



 ahimsa<sup>®</sup>

## **Hello there!** **I'm Dr. Manasa Mantravadi.**

I started Ahimsa for one simple reason: I saw an opportunity to advocate for children's health—on a national scale.

When I learned that the majority of kids' dishware on the market was likely to pose health risks, and that steel was the only practical, science-backed choice, I knew it was time to do something. And quickly.

Tapping back into my childhood in India and my memories of happily eating from stainless steel, I went to work crafting a modern set of dishes that were eye-catching and playful, modularly designed for smart portioning, and lovable and enduring for a lifetime. That's how this pediatrician became an entrepreneur.

And how this aha moment became Ahimsa! It's my love letter to children (including my three little ones), to families everywhere, and to the planet we all call home.



# Medicine meets motherhood

Why a board-certified pediatrician and mom of 3 started a movement



**1981**

Dr. Manasa Mantravadi was born in India, where stainless steel dishes had been used for generations.



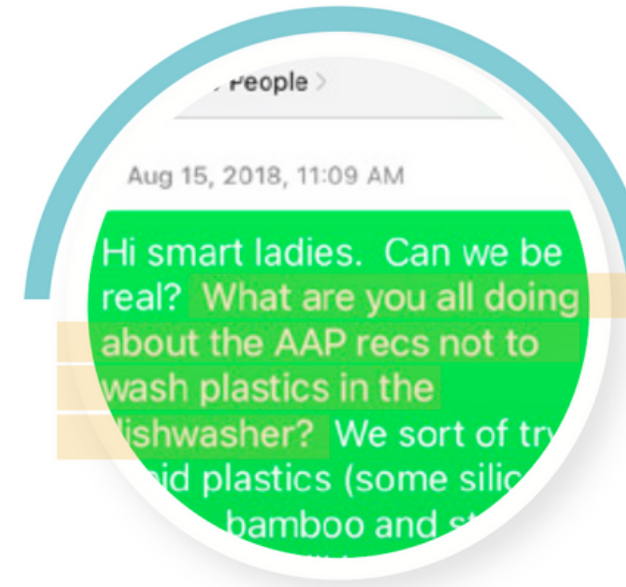
**1983**

Mantravadi moved to the U.S., where her mom continued to use stainless steel dishes.



**2018**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) said that chemicals in plastic interfere with children's hormones, growth and development.



Mantravadi and pediatrician-mom friends look for stainless steel dishes.



Mantravadi launched Ahimsa—more than dishes—a movement to get plastic off the table.

# Plastic is a global threat to human health



**2018**

Chemicals in plastic harm children's hormones, growth and development.

Trasande, Leonardo. 2018, August 1. *Food Additives and Child Health*. <https://publications.aap.org>



**2020**

Plastics contain and leach hazardous chemicals, including endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that threaten human health.

Endocrine Society. 2020, Dec 15. *Plastics pose threat to human health*. [www.endocrine.org](http://www.endocrine.org)



**2022**

The impacts of plastic production and pollution on the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature loss and pollution are a catastrophe in the making.

United Nations. 2022, March 2. *Nations sign up to end global scourge of plastic pollution*. [www.news.un.org](http://www.news.un.org)

## Change is coming

In March, 2022

# 175

**countries agreed** to a first-of-its-kind global treaty to restrict plastic waste

The executive director of the U.N. Environment Program called it "the most significant environmental multilateral deal" since the Paris Agreement.

# The problem.

We all know that plastic is bad for the planet.  
But did you know that plastic is also bad for your child's health?

## WHO SHARED THE PROBLEM?

In 2018, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published a report that warned parents about the harmful chemicals in plastic that interfere with children's

## HORMONES, GROWTH & BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

### HOW? FIRST, LET'S BREAK DOWN HORMONES

The endocrine system is a series of glands throughout the body that produce hormones.

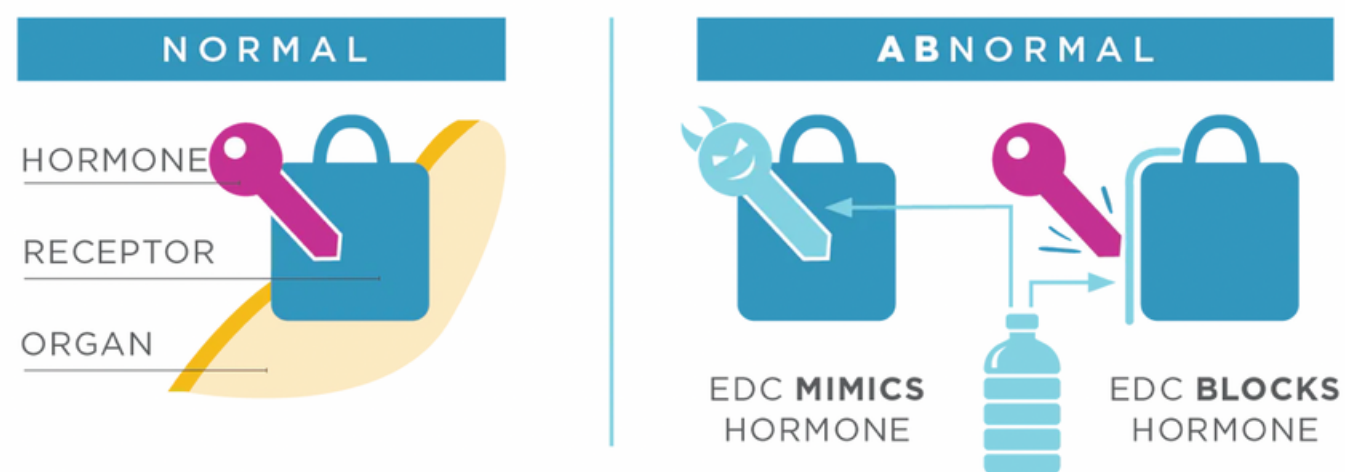
Hormones are natural chemicals that communicate with various organs to regulate overall health and well-being.

Hormones are essential for normal development of the brain and the body.

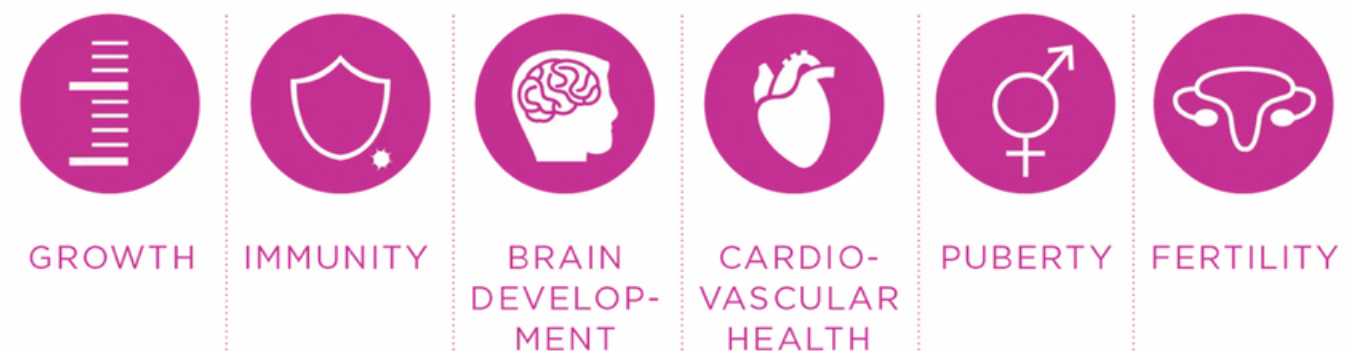


## WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH PLASTIC?

The chemicals found in plastic, called **Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)**, interfere with the endocrine system because they mimic or block natural hormones and their actions in the body.



This can cause **abnormal** signals that affect your child's:



## For better student health

Stainless steel is the **ONLY** non-breakable dishware material recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).



## Plastic harms kids' health

Research shows that chemicals in plastic affect children's health, including:



brain development



growth



immunity



puberty



fertility



cardiovascular health

That's why in 2018, the AAP released a statement recommending glass or stainless steel to serve and store food.



## To save schools money

Case studies show that schools and businesses break even within the first few years.

## Plastic tray:



\$3.50 – \$8.91\* / tray

average time to re-order: 1-3 years due to etching, scratching, wear-and-tear, breakage ends up in landfill

*\*based on current numbers from industry-leading manufacturers*

## Steel tray:



\$7.75 – \$8.85 / tray \*\*

average time to re-order: >10 years

minimal replacement needs; when time, it can be recycled!

*\*\*pricing based on order quantity*

## To educate and to advocate



We are turning the cafeteria into the classroom to provide students with the tools to initiate behavioral change at school—and at home.



We are partnering with The Smurfs to develop an engaging educational program filled with fun facts, creative ideas, advocacy initiatives and ways to celebrate a job well done.

Our program helps students and staff understand the importance of reusables vs single-use waste—as aligned with many cities' Climate Action Plans.

## To help our planet

The cafeteria is the **greatest source** of a school's carbon emissions.

Plus, school cafeterias are one of the US's highest contributors to plastic waste.

By one measure, a single middle school can create more than 30,000 pounds of waste through its lunchroom annually—multiply that by nearly 100,000 public schools in the nation... that's **3 billion pounds of waste!**

## Change *is* coming

In March, 2022, 175 countries agreed to a first-of-its-kind **global treaty to restrict plastic waste**. The executive director of the U.N. Environment Program called it “the most significant environmental multilateral deal” since the Paris Agreement.

## Change to stainless steel

Steel is the most recycled material on the planet, and it can be recycled repeatedly without any loss of quality, strength or composition.

Ahimsa products are made from 100% recycled steel. Plus, our process does **NOT** produce toxic run-off into the environment.

Our products will **NOT** transfer harmful chemicals into food, and they are free of BPA (and all bisphenols), PVC, phthalates, melamine and lead.





# Environmental Health Overview

Children are vulnerable to environmental hazards — and more vulnerable than adults — for a number of reasons:

- Children breathe more air, consume more food and drink more water than adults do, in proportion to their weight.
- The immune, central nervous, digestive and reproductive systems of a child are still developing. During certain critical windows of time, exposure to environmental toxicants can impact a child's development and lead to irreversible damage.
- Children behave differently from adults and have different patterns of exposure to environmental hazards. For example, hand-to-mouth and other oral exploratory behaviors that occur during normal child development may introduce exposures to lead, arsenic and other toxicants. Children also spend more time on the floor, closer to the ground, and outdoors, creating more and different exposures than adults may experience.
- Children have little control over their environments. Young children who are dependent upon others for movement may experience sustained exposure to agents or situations that are out of their control. Other children, adolescents and young adults may be both unaware of risks and unable to make choices to protect their health.

## Tomorrow's new reuse economy for food service

**86% of disposables avoided**  
- reducing climate and energy impacts, water use and natural resource extraction.

**193,000 jobs created** in new reuse economy.  
Jobs are created regionally in collection, washing, logistics, delivery, etc.

**841 billion disposable food packaging items avoided** and **7.5 million tons** of materials averted annually.

Reuse service providers

**\$5 billion saved** by food service businesses from no longer procuring disposables for on-site dining.

**\$5.1 billion saved** by businesses and communities from avoided solid waste costs from no longer using disposables

**17 billion pieces of litter prevented** through new reuse systems

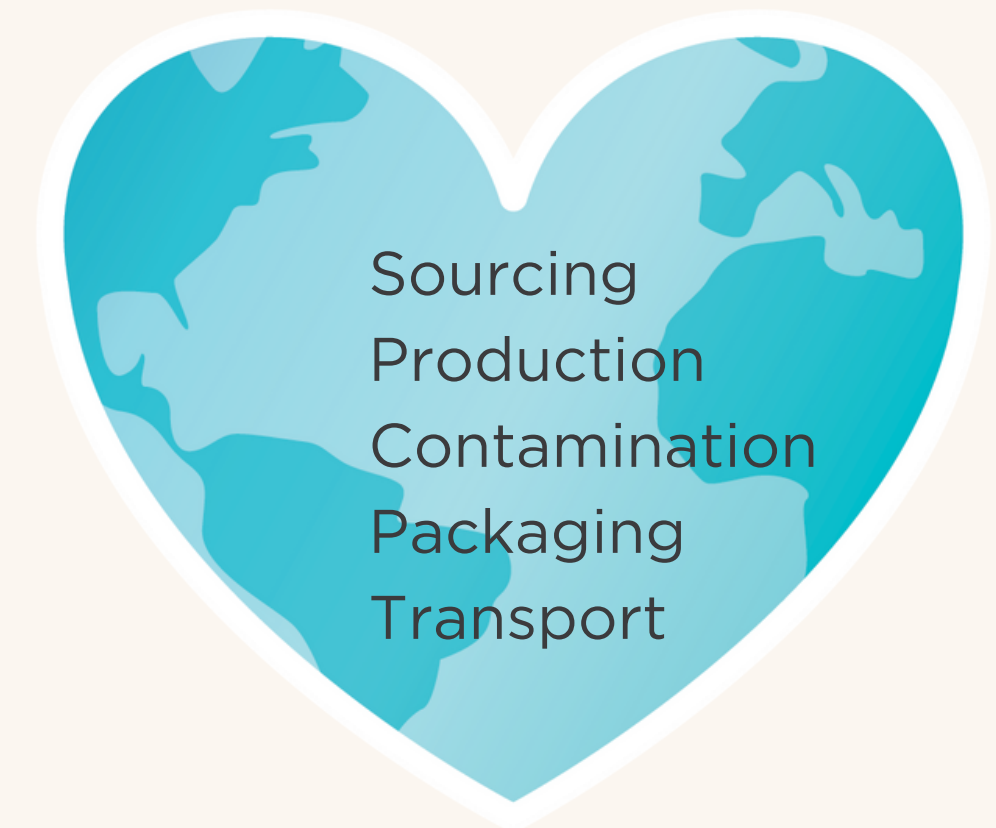




The GreenScreen Certified Standard for Reusable Food Packaging provides in depth criteria for reusable products that are preferred for human and environmental health. Manufacturers now have a **clear roadmap** to meet purchasing specifications for reusable products that are made with **preferred chemistry** for a **clean circular economy** while cutting consumption and waste generation.

## Our Promise

**Ahimsa** (uh·HIM·suh) is a Sanskrit word meaning avoiding harm. We work to avoid harm in every way we can for children and the planet.



## Our Promise

### **Science is our guide**

We are committed to the environmental, nutritional and overall health of children using the most up-to-date science. We will make evidence-based decisions on everything we do from products to resources. Our mission is to educate and empower those who care for children to help them develop lifelong healthy habits through our holistic and science-based approach to health.

### **Unmatched material safety**

We are committed to staying current with the latest advancements in the field of children's health and nutrition and ensuring the absence of harmful chemicals in our products.

### **Sustainably designed**

Ahimsa is unwavering in our commitment to producing products and packaging that are entirely devoid of plastic.

### **Advocacy for all**

Ahimsa is dedicated to upholding equitable and ethical treatment of all our team members throughout every facet of our operations.

### **Responsible sourcing**

Ahimsa consistently seeks out the finest-grade raw materials to craft our products with the utmost quality and care.

## Our “No-No List”

### **Materials we NEVER use in Ahimsa products**

Chemicals that could be harmful to human or environmental health because they are known or suspected, including:

- Carcinogens
- Reproductive or developmental toxicants
- Systemic toxicants
- Endocrine disruptors
- Persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemicals
- Very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB) chemicals
- All Bisphenols – including BPA, BPB, BPF, BPZ, etc.
- PVC – polyvinyl chloride
- Phthalates
- Melamine
- Heavy metals (cadmium, arsenic, hexavalent chromium, mercury, lead)
- All plastic (petroleum-based, biobased, micro)
- Formaldehyde
- Latex
- Flame retardants
- Sulfates
- Siloxanes
- PFAS



Colorful stainless steel dishes made by Ahimsa sit on display during an Earth Day event on Friday, April 22, 2022, at The Orchard School in Indianapolis. *Grace Hollars/IndyStar*

“It might be unusual to see kids excited about lunch trays, Helvie said, but it’s because they’re learning about **why we made the change.**”

Sherri Helvie, Head of School, The Orchard School



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