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Food warning labels

By the end of 2009, most artificially coloured foods in Europe will have to carry the warning: "may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children."

"It is the first ever warning label regarding the effects of foods on children's behaviour," says Fed Up author Sue Dengate, "but it won't be happening in Australia."

Dengate, who founded the Food Intolerance Network of over 6,500 families at www.fedup.com.au, will be speaking in 16 locations in south-eastern Australia in August and September 2009.

"Australian food is changing in response to consumer demands - for example, Smarties have announced a switch from artificial to natural colours - but that's just the tip of the iceberg. Parents need to know which ingredients can affect their children", says Dengate.

"Sugar gets the blame but it has been shown not to cause children's bad behaviour.

"Research shows that parents don't know which foods contain additives and underestimate how many additives their children eat.

"As well, parents are usually surprised to find that certain fruit and vegetables - such as grapes, tomatoes and broccoli - can cause a range of problems in some children.

"If your child is oppositional, demanding, easily annoyed, defiant, argumentative, can't concentrate on reading or homework, is easily distracted, restless, makes silly noises or has difficulty settling down to sleep, think food," says Dengate.

Other conditions that can be associated with food include asthma, bedwetting, sneaky poos, constipation, headaches, stomach aches and itchy rashes.

Further information is available at www.fedup.com.au under Talks

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