

Parents risk jail for raising children as vegans

19th May, 2019



Creative Commons 2.0
via Stephanie on flickr.com

Doctors in Belgium have stated that raising children on a vegan diet is "unethical" and should be a criminal offence. Vegans refrain from consuming any animal products, including meat, eggs, dairy products and other animal-derived

substances. The Royal Academy of Medicine of Belgium has declared that veganism is "unsuitable for unborn children, children, teenagers, and pregnant and lactating women". Professor Georges Casimir said vegan parenting qualifies as "non-assistance to a person in danger," which is a criminal offense that carries a prison sentence of up to two years. He said children need "higher requirements for protein and essential fatty acids" and that these nutrients must be from animal products.

The animal rights group PETA reacted angrily to the ruling of the Belgian medical association. It rejected the ruling and called it "ignorant codswallop". PETA spokeswoman Dawn Carr said: "Nutritionists confirm that while a meat- and dairy-based diet is what strikes people down in adulthood (as it can lead to hardened arteries that cause stroke, brain aneurysms, and heart attacks) a well-planned vegan diet is perfect for babies and children." She added: "Kids, including my own, thrive on a balanced vegan diet, but as with any dietary regime, it's the parents' responsibility to ensure their child is getting all the necessary nutrients." Around three per cent of Belgian children live in vegan families.

Sources:
plantbasednews.org / newshub.co.nz / telegraph.co.uk

Writing

Veganism is the healthiest kind of diet. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

doctors / vegan / diet / dairy / animal products / teenagers / parenting / protein / animal rights / dairy / adulthood / stroke / brain / heart attacks / regime / nutrients

True / False

- a) Belgian doctors said raising children as vegans should be a crime. T / F
- b) Vegans do not eat meat or fish but milk is OK. T / F
- c) The doctors say veganism is unsuitable for unborn children. T / F
- d) The doctors say children need fatty acids from animal products. T / F
- e) An animal rights group said the doctors' ruling was ignorant. T / F
- f) A spokeswoman said a dairy-based diet helps prevent strokes. T / F
- g) A vegan said her children were not thriving on a vegan diet. T / F
- h) Over 5% of Belgian children live in vegan families. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. stated | a. make certain |
| 2. ruling | b. inappropriate |
| 3. unsuitable | c. responded |
| 4. offence | d. crucial |
| 5. essential | e. announced |
| 6. reacted | f. flourish |
| 7. ignorant | g. ideal |
| 8. perfect | h. crime |
| 9. thrive | i. uneducated |
| 10. ensure | j. judgment |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of a vegan diet?
- b) Should governments be making diets a criminal offence?
- c) How healthy is your diet?
- d) What should children eat?
- e) Do we need to eat meat and other animal products?
- f) What might the doctors think of cultures who eat no animal products?
- g) Is a child really "in danger" if it eats no animal products?
- h) Where can people get proteins from besides animal products?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Vegans refrain from consuming | a. "ignorant codswallop" |
| 2. dairy | b. a prison sentence |
| 3. pregnant and | c. necessary nutrients |
| 4. a criminal offence that carries | d. angrily |
| 5. protein and essential fatty | e. products |
| 6. The animal rights group PETA reacted | f. for babies |
| 7. It rejected the ruling and called it | g. lactating women |
| 8. hardened arteries that | h. any animal products |
| 9. a well-planned vegan diet is perfect | i. cause stroke |
| 10. ensure their child is getting all the | j. acids |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What are the health benefits of veganism?
- Could veganism help protect the planet?
- Do you agree with PETA that the ruling is "codswallop"?
- Do vegans have healthier hearts?
- How well-balanced is the food people eat in your country?
- Are there many vegans in your country?
- What questions would you like to ask the doctors?

Spelling

- a vegan diet is lnetiucah
- animal-derived stcusebnsa
- a aiirclnm offense
- children need higher eeruesqtnrim
- protein and setiasnel fatty acids
- rnitentus must be from animal products
- the Belgian medical coanoissita
- called it "nrntoagi codswallop"
- it can lead to hardened taereisr
- treihv on a balanced vegan diet
- any dietary mgieer
- seurn their child is getting all the necessary...

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. j	3. b	4. h	5. d
6. c	7. i	8. g	9. f	10. a

Role Play

Role A – Weight Control

You think weight control is the biggest advantage of being a vegan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the least advantageous of these (and why): nutrition, no animals dying or environmental benefits.

Role B – Nutrition

You think nutrition is the biggest advantage of being a vegan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the least advantageous of these (and why): weight control, no animals dying or environmental benefits.

Role C – No Animals Die

You think no animals dying is the biggest advantage of being a vegan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the least advantageous of these (and why): nutrition, weight control or environmental benefits.

Role D – Better For The Environment

You think environmental benefits is the biggest advantage of being a vegan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their reasons. Also, tell the others which is the least advantageous of these (and why): nutrition, no animals dying or weight control.

Speaking – Veganism

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest advantages of being a vegan at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| • better for the planet | • weight control |
| • no animals die | • nutrition |
| • less food poisoning | • lower blood sugar |
| • reduction of body odor | • healthier heart |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.