



## ***Would your child choose a banana over junk food ?***

BY LISA LEAKE  
[WWW.100DAYSOFREALFOOD.COM](http://WWW.100DAYSOFREALFOOD.COM)

A little over a month into our family's "100 Days of Real Food" pledge my 5-year-old daughter did something that blew me away.

We had been going back and forth over whether we should be voluntarily restricting our kids from all things highly processed. How could I not second-guess that decision after witnessing my daughter's tantrum on day 9 over a donut or after constantly questioning myself whenever I packed up separate "special" non-processed meals for my daughters to bring to every single birthday party and day of camp so far?

Voluntarily imposing extremely strict rules on what you can and can't eat is no way to live forever, but doing it for a 100-day long experiment was turning out to be quite an eye-opening experience for us. And on day 33 of not eating white flour, sugar, deep-fried foods or anything out of a package with more than 5 ingredients my daughter did something that proved these temporary "restrictions" were actually teaching her some incredibly valuable lessons.

Here's what happened next in an excerpt from [100daysofrealfood.com](http://100daysofrealfood.com):  
"The other day we were waiting in line at a concession stand to get some water. This kind of place is my worst nightmare right now with the display cases full of candy bars and chips as well as the hot items like chicken nuggets, fries and hot dogs, but my daughter was thirsty. I was hoping for a pleasant and quick escape with our free cup of water, when I heard the dreaded "I'm hungry for a snack." Wow, I wonder where she got that idea? So of course I said, "You know we can't have any of this right now, but I promise I will give you something as soon as we get home." A few moments later my 5-year-old proudly spotted a basket of bananas on the counter that I had not even noticed. How could I have ever thought it was bad to involve my children in this little project of ours when it has taught my daughter to find - and want - the one and only healthy whole food out of a sea of junk? One thing I have learned is that after a few bumps in the road kids can be unbelievably adaptable."

Our daughter was not the only one who had to learn to adapt during our strict real food pledge. I cannot stress enough how typical our family used to be a mere four months earlier. Not long before taking our pledge I never once read the ingredient labels on our food, never bought anything that was organic, and barely said "no" when our daughters wanted some sort of highly processed treat. All four of us were having to relearn how to live without highly processed junk food and refined ingredients, among other things.



~ { CONTINUED } ~





## ***Would your child choose a banana over junk food ?***

~ { CONTINUED } ~

We were also trying to stock our fridge with lots of locally grown in-season produce as well as locally raised meat products. In fact our real food pledge rules required that our meat was local, but at the same time we were trying to eat a lot less of it. So I found myself trying to push the idea of dinner being "a meat and two side items" out of my head, and one night after getting home late with no plan for dinner this new way of thinking led to a rather unusual platter of snacks.

This dinner, which I like to call a "hodgepodge" meal, consisted of whatever I could find in the fridge. We ended up with peanut butter and raisins on celery sticks, toasted homemade whole-wheat tortillas with hummus, caprese salad, green beans with almonds, leftover homemade gazpacho soup and baked potatoes.

I had no idea how my family would respond to this so-called dinner, but as it turned out my young daughters liked having a "family style" meal where they could pick and choose what they wanted. And while it didn't look like a ton of food at first, a little of this and a little of that surprisingly filled us up quickly.

So with a month of our real food pledge behind us not only did I have to relearn how to shop for food, where to shop for food and what to cook - I now had to relearn what could constitute a meal as well. Our 100 Days of Real Food pledge was turning out to be full of one surprise after another.

To learn more about the 100 Days of Real Food pledge, go to [www.100DaysofRealFood.com](http://www.100DaysofRealFood.com).

***Read more:*** <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/05/16/2218986/would-your-child-choose-a-banana.html#ixzz1MXesdA6f>



~ The End . . ~

