

HEALTHY CHILDREN - HEALTHY PLANET

A SEVEN-SESSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, FAITH CENTER OR HOME

PURPOSE

- To understand how the pervasive effects of advertising, media, and our consumer culture can influence a child's view of the world.
- To discover ways to create meaningful family times and healthful environments for children.
- To explore ways to develop a child's connection to nature, and to foster creativity.

"The course has been very affirming of our thoughts and values in raising our children. It gave us insight into how others use their values and beliefs to actualize family growth and traditions. Thanks for the wonderful course book." -

Cami Curran, Columbus, OH



Simply Living — Creating a compassionate and sustainable world through personal, community and cultural transformation.

SESSION THEMES

1. **Cultural Pressures:** A powerful fusion of pop culture and peer influence creates a social smog that has a strong influence on today's children, says author and doctor Ron Taffel. How should adults respond to these pressures?
2. **Family Rituals and Celebrations:** Meaningful family time can provide an antidote to cultural pressures of consumption. Explore how ritual can enrich a child's family experience and examine alternatives to elaborate celebrations and gifts.
3. **Advertising:** The average child sees an estimated 20,000 commercials every year. What are the effects on our children, and what steps can adults take to lessen the impact?
4. **Food and Health:** Many schools serve high-fat lunches, soda, and candy is readily available on school grounds. What is the link between diet and learning? How can adults encourage children to include healthy foods in their meals?
5. **Time and Creativity:** Today's children may have schedules that rival the busiest adults. How can adults help children find balance between activities and unstructured time, which is often the source of creativity?
6. **Technology and the Media:** Opinions differ on whether computers hinder or help the natural process of child development. Watching TV can displace more valuable experiences. What steps can adults take to create a healthy media environment at home?
7. **Exploring Nature:** Children have an affinity for the natural world and as Rachel Carson says, "an inborn sense of wonder." As children spend more time indoors, they connect less to the wild places in their neighborhood. How can we give children the opportunity to connect with the natural world?

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