



Feeding 5 Million

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Story by Stephanie Weeks

There is a Food Revolution taking place around the globe. From Sydney to Vancouver, London to Hong Kong people are demanding to know the truth about the foods they are consuming. Consumers are looking to make better choices and learn how to cultivate skills around food that will improve their overall well-being. Obesity and diet-related diseases are reaching epidemic proportions worldwide. Many of the issues we face are connected to the effects of malnutrition. Different regions of the world are affected in varying degrees by malnutrition. Some are malnourished due to a lack of food while some are malnourished due to eating a diet high in processed food-like substances. America is the most over fed and under nourished country in the world. We get plenty of calories daily, but the foods that are being consumed lack the nutrition that our bodies need to function optimally. Children in third world countries are malnourished due to a lack of access to nutrient dense foods. 65% of Guatemalan children born in their native country have stunted growth due to malnutrition. In each case people need education on food, how to cultivate it in their local communities, how to prepare it and how it provides the building blocks our bodies need to thrive.

For the last 5 years my husband and I have traveled to over 80 countries bringing health, hope and nutrition to tens of thousands of orphans around the world. Our goal is to wipe out global malnutrition which kills a child every 6 seconds. The way we are working to annihilate this epidemic is through focusing on finding access to quality food sources, teaching children how to grow and prepare their food and having them feel the benefits of nutrient dense food. With all the food programs out there working to make an impact on this epidemic, now is the time to come together and focus on cultivating food preparation skills for the next generation. When food groups provide ready meals enriched with synthetic vitamins and minerals, essentially, band-aids are being placed on the problem. Bellies are being filled; however, it is not the solution. When we show communities how to sustain a local garden, teach them cooking skills to preserve the nutritional value and give them the skills needed to continue on a path of health and well-being after we leave, that is when real change happens.

One orphanage we support in Romania which used to have several children each winter die, decided to implement our wellness strategy. Not a single death has taken place since implementing whole foods into the children's diets. It's amazing! The orphanages in Mexico that are being support are having great success. The children are becoming better students, there are less behavioral issues and happiness has increased. The biggest impact we can make on this world is showing people the truth about food and its impact on every aspect of our lives. We believe the greatest legacy a person can leave in this world is to positively impact the lives of others. When we go into an orphanage, we first access the needs of the children, what resources do they have available to them and what skills need to be cultivated.



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Throughout the educational process we show the children where food comes from. Everyone can grow a tomato plant or herbs in a windowsill to begin and then graduate into a thriving community garden. Once we have a system in place that provides the community with food, we show the caretakers and children how to prepare the food to preserve the nutritional value in the food and make sure nothing goes to waste. All the scraps that may be left over are used as compost and put back into the garden in a perpetual cycle. We have been blessed to witness the dramatic changes that occur when our bodies get the nutrition it needs. These children take pride in helping in the kitchen knowing that what they create in this environment is changing the trajectory of their lives and that is an amazing gift to give.

If we want to make a change in the world we must first begin with ourselves. The first step is to join the Food Revolution and be the first to get all the updates that are coming for Food Revolution Day, May 15, 2015. Next, plan your meals for the week and make cooking at home as a family a priority. When children cook with you they are more likely to eat the meal in front of them which may include new items they have never tried before. In taking the time to teach them cooking skills, you are setting them up for success, to choose nourishing foods as adults and to pay it forward in helping others acquire good eating habits. We are excited to be on this journey with you. It is time for our Food Revolution.

Stephanie Weeks is a wellness consultant and social entrepreneur. She has traveled the globe extensively visiting 80+ countries and counting. When she is not visiting orphanages around the world bringing life changing nutrition to children, she is at home cooking meals for friends and family to enjoy. She believes living well is a lifestyle. Stephanie writes a weekly blog at OurWellnessRevolution.com



The Jamie Oliver Food Foundation (USA) is a California based 501c3 non-profit organization.



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