



Engaging in Vegan Dietary Practices: Parents' Experiences Raising Children on Plant-Based Diets

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ABSTRACT:

It is known that a vegan diet is a healthy choice from infancy to adulthood. This is significant due to the growing number of people adopting plant-based diets. Despite this, adopting a vegan lifestyle for parents and their children may have social implications. This research explored parents' experiences of raising vegan infants and children in northeastern Ontario, Canada. There were 15 focus group participants and 11 interview participants who took part in this study. Twenty-three of the participants followed a vegan diet, while the remaining two were nearly vegan in their dietary choices. The results of this study offer insight into the experiences of maternal vegan eating successes and challenges, during the early years of pregnancy, childhood, and beyond. Some participants described the support that was offered by their medical community and extended family in regard to their dietary choices, while others offered negative experiences medically and personally (i.e., familial rifts, seeking new medical help, etc.). As vegans are a growing subgroup of the Canadian population it is important to understand their lived experiences, specifically beyond the borders of major cities and in regions of the country where hunting and fishing are an important aspect of the local culture.