

ship and many families moved away from the Coast Reservation area. Although termination did not address the Tribe's treaty-reserved hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights, after termination occurred in 1954 the state of Oregon began enforcing its fish and wildlife laws against Siletz Tribal members.

Without resources to litigate the continued existence of their treaty rights, the small group of Siletz Tribal members remaining after termination focused on getting the Siletz Tribe's status as a federally recognized Indian Tribe restored. The Siletz Tribe was the second one in the nation to be restored to federally recognized status in 1977.

Supporting Tribal elders

Tribal elders suffered the most devastating impacts from termination, separated from their community and culture, and displaced to other areas of Oregon as Tribal lands were sold off. The disruption has caused increased levels of medical,

social and emotional trauma for elders as a result of termination.

We intend to allocate funds from the Salem casino project to fund the Tribal Elders Program.

Effective law enforcement

We do not currently have a law enforcement department, meaning the Tribe must contract with nearby non-Indian governments to provide limited law enforcement coverage for Tribal lands. With its current level of funding, we are unable to establish and maintain an effective law enforcement department to meet the needs of our communities.

The proposed Salem casino will allow the Siletz Tribe to establish and maintain a full-service Tribal law enforcement agency.

Managing natural resources

Siletz hunting and fishing rights became an issue during restoration as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

(ODFW) was adamantly opposed to Siletz Restoration unless the Tribe agreed to extinguishment of all of its hunting and fishing rights. This imposed additional trauma on the Tribe and its members while the Tribe was moving forward to mitigate the trauma of termination.

With the choice of establishing a reservation or keeping their hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights, the Siletz Tribe chose to move forward with establishing their reservation and was forced to agree to terms that imposed severe limitations on the Tribe's exercise of its hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights.

In the last two years state of Oregon officials, including Gov. Kate Brown and the current director of ODFW, Curt Melcher, have acknowledged the state's position during the late 1970s to limit the Tribe's treaty hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights was unconscionable. Jointly, the two parties have been working with the Tribe to rectify the harmful effects of termination that continue to adversely affect the Tribe and its members.

With the current negotiations in process with Gov. Brown and the ODFW director, the agreement will allow the Siletz Tribe to exercise its treaty-reserved hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights for the first time since 1954. The agreement was set to be finalized by the end of 2022 and once it is in place, we will need to establish a much larger Natural Resources Department with staff to regulate and manage the increased fish and wildlife harvest and related natural resources activities.

Additional support

Other service areas that casino project funds will go toward for Tribal members include education, social services, health care, substance abuse intervention and prevention, employment and training, Tribal language and cultural preservation, housing, natural resources planning and management, environmental protection, public safety, emergency preparedness, public utilities and transportation planning and infrastructure.

For more information about the Siletz Tribal Arts and Heritage Society, visit siletzartsheritagesociety.org.

Healthy brains for growing children require balanced choices in what we consume

By Nancy Ludwig, MS, RDN, LD, Head Start Consulting Nutritionist

Brain development is an important part of health and function for growing children, both in the womb and after birth. In my role as consultant nutritionist to Siletz Tribal Head Start, I offer information for families. Today's topic addresses reasons and ways to support brain health for common conditions that are poorly understood.

There is a great deal of science looking into brain development. At this point, it is a bit early to have clear recommendations. As always, however, we cannot wait; we need to make our best choices now for the health of ourselves and our children. Nurture is my focus for this article, specifically on emotional and food-based nourishment.

The brain functions with synapses and neurons that send important brain signals. Toddlers' brains have twice as many synapses and neurons as adults.

One of the ways a brain stays healthy is the process of pruning. Synaptic pruning is a natural process that occurs in the brain between early childhood and adulthood. During synaptic pruning, the brain eliminates extra synapses. Synapses are brain structures that allow neurons to transmit an electrical or chemical signal to another neuron.

Synaptic pruning is thought to be the brain's way of removing connections in the brain that are no longer needed. Researchers have recently learned that the brain is more "plastic" and moldable than previously thought. Synaptic pruning is our body's way of maintaining more efficient brain function as we get older and learn new complex information.

As more is learned about synaptic pruning, many researchers are wondering if there is a link between synaptic pruning and the onset of certain disorders, such as

autism or schizophrenia. Data shows there is less pruning in autism and possibly too much in schizophrenia. It is postulated that possibly the sense of overwhelm, common in autism, may be associated with less synaptic pruning.

Neuro-typical and neuro-diverse are terms being used more frequently. By contrast, neuro-typical describes expected, or typical, behaviors and neuro-diverse describes a wider range of behaviors, which could be considered atypical. The knowledge of where research is heading can help guide us to make choices now, as well as allow us the acceptance of what is, so we don't beat up on ourselves as parents or be too hard on our children, who may not be able to be as our culture may seem to expect.

Not all children and adults develop in the same ways. When conditions like autism and schizophrenia are noticed, it is very important to bring patience and acceptance to our role as parents, care providers and the wider community. There is often an unseen, deeper root cause that may become worse if not supported emotionally.

Our brains are composed of nearly 60% fat. The brain of a baby is about 1/3 of its adult weight at birth (approximately 1 pound at birth and 3 pounds as adult). At 6 years, children's brains are nearly 90% the weight of an adult brain.

Healthy fats are important for healthy brain development and function. Natural, fresh, unprocessed and organic are good rules of thumb for healthy fats, including avocados, fatty fish (uncontaminated), eggs and nuts.

When babies are in utero, the microbiome is being established. By age 3, a child's microbiome foundation is established. Early assaults to the child's microbiome, such as excessive antibiotics, may lead to adult illness. Mothers with Group B Strep are often given antibiotics during the birth process to protect the baby.

Antibiotics kill our "buddies" (those friendly microbes in our guts), so it is important to take them only when it is really important and not any more frequently than necessary. There is a time and a place for antibiotics.

Each time our buddies are knocked down or killed, recovery and restoration are needed. If we see that previous antibiotic use is possibly linked with our present conditions, we may feel bad and fear that we harmed ourselves or our children. This is not useful! We can be "health warriors" to make the next best choice to nourish our buddies to find balance.

Balance is the state where none of the organisms dominate. We often experience problems or sickness when our microbiome or terrain is not in balance. Balancing the microbiome is also known as strengthening our terrain or taking care of our buddies. To re-establish balance, we can manage our foods and supplements to feed the buddies vs. harming them.

Restoring our microbiome (buddies) is critical because the internal community of living microorganisms supports healthy digestion and immune system response, among other useful functions, such as brain development and function. It is made up of trillions of cells that continually report to the brain on the state of the body. There is major communication going on in the body orchestrated by our microbiome.

Our buddies are nourished by a variety of foods, including fiber and fermented or cultured foods. Adherence to an ancestral, organic diet will do much to restore a damaged microbiome.

Probiotic supplementation has proven to be extremely effective in treating depression through restoration of beneficial bacteria in the gut. One or two teaspoons per day of fermented foods should be added to your list of powerful safeguards against the ravages of the modern age.

We now see that brain development and function is influenced by the gut microbiome. In turn, mental health and function follow this sequence.

Communication between our gut and brain goes both ways (as well as total body communication). This, along with our genetics, sets the stage to determine the levels of neurotransmitters that are produced by our bodies. Neurotransmitters include serotonin, dopamine, acetylcholine, GABA and norepinephrine. Each of these plays a role in our mood and function.

Some of the childhood conditions and related symptoms of ADHD, autism and anxiety may be related to brain development, as influenced by the microbiome and neurotransmitter production and balance. These conditions cannot be classified as brain conditions only as they are intricately linked with digestive or gut conditions (whether symptomatic or not).

When the organisms in the microbiome send distress signals, a host of health effects can occur, from depression and other psychiatric complaints to brain disease, stroke and seizures. Toxins and antibiotics can undermine the beneficial bacteria that are essential to maintaining this delicate internal balance. The resulting inflammation often presents as symptoms of mental illness.

It may be easy to feel alarmed and to think that it is too late to change things. I believe, however, that our choices always matter and we can choose the next best thing to seek health and balance. Our openness to learning can guide us before the science is clear, just as our ancestors did.

Siletz Tribal Head Start offers nutritional support at no cost to Head Start families. This usually occurs over the telephone. If you have nutrition concerns about your Head Start child or want to discuss family nutrition concerns, please contact your teacher or the director and ask to speak to the nutritionist.