stir in a tablespoon of natural nut butter just before serving.

## **ALL SOUPED UP**

Making soup is convenient for busy families— pot can go a long, long way. Plus, it freezes well. And, soup is quite versatile. It can be served as dinner or lunch. Best of all, you can put it in a thermos and send it along as a school lunch. Pair it with a green salad and a piece of fruit and you have a full meal loaded with nutrients.

## **PUREED VEGETABLE SOUP WITH A KICK**

Makes about 10 servings

2 onions, chopped

1 bunch kale, coarsely chopped

3 medium zucchini, coarsely chopped

3 medium carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped

2 cups broccoli florets

2 cups coarsely chopped butternut squash

Two 15-Ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed

1 quart water

One 15-ounce can full-fat coconut milk

8 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped

2 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger

1 tablespoon poultry seasoning

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground turmeric

1 teaspoon cayenne

1 bay leaf

Put all of the ingredients in a large stockpot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the squash is soft, about 20 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and cool slightly. Puree in batches in a blender.

## **CHICKEN- QUINOA SOUP**

Makes 6 servings

NOTE: Omit the beans if you determine that your child has a sensitivity to beans.

1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 pound chicken breasts, cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ - inch pieces  
Sea salt and black pepper to taste  
8 ounces white mushrooms, sliced  
2 stalks celery, sliced thin  
1 cup cooked quinoa  
One 15- ounce can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed  
4 cups unsalted chicken broth  
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

1. In a large pot heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until just cooked through, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the mushrooms and celery and cook until the chicken is golden- brown, about 10 minutes.
3. Stir in the cooked quinoa, beans, broth, and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Lower the heat and simmer until heated through. Stir in the parsley.

## **DINNER DELIGHTFUL**

Mom and Dad are not short- order cooks! This is a mantra for mealtime sanity. The biggest mistake parents make is feeding a food-fussy kid something other than what the rest of the household is eating. On the other hand, it's not fair to make kids eat food that doesn't suit their young palates, either. The happy medium is dinner entrées the entire family can enjoy. Sometimes all it takes is the right sell to get kids to bite . . . and bite again. Our Brain Balance nutritionists, families, and friends have become pros at concocting meals that make family dinners delightful.

## **A BETTER MAC AND CHEESE**

Makes 2 to 3 servings

2 cups gluten-free and casein-free macaroni noodles, such as Tinkyada  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 cups Daiya Cheese Cheddar Shreds  
4 tablespoons Earth Balance buttery spread  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup rice or coconut milk, such as So Delicious  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon black pepper  
1 teaspoon sea salt

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a Dutch oven or other oven-safe pot, cook the noodles for 16 minutes at a rapid boil. Drain in cold water.

3. In the same pan you used to cook the noodles, add the cheese, butter spread, milk, pepper, and salt and cook over low heat until the cheese begins to melt. Add the noodles back to the pan until the desired thickness is achieved.

4. Bake until golden-brown.

## **TURKEY POTPIE**

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Gluten-free pizza dough for a double-crust pie

½ cup Earth Balance spread

½ cup Donna's GF All-purpose Flour or packaged gluten-free flour

1 teaspoon sea salt Dash black pepper

¼ cup plus ½ cup rice milk, divided

2 cups low-sodium chicken broth

3 cups cooked cubed turkey

1 cup chopped spinach

3 potatoes, cooked, peeled, and cubed

One 16-ounce package frozen mixed vegetables

½ teaspoon dried thyme

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.

2. Divide the pizza dough in half. Roll out half of the dough on a lightly floured surface into a 14-inch circle. Gently fit into a 2-quart deep-dish round casserole dish. Trim the pastry to 1 inch from edge of the dish. Set aside. Roll out the remaining dough on a lightly floured surface into a second 14-inch circle. Set aside.

3. In medium saucepan melt the Earth Balance spread. Add the flour, salt, and pepper and stir until combined. Slowly add ¼ cup of the rice milk and the chicken broth and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thick and smooth. Remove from the heat and pour into a large bowl. Add the ½ cup of rice milk and mix well. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Spoon into the pie crust.

4. Cover the casserole dish with the remaining dough. Fold a 1-inch strip around the top edges of the pastry. Crimp to seal. Cut four slits in the top to vent. Brush the pastry with water. Bake for 60 to 70 minutes, or until golden-brown. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Mary Partee:**

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