

# Your kids will still love you if you don't buy candy

By Shirlee Iden  
staff writer

You call it candy; she calls it Continuously Advertised Nutritionally Deficient Yummies (CANDY).

She's Vicki Lansky, author, publisher, parenting expert and wife and mother.

In Lansky's book "Taming of the C.A.N.D.Y. Monster" she contends nutrition is a matter of parenting.

"I know what my kids would do with the grocery money if they did the shopping, and where they would like to eat if I didn't plan on cooking — and it's not at Grandma's!"

"If you don't buy candy, your kids will still love you," she said in a recent Southfield interview.

Lansky's book, published first four years ago, was perched on the New York Times best-seller list for weeks before coming out as a Bantam paperback last month.

A previous publication, "Feed Me, I'm Yours," was focused on helping parents get infants off to a good nutritional head start.

"C.A.N.D.Y. MONSTER" is a guide to better eating for kids, and what's more, it's kid-tested. Lansky offers more than 200 recipes, all light on sugar, salt and "junk food."

The book has tips on milk allergies, snack ideas, how to eat out with children. Lansky and her husband, Bruce, originally put the book out themselves.

Born in Louisville, Ky., Lansky grew up in New York City and was an art history major, earning a degree from the Connecticut College for Women.

"Later, my husband got a marketing-advertising job with Pillsbury, but when we moved to Minneapolis, the job disappeared," she said. Today they live in Deephaven, Minn., in a house beside a lake.

The couple, parents of Douglas, 12, and Dana, 9, started Meadowbrook

Publications and published her two child nutrition books and now put out a bimonthly newsletter, "Practical Parenting."

"It has 6,000 subscribers and no advertising," she said. "I don't write the newsletter, but I do write a column for it. The newsletter is meant to find what works for other parents."

"We ask questions in each edition, and readers mail back their replies. We seem to get the right mix of answers."

ONE EDITION included both questions on "security blankets" and on the proper amount for allowances and whether they should be given for chores or without strings.

"The newsletter is a labor of love," Lansky said. "We have a woman editor who works with me."

Stressing that she doesn't claim to be a nutritional expert, Lansky said, however, I never cook with salt and my book is really middle of the road."

"You can shop in a regular grocery store to buy ingredients, but do creative things like using half-and-half whole wheat flour and making M&M cookies with just three candies on top," she said.

Lansky has been featured in national publications and on TV. When she does media appearances as she did in Southfield she measures out a very ordinary child's lunch, indicating amounts of sugar.

"I can do a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, two Twinkies or Snowballs, orange pop and perhaps candy and show the audience there's more than half a cup of sugar there," she said.

Nutrition is seldom taught in depth in medical schools, Lansky pointed out. "Doctors are trained to treat illness, not prevent it."

"This puts the responsibility right back on us as parents. And what is more important for parents to do than to nurture and nourish our children?"

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