

## Events: BSF Teleconferences

### Food Allergies & Schoolchildren By Cheryl Sternman Rule

Parents of food allergic children face special challenges when their kids go off to school. They must not only teach their children what is and isn't safe to eat, but also make a concerted effort to share this information with a broad spectrum of school officials.

The number of children suffering from food allergies continues to climb steadily; recent estimates top 2 million. (More than 12 million Americans suffer from food allergies.) As these numbers swell, parents are finding more resources to help them manage their children's allergies while on school grounds.

The nonprofit Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) lies at the center of this resource hub. According to FAAN, eight foods are responsible for 90 percent of all allergic reactions. These foods include peanuts, tree nuts, soy, dairy, wheat, fish, shellfish, and eggs. Any food, however, can cause an allergic reaction, and the severity can be as mild as a few hives or as serious as full-blown anaphylaxis or even death.

Fortunately, FAAN has developed the School Food Allergy Program (SFAP) to show how parents, students, and members of the school community can work in concert to provide a safe, healthy environment for food allergic children. This program has already been distributed to more than 20,000 schools across the country.

FAAN encourages parents to work with school officials to design an individualized plan of action for their child. Such action plans encourage discussion around materials used for classroom lessons, food served for birthday celebrations and on field trips, and parental involvement in making the school cafeteria a safe place for their child to eat.

FAAN says food service staff must be especially vigilant about hidden ingredients, cross-contact between foods, and allergens that may be left on cafeteria tables both before and after meals are served. Parents should inform cafeteria staff of foods to avoid and ensure that staff is knowledgeable about reading labels; designating a safe, allergy-free zone for meal preparation; cleaning procedures which effectively remove allergens from eating surfaces; and, how to identify and treat allergic reactions if they occur.

Together, parents and schools can work together create a successful and safe-food environment in the classroom, in the cafeteria and beyond.

For more information, visit FAAN at [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org).

**Cheryl Sternman Rule** is a freelance food and nutrition writer in San Jose, Calif. Her most recent article about food allergies appeared in *EatingWell* magazine ([www.eatingwell.com](http://www.eatingwell.com)), where she is a contributing editor.

## Community Spotlight: Alexandria, VA



## ADHD

Today, in the United States, one in six children suffers from a disability that affects their behavior, memory, or ability to learn. Diagnoses of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are increasing at an alarming rate. Why? What has changed?

Nutrition plays a vital role in helping young minds reach their full potential.

To read more about how diet affects ADHD, as well as download other resources, exclusively available for BSF members, go to our [website](#)

## The movie about the movement



## BSF Picks

### Recent Books

[Feeding the Whole Family: Cooking with Whole Foods](#) by Cynthia Lair with foreword by Peggy O'Mara (Paperback 2008 Updated Edition)

[Brain Food Recipes for Success in School, Sports, and Life](#) by Vicki Guercia Caruana and Kelly Guercia Hammer

[Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder](#) by Richard Louv

### Video clips:

[What Can I do About Fluoride in my Water?](#)