

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Hi, Welcome back to the Women's Vitality Summit, this is Dr. Keesha Ewers, your host and I'm very excited and honored to be interviewing Dr. Elisa.... Actually I'm going to start over, is it 'e-liyh-zuh' or 'e-lees-uh'?

DR. ELISA SONG: It's 'e-lees-uh' you got it right!

DR. KEESHA: I got it right! [Laughs] I was all of a sudden like... Welcome back to the Women's Vitality Summit, this is Dr. Keesha Ewers, your host and I'm very excited and honored to be interviewing Dr. Elisa Song, who founded the Whole Child Wellness Center in 2005 with a mission to create a nurturing environment that integrates allopathic and natural medicine, customized each unique child, in order to help children thrive to their fullest potential. Dr. Song has special interests in providing integrated care for children with complex medical issues including Autism, ADHD, Asthma, Autoimmune Disease, Eczema, Failure to Thrive, Food Allergies and Sensitivities, Re flux, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, And other gastrointestinal disorders as well as seizures, and neurological disorders and environmental illnesses. Welcome to the Summit, Dr. Song, I'm so excited to have you on the summit, you're the only one here talking about children's health and I think this is one of the biggest things that helps women feel vital, is if their children are vital too.

DR. ELISA SONG: That is absolutely true, thank you so much for having me. I know as a mom myself, when my kids are healthy and my kids are vibrant and I feel empowered to care for them successfully, I feel so much more vital. So I do think an essential part of a woman and a mom's vitality is knowing how to care for their kids.

DR. KEESHA: It's so absolutely true. As a mother of four, I couldn't agree more. I like to start each interview just talking about just reminding our listeners and us what the word "vitality" means, it's our passion, it's our juice, it's our zest for life. It's our ability to live to our optimal potential. And I always ask my guests, what do they see as the biggest vitality sucker out there right now. And I'm going to ask you from your perspective as an integrated pediatrician, what do you see that robs children of their vitality today?

DR. ELISA SONG: I think that is a really important question to ask. I think that for me personally, my children, my friends, my family, my patients, one of the biggest, biggest, suckers of vitality is really how over-scheduled we are, how over-scheduled, our kids are, and how many expectations we put on ourselves and our kids and what they should be doing. Kids nowadays do not, for the most part, know how to just sit, and be, and create. They need to be told what to do and where to go and when to do it. And parents feel like they need to do that for their kids. So, I think as parents, if we can learn how to let go of that, be ok with not having a schedule for our kids all the time. Be okay with not getting them into the best summer camp or the best after-school program. And letting them, and us, know how to just have those moments where we create fun together, we just create our own path. Instead of expecting it to be created for us.

DR. KEESHA: You may not be surprised to hear that every one of my 48 guests has said the

same thing. Isn't that interesting? The same thing! That we are over-scheduled and we are running ourselves ragged because of it. And we're doing it to our kids. I can see that! I can totally see that! My youngest is 19 my oldest is 27 now. And I used to have these Rainbow Bridge books, so that when they came out of the school year, we'd do some schoolwork over the summer and they had the Rainbow Bridge Books, which we broke down so they had lessons for each day. So they were expected to do that, and we had goals we would set for physical activity all summer. But they have the rest of the day where they could create things, they could paint, they could do whatever they wanted. And they're such creative adults now. I think it's so important, that as we're scheduling, we schedule in free time. Isn't that weird to say?

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes, yes. And that free time is just something that a lot of parents don't know what to do with. I think that we as a society have lost our ability to know what to do with ourselves when we're idle. And we don't have to do anything. Even the games, even the toys that kids play; for instance, video games, there's a certain sequence involved you can just guess the next level, and that's your challenge. There's no creation of that story. So kids don't have to use their imaginative minds, they don't have to innovate anymore, and that's a big problem for their future and the future of our society.

DR. KEESHA: You're right, because you think about what is it when you have downtime, you reach for your phone! I see that happen all the time with adults. They reach for their phone if they have two seconds. Interesting.

DR. ELISA SONG: And then if we can't model that behavior. It's really hard to teach our kids to do that.

DR. KEESHA: For sure. Well you have a summit for children; I want to make sure we do a shout out about this because you're going to have experts all over the place, in different regions of healthy children and all kinds of different subjects. You were telling me about it before we started this interview. It's so exciting. So I want to make sure that you give the dates and everything for that.

DR. ELISA SONG: Well, it's actually just some months after the [Women's Vitality] Summit. It's called the "Thriving Child Summit". And it's really going to incorporate speakers from all walks of life, in fact speakers from all over the world. We have a speaker from Australia, discussing all aspects of ways to help children thrive. And that includes not just an integrative approach to their healthcare but really helps with parenting skills. It involves really having a vital and vibrant mom, who knows how to take care of herself, not just during her pregnancy and postpartum but really, as her kids get older, which is why I have you, Keesha, as one of our expert speakers. So I'm really excited about that, I think this is information that all parents should have.

DR. KEESHA: Wonderful.

DR. ELISA SONG: Oh and the dates are October 3-10

DR. KEESHA: Alright. 3rd through 10th of October everybody, and how can they find information about that?

DR. ELISA SONG: They can find information on the website, www.thrivingchildsummit.com

DR. KEESHA: Beautiful. So you do a lot around building blocks for healthy kids, and I would love for you to talk a little bit about some of those building blocks and how do we approach the health of our children from all aspects.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes. I definitely have a building blocks foundation for kids' health. When I integrate conventional pediatrics with functional medicine, nutrition, homeopathy, acupuncture. But the bottom line is we need to get the foundation of our children's health as vibrant as possible. Right? You can't build a house on sand. So we need to have a sturdy foundation. And this is true for kids when they come into see me when they're sick, or when they're well and parents just want to learn how to optimize their kids' health. When we look at the building blocks, I start with 5 main ones. The first one I call "You are what you eat" And It's making sure that whatever we put into our kids' bodies are pure, clean and nutrient-filled. We want to focus on organic, whole, unprocessed foods as much as possible. Most parents wouldn't think to put less than the highest-grade fuel in their car. We need to think about our bodies in the same way. Ours and our kids. We only want to put the best ingredients in. We need to make sure that the foods that kids are eating and the water that they're drinking is free of heavy metals, artificial flavors, colors, and dyes. They all affect brain and immune functioning. And reducing added sugars when possible.

DR. KEESHA: You mean Gatorade's not a health food?

DR. ELISA SONG: Oh my gosh... [Laughs], I could go on and on about artificial flavors and dyes. The European Union actually requires any food substance with artificial flavors and dyes have a warning on it that these ingredients could contribute to neurological symptoms like ADD. So... really powerful...

DR. KEESHA: There's so much science you can get buried under it and die for what's been shown about artificial... colors and flavors and preservatives and yet we persist it's ridiculous. So I'm glad the European Union is doing that now. But whenever I see kids come off of a sports field after their bodies are really at... really needing to be re-hydrated and recharged and they're handed a bottle with all of that junk in it

DR. ELISA SONG: The red Gatorade or the blue Gatorade and kids... there are some kids who are so sensitive, they literally become different kids. They become aggressive and violent even, and it's like Jekyll and Hyde... that is like poison to them.

DR. KEESHA: And then follow that up with the treats that come out of packages after a game, the Costco thing... or at the high school things there is usually a PTA group selling things and it's always stuff that's not good for you and I know in my kids' high school, I really went onto a little went onto a little soapbox about this and got some things changed but you can do that. You can be a change agent for health, if you just make sure you have the science and the passion and the wherewithal to stay attuned to the issue of children's health. So you can make a change.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yep, and I tell athletes and parents the most hydrating thing you can drink after words is coconut water. You get your electrolytes naturally and it's something that's so good for you.

DR. KEESHA: Okay so I interrupted your building blocks...

DR. ELISA SONG: So the second building block is really "Do you have the guts?", which is "We're not just what we eat but also what we absorb". So we have to make sure that our gut microbiome is healthy and this is going to improve our focus, our tension, our immune functioning, our mood, and our sleep. So we have to clean up the gut, we want to identify and eliminate any food sensitivity that kids may have and also eliminate and imbalanced organisms that they may have like yeast or bacteria or something called "gut dysbiosis". It's not just in kids' chronic health concerns but also in adult chronic health concerns. Gluten and dairy are the biggest culprits but really kids can become sensitive to anything that they eat all the time. Even things that seem really healthy for them. And then we want to use supportive nutrients like fish oils, probiotics, and glutamine. The next building block is really "Clean up your room". This means clean up your home environment, removing plastics, parabens, bisphenol A, any other endocrine disrupting chemicals from our house and that can be found in skin-care products and cleaning products. These are things that can trigger early puberty in our kids. We're finding kids at younger and younger ages developing breasts and getting their periods. Really enhancing our kids' detoxification capacities'. With food it's possible, get those nutritious vegetables in. Cilantro, parsing it in your smoothie. And when needed we can use substances like glutathione and milk menthol.

The next building block is "Go to bed", really having good sleep hygiene. That's critical. As parents we know everything just works better when we get enough sleep, and that's especially true for kids. And that includes no screens at least an hour before bedtime. That can be really challenging in high school, when there's so much homework, which is another issue. But really minimizing the screens before bedtime. And then the final building block, which really we don't pay enough attention to, by any means, even in integrated medicine, is "Don't worry, be happy". We need to find ways for kids to be mindful in their daily lives and understand how to create happiness for themselves and not just try to have happiness happen to them. So then, it is teaching kids daily mindfulness, meditation or cognitive behavioral techniques to reduce their stress and anxiety. There are amazing feedback programs like Heartmath that you can use right on your iPhone, any time of day. Spending quality time with your family, going on hikes, going out in nature. Getting off those screens. The recommendations by the American Academy of

Pediatrics is no more than 1 hour per day of screen time, and that includes non-school work computer time. Phones, Video games, TV. All of that. Fact, I would say less than an hour a day. But kids will look at me like I'm crazy for that.

DR. KEESHA: I know. Adults do the same thing when they come to me for insomnia and I tell them to turn off their screens an hour before they go to bed.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yeah

DR. KEESHA: They say "What?" [Laughs]

DR. ELISA SONG: I know. Well most adults will actively check before they go to bed. That last email or that last Facebook post. And the first thing they do when they wake up is turn on their phones. And I'm guilty of that sometimes as well. I can't say that I never do that. But I cringe when I find myself really reaching for the phone first thing in the morning.

DR. KEESHA: Right. So I think that the American... well the US Surgeon General said that two of the things that's getting in the way of our children's health is the drinks that have the high-fructose corn syrup and preservatives, and screens. So, it's really important that we pay attention and really monitor that screen time with our kids.

DR. ELISA SONG: And there's this whole phenomenon now of really screen and video game addiction and it's becoming really problematic around kids and adults. And that's something that we really have to pay attention to.

DR. KEESHA: I do a lot of marriage and family therapy. There are so many couples with this problem. One of them has a very serious addiction to a screen. It's causing marriage problems. Alright, so we've gone through the building blocks for healthy kids, which are fantastic. If we follow these then we do a lot for prevention. Don't We?

DR. ELISA SONG: Absolutely.

DR. KEESHA: And it's so much easier to prevent illness than it is to cure it. So much simpler.

DR. ELISA SONG: Absolutely.

DR. KEESHA: And so when we talk about preventative medicine in the USA. Under insurance guidelines, we're talking about things like mammography, which is really screening for disease. True prevention is what you're talking about. Food, movement, getting out in the sunshine. Being able to handle your stress properly, like through cognitive behavioral therapy and biofeedback. HeartMath is an amazing program. I prescribe it all the time. So the true preventative medicine, not screening for a disease. That's where we can really have good quality of life. So let's say that we've sent our child off to schools, the giant petri dish with windows. And our child comes back

with something, can we talk about some of the common ailments that parents find in their children, and some ways that we can deal with them in a more natural way perhaps than antibiotics?

DR. ELISA SONG: Absolutely. You know, when I... what I've found so powerful in really using an integrated approach to kids' health is having a natural medicine toolkit that I can teach to parents. To help them learn how to get their kids to recover more quickly. And actually prevent them from getting sick as much too. And really when we use our natural medicine's toolkit, we don't throw out our conventional medicine, we have that as a backup. But when we have a natural medicine's toolkit it really minimizes the needs for things like antibiotics that can disrupt the microbiome. Put our health back a step. And cause sometimes more side effects, harm, than good. So this is where one of the foundations of acute care, when kids are sick, is homeopathic medicines. Homeopathic medicines, not many people understand really, exactly what homeopathic medicines are. And many will confuse homeopathy with anything natural. But homeopathic medicines are a specific form of medicine that really is truly evidence based. It uses minute quantities of the substance to help the body really heal itself. Move in that healing direction. Because of how safe homeopathic medicines are, they're typically my first choice of treatment for babies, even newborns and for nursing moms. So I love using homeopathic medicines, I've seen them work wonders.

For those of you who have not used homeopathic medicines and are not familiar with what they do and how to use them, I have a lot more information on my website which is www.healthykidshappykids.com This is my blog that I started to educate parents about integrated approaches to their health when they don't have access to a practitioner, or just want more information for their kids. So, one of the things that I will use homeopathic medicines for is fever. Now, with fever, the first thing I tell parents is "do not be afraid of fever." Feverphobia is rampant. Not just for parents, but for healthcare professionals. The first thing that happens when you go to the emergency room and your kid has a fever is they give your kid Tylenol or Motrin. So I want parents to understand that fever is your body's natural response to infection. And when we have a fever in our body, the heat actually slows down the viral and bacterial particles in our body, so that our body can actually fight them more easily. So fever is not a bad thing. So if the kid is neurologically normal, fever cannot get too high, it will not cause brain damage, which is another concern for parents. So, there are some studies showing that suppressing fevers with Tylenol or Motrin can actually prolong the duration of the fever. You can actually keep your kid sicker for longer by giving them Tylenol or Motrin. So we can use homeopathic medicines. There are some that are really good for fever.

Homeopathy is really individualized, so we want to choose the medicine that actually fits the kind of fever that your kid is having. For instance, If my son has a fever, he might get a low-grade, 100-101, that just kind of lingers on, not that big a deal, cheeks a little rosy, but he seems okay. Whereas my daughter, tends to get high fevers, she might get to 104, be flushed, be sweating, be really agitated and anxious and upset. And so for my son, that low-grade fever at the start of any illness, I would give him homeopathic Ferrum Phosphoricum pellets. For my

daughter, her fever is a classic Belladonna fever, so I would give her Belladonna pellets. The way you get the pellets is you give three of the little pills, they taste just like sugar pills, kids love to take them. So three of the little pills, every 1 to 2 hours. So when they start to feel better you can just stop. The other things that I really like to use for fever are herbal medicines. So one herbal remedy that can work really well and taste really good is elderberry syrup. So elderberry syrup you can find at any health food store. It's great for fevers and it's great for coughs. When there was that H1N1 outbreak that was causing hysteria, elderberry was found actually in the lab, to be effective against H1N1. So at that time I was recommending a lot of elderberry. The other thing I have...

DR. KEESHA: That's such determination.

DR. ELISA SONG: Isn't that amazing?

DR. KEESHA: There's always a question about vaccination vs. non-vaccination. We'll come back to that, but the elderberries great. The other thing that was found to be helpful was Kimchi, Korean spice. So, I think that really that's the power of fermented foods for supporting our microbiomes. And then acupressure. I love acupuncture. I do it on babies, kids, and teenagers. Acupuncture is something that parents can do at home to be as effective as acupuncture. And the point that I have parents massage, when their kids are sick, it's called large intestine 4, which you can look up online, but it's basically when you bend your elbow, it's right at the outer edge of your elbow crease. Parents can rub this for a minute or two. I love adding oils to the acupressure point; they can use Peppermint Essential Oil, to help cool the body. Or lavender Essential Oil, which decreases not only the inflammation but also the anxiety that kids have when they're sick. That's just an example of how I use a medicine for fever, or the beginning of a cold or a flu. And parents, when they have those things to do that are effective and help their kids fight their germs naturally, without suppressing their symptoms naturally, without suppressing symptoms. It just feels so much more empowered, and that's part of what being a vital parent is: knowing how to help your kids in a safe and successful way.

DR. ELISA SONG: Well that's great recommendations for fever. I kind of opened up the can of worms; we didn't talk about this ahead of time, about vaccinations. I would love for you to talk about that.

DR. KEESHA: That's the big elephant in the room, when people come to see me. So I always start off the conversation, when people come to me to discuss vaccines and vaccine safety or concerns. With my view that really I think that vaccines have been very helpful in reducing the number of vaccine preventable illnesses. With that said, we know that there's no medication in the world that is 100% safe or effective. So now, in this day and age, many of these illnesses are dramatically on the decline or really virtually non-existent. We have to weigh the risk of the harm of the vaccine could cause, with the potential risk of contracting the illness. And that balance may shift over time, and it does shift. When vaccines were first created we had the

higher burden of illness that made it worthwhile to vaccinate relative to the risks of the vaccine. But now we are shifting likely the opposite direction for many of our vaccines.

The big question I get asked is "Do I think vaccines cause autism?" I say, "Well I don't think there's any one single cause of autism". And I see many kids with autism where I take an integrated medicine approach. I have been able to help kids get off the spectrum, which is so inspiring. But do I think some of those kids were harmed? Yes, but not all of them. When we look at vaccines the kids that have been found in the vaccine course and in research to have been harmed by vaccines are the kids who have underlying Mitochondrial problems, and also methylation issues. And these are things which... if we know about, if we can identify and assess risk factors in the kids. There are some tests that we can run. Even before shots are given. And even if we don't do the shots then there are supports that we can give to the body to help that child receive the benefits of the vaccines without getting harmed. And those are things like Methyl B12 and folic acid, prior to the shot get it into their system, try aiming for maybe a week to month before, to support the mitochondria. And either glutethyone or milk to support their liver and detoxing the extra chemicals that are in the vaccines.

If you look at the package for the vaccines, unfortunately the mercury may be out, but there are loads of other chemicals, including aluminum, MSG, and formaldehyde... things that ideally we don't put into our bodies. But we don't have the choice if we're going to get vaccines. So I think there's a way to get vaccines safely, not all kids have a risk for harm. But if we can identify those kids who might be more at risk, we can do so much to prevent downstream problems and support their bodies while still supporting the public good.

DR. ELISA SONG: Such a great answer, really. I also talk about this when I have a lot of parents ask me about vaccinations and the movie "Vaxed". And it's a very good movie. And I answer in very similar way. And one of the things I like to do is look at the 23 innate genetics first too. Because you can tell if there's a mitochondrial problem ahead of time. You can tell if there's an MTHFR problem ahead of time. And so I think we're getting into a place. I think this is the most exciting time to be in medicine since I've been alive, because we can do such great individualization and personalization of interventions rather than trying to assume that one size fits all because we know it doesn't.

DR. KEESHA: Absolutely right. We're just at the tip, the forefront of innovation, of being able to practice that precision medicine, personalized medicine, but when it gets here, and it becomes really mainstream, we're going to see dosages of medicines be way more accurate. We're going to be able to do true prevention. It's going to be great. I hope that it gets here.

DR. ELISA SONG: Well I think it's already here because these direct genetics tests are already here. I use them all the time in my practice. I can really personalize things. So we're getting there, it's really wonderful. So let's talk about some other common things that parents will see with their kids. Like ear infections.

DR. KEESHA: Yes, so ear infections are really... they are probably one of the top reasons that kids come to the doctors. Because they have an earache. Once I started using my natural medicine's toolkit, I have had to virtually stop writing prescriptions for antibiotics. Over the past 10 years of my integrated pediatric practice I can probably count on less than 2 hands the number of times I've had to use antibiotics. Which is amazing because in my conventional practice, beforehand, it was almost on a daily basis you'd be handing out a prescription for an antibiotic, for ear infections. Of course sometimes we have to use them, but when we do, we have to balance it out with probiotics to really keep that gut microbiome healthy, and prevent subsequent infection. So what do you do when a kid has an ear infection? Well homeopathy is great. The first thing is that homeopathic 'Ferrum Phosphoricum' that I mentioned. For those low-grade fevers. That is the #1 homeopathic medicine to start when your kid has an earache. That's the first one I would try. If you don't know what to do, start with that one.

The next thing that some parents may already be using is garlic eardrops. Garlic eardrops, some studies looking at them effectively penetrating that eardrum. Reducing pain, pretty immediately, reducing inflammation. And also killing the bacteria or virus that's causing the infection. Because as we know, many ear infections are going to be viral. Antibiotics are going to do nothing for them. And so the recommendation is for those lower risk kids to wait and watch for a couple of days before you give them Antibiotics. Meanwhile if you don't have a toolkit while you're watching, all you have under your belt is to maybe give ibuprofen to the pain. But if we have our natural medicine's toolkit we can help our kid's body and ear heal so that their feeling so much better and their eardrum is healing. In terms of acupressure, there are certain points all around the ear. Right in front of the ear, low when you have your mouth open you can feel a little depression there, right behind your earlobe, a little depression behind your earlobe. You can massage those points and again, lavender is really great for reducing inflammation and helping the anxiety that kids have in their pain. You can easily find garlic eardrops at any health food store. Some parents will make their own garlic eardrops I just would caution if you haven't made them before, you have to make sure every bit of garlic is strained out of the oil. Because if the garlic bit touches your kid's eardrops or the skin in their ear canal, it can burn. It can hurt.

DR. ELISA SONG: That would be adding fire to the fire. You don't want to do that. So I think that one of the most frustrating things as a parent is when your child's in pain and you can't alleviate it. So what you're offering here is instead of... I think a parent feels good when they have a prescription for an antibiotic in their hand because they just assumed control of the situation. And so you're giving them a homeopathic replacement. It's where they're actually going to be able to treat their kid's earache without doing harm. Even better, so great. I just got home from Bali a little while ago and I had... I came home 9:30 PM Sunday night. And I was working Monday morning at the clinic. And around 2:30 I said to my staff "I need a cup of coffee". They said to me "You don't drink coffee". Because I take everyone off of coffee. I said "I know" and it is precisely because I don't drink coffee that coffee is going to work right now. And so that's the way we need to look at antibiotics now. We need them sometimes, but if we overuse them then they don't work! It's really important that we treat things like this the way that

they are. They're medicines that need to be reserved for when they're really needed. Not because they're convenient. So I think that that's a great way to think about them. They've saved so many lives but we're really doing ourselves harm by creating superbugs because we use them so much.

DR. KEESHA: Exactly. Parents really feel so powerless when their kids are sick and in pain and that's why acupressure is great. You can give them something to do with their hands. They can touch their child in a loving but therapeutic way. So these natural medicines they can start giving without causing harm to their kids. Upset stomachs and flu's are another common ailment for children, right?

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes. And there's nothing worse than a vomiting kid. It's really hard for everyone. But stomach flu's. There's a lot of stomach flu's in the summer, a lot of stomach flu's in the winter. It's kind of a year round phenomenon. And so yes, there are very good natural medicines that we can use for stomach flu. From a conventional standpoint, there's really nothing. Except [inaudible 35:08]... here's some Zophran, which can have significant side effects. With stomach flu, one of the best homeopathic medicines is 'arsenicum album'. It can help reduce all the nausea and also reduce the vomiting and the diarrhea. And typically with stomach flu every half hour, then I would give them arsenicum album every half hour. You want to match the frequency of your dosage to how significant or severe the illness is.

DR. KEESHA: How many pellets would you recommend?

DR. ELISA SONG: Three at a time.

DR. KEESHA: And I try to remember with homeopathic medicine you want to keep it away from caffeine and mint, right?

DR. ELISA SONG: Yeah so ideally, I still do think it works when it's near food, but the most important thing is away from mints, because it does get absorbed mostly through the mouth, under the tongue and peppermint constricts your blood vessels. So it's just going to reduce how much is absorbed. Coffee too, fortunately most kids aren't drinking coffee. But, if they've just eaten, ideally you'll wait 10 minutes to give it.

DR. KEESHA: I'm shocked at how many kids are drinking coffee now...

DR. ELISA SONG: I know, Peet's and Starbucks are...

DR. KEESHA: I live in Seattle though, so maybe we're early adopters for children because the land of Starbucks... but it's awful! [Laughs] How many jittery anxious kids I get in my practice and I found out they're drinking coffee.

DR. ELISA SONG: I know... or Red Bull or whatever

DR. KEESHA: Red Bull! Oh my gosh yeah. So that means mint toothpaste and mint chewing gum, make sure when you're taking those that you're not following it up with some gum...

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes and then homeopathic cinchonas, the reason I spell that is because it's not a very well known homeopathic medicine, but it's one that helps from recovery after losing any body fluids. After vomiting or diarrhea. Or if you've just run a marathon and you sweat a TON and you're dehydrated. It's what helped me really heal so quickly from giving birth to my daughter, Kenzie, when I had lost a lot of blood. So it helps recovery from any loss of body fluids. So that you can give right away, it can help with energy, can help them pep up a little bit sooner. I love herbal teas, and a lot of kids can learn to love them as well. And when kids have stomach flu, Banana Milk Tea is great, because it can reduce spasms. That spasmodic, cramping pain that you can get when you're feeling like you're going to throw up or have diarrhea. Of course, [inaudible 38:00] helps with anxiety and is overall calming. Which kids and parents both need. And peppermint tea is great, but if you're giving homeopathics you'll want to just wait. But peppermint is great for nausea. Fantastic for nausea.

Hydration is of utmost importance when kids are sick. I tell parents to not worry if kids are not eating, do not worry if they lose weight, they will pick it back up. But they have to drink. The drinks I recommend, I mentioned before: Coconut Water, because it is chock full of electrolytes, so much more hydrating than regular water. And bone broth is awesome! So you can make your own really easily, on our blog I have a really great pictorial for parents to walk through if you've never made it before. And matter of fact nowadays there are a lot of really great companies that are making really great bone broth, so if you just want to buy some. And of course, probiotics. There are particular probiotics that can be helpful. The most helpful one is one called *Saccharomyces boulardii*. It's a long word, but it's a beneficial yeast probiotic that has been shown to be helpful in stomach flu's, and diarrhea. Especially antibiotic induced diarrhea. So if your kids have happened to need antibiotics and they get diarrhea and one of the probiotics they use to treat this is *Saccharomyces boulardii*.

DR. KEESHA: You know, you were talking about ice, and you can put your drink if your kid's having a hard time drinking anything and they just keep throwing up, and make it into ice cubes. That was something I learned when my kids were little. Putting whatever I'm going to give them and freezing it as an ice cube and they can have a little slushee.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yeah, that's a great way to do it. You can make a little ice pop for them with herbal tea. When my son was recovering from his tonsillectomy I actually made some slippery elm for his throat. But he didn't really want to drink it. So I made jello and it had the same properties.

DR. KEESHA: Yeah, perfect. So there are some more chronic things that I think a lot of children of this era deal with and one of the things I see a lot in my office is anxiety.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yeah.

DR. KEESHA: There are natural ways of treating anxiety that don't require medication in children and I think it's good for parents to know what some of those are.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes, there are many many many natural things that we can do to support the body and the mind for kids who have anxiety. And I really can't say that I know any kid who doesn't have anxiety at some point or other and the increasing number of kids who have really debilitating anxiety is huge. What is shocking and disturbing to me is the number of kids who are younger and younger ages who are put on psychotropic medicine. And this medicine, many of them have no long term studies in young kids, and many of them have black box warnings, with increased suicide risk or increased heart risk when taking them. So I have huge concerns. Sometimes in crisis they might be needed, and we may have to consider them but there's so many things to do before you even think about putting your child on medication.

The first thing that is really... you've got to take a whole body and whole mind approach. It's not just replacing your supplements and your vitamins with, replacing supplements and vitamins. That's a pretty simplistic way of looking at functional medicine and saying here you go, and take this supplement and that's going to be it. You have to take a look at the whole lifestyle. So that's one thing, whatever they have to do to slow down. Learn those techniques. There are a series of books by a psychologist called Don Huebner, and she'll be one of my experts that I interview on the Thriving Child Summit. But she has a whole series of "what to do" books that teach kids cognitive behavioral techniques. I love them. And one of the books is "What To Do When You Worry Too Much". So giving visualization, or little exercises that they can do when they're getting stuck in that worried trap and how to get themselves out of it is really important. There are mindfulness meditations CD's that kids can listen to that are made for them. So they have to learn a tool to break that cycle once it gets into that spin of increasing worries and agitations.

Of course sleep is really important. Our kids are not getting enough sleep. In High School I have kids who come to me and say, "I literally can't go to sleep before 1AM because I have too much homework. Well, there's not much we can do about that part of it. But we can find ways to catch up on that and get good quality sleep. So not having that caffeine while they're studying. Trying to reduce the screen time. But just some wide set things that not enough people talk about... It's really important to have a holistic approach and then while we're thinking about a functional medicine approach. When I see kids with chronic conditions of any sort. Whether it's anxiety or autism or autoimmune illnesses or asthma. You've got to start with the gut. If you can heal the gut then you are going to get your kids maybe 70-80% of the way towards healing. You know, they're going to feel better just by doing that. And with the anxiety that's really really important because we know that the makeup of our gut bacteria, or microbiome, can have huge effects on our mood. And our emotional resilience. We also know that the majority of serotonin, our feel good hormone... it helps us be happy, resilient, it helps our sleep. The majority of serotonin in our body, maybe 70% or more is made in our gut. So if our gut is not healthy, there's no way we can have enough serotonin to support our mood. So starting with that gut, things like probiotics,

identifying, testing for dysbiosis, and imbalances and treating if there's yeast or bacterial overgrowth or parasites. If there's inflammation, treating that. Identifying food sensitivity. Kids have to get off of gluten when they have problems with anxiety. I've worked them towards it.

DR. KEESHA: And sugar!

DR. ELISA SONG: And sugar. They have to get off sugar; they have to get off that Gatorade and those coffee drinks and those other sodas that they're drinking. Foods are so powerful for our brain.

DR. KEESHA: Just a really important insert right here is don't take them off of gluten and put them on processed non-gluten snacks. That increases sugar [Laughs].

DR. ELISA SONG: Cause there is a way to have healthy gluten free diet, and there is a way to have horrible crappy gluten free diet, that doesn't do anything. And then supplementation-wise... lots of fish oils, those omega-3 fatty acids, not just the DPA... the EPA in the fish oil really important for proper neurological functioning. Vitamin D. So many of us, kids and adults. Even in the middle of summer, when I check kids who are brown as can be, running around in the sun all day, they have low Vitamin D. And Vitamin D is a hormone that is critical for emotional well being. I often will try kids on 5HTP, 5 hydroxy-tryptophane, which is an amino acid precursor to serotonin. So it helps them build up their own serotonin levels, so that they can have enough serotonin around in their brains to feel good.

The other things that I use are homeopathic medicines. There are some great homeopathic medicines for anticipation anxiety, the anxiety that keeps you up at night. For the anxiety that makes you feel like you might throw up. You know, we can individualize that, for the particular child. I use acupuncture when possible. Some kids and teenagers are resistant but I'll have them try it. And then I'll have some kids who start and they love it and they ask for it on a weekly basis or a bi-weekly basis. But there are some important points, the one right on the top of your head. That's a really, really great relaxing point that they can massage themselves and I'll use an acupuncture needle to really stimulate that point. There's a point in your ear on the upper-inner fold of your earlobe it's called shen-men that really houses our spirit. I'll do acupuncture on that point. Then I'll even put what's called the vicarious seed, a little seed that I can tape onto the point where kids themselves can just rub that point with the seed that's taped there, and stimulate it if they're feeling anxious or taking a test and getting overwhelmed or if they're having trouble shutting down their minds and falling asleep. So those are all some of the components that I might use, but again starting with gut is critical. And then finally in some kids, there is an increasingly recognized phenomena where kids can suddenly develop anxiety, OCD type thoughts, aggression, fears, ticks, and that's something called PANS, Pediatric Acute Neuropsychic Syndrome. Which is...

DR. KEESHA: On the rise!

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes, on the rise. The more I test, the more I find it. These are kids who have either Strep, and that's a condition called PANDAS, or PANS if it's triggered by mono or Lyme disease or the rosella virus where kids, either suddenly or not so suddenly, have a suddenly new onset of these fears or worries and anxieties. If that's the case, that is an autoimmune reaction in the brain that's going on. And we have to treat it with anti-inflammatories, sometimes with antibiotics, to treat the infection that's triggering this reaction. And I do use quite a few immunomodulatory supports. I've recently been having a lot more kids doing well on something called low dose Naltrexone, which is really helpful for autoimmune illnesses.

DR. KEESHA: Yeah

DR. ELISA SONG: So, for kids who... I'm doing my functional and integrated medicine work and we're getting some progress but we're kind of stalling and not seeing the improvements that we'd like to. Then I'll check for those infections, and see if maybe we're missing something that we're not addressing appropriately. It's all such great advice that you're giving and put away the magic pill theory and start looking for these root causes. I don't ever see, usually, that there's a smoking gun of one thing. I think that there's critical mass that will happen until their neurological system can't manage anymore.

DR. KEESHA: So let's move to constipation, another one that's so rampant.

DR. ELISA SONG: So rampant, and in fact, that was one of my first blog posts on healthykidshappykids.com because it is such a problem. And my concern is that kids, toddlers, young kids are being put on Miralax for years and years and years. And Miralax which is polyethylene glycol, it doesn't sound great... was never studied for long-term use in kids. And in fact, it's never actually been approved by the FDA for use in kids less than 17 years of age. So it's all off label use. We have no idea, the long-term effects of it. And the fact that there's so much we can do for it naturally. And I don't really know any kid... I guess I know some... but most kids have had bouts of constipation, most adults have had bouts of constipation and most really prolonged. And we often see this coming to a head when kids are starting to potty train. They're getting constipated and they're holding on to their poop and it's becoming a total nightmare for the kids. So there are a lot of different tactics we'll talk. Sometimes one actually does do wonders and we don't need to address the others. But typically like you said it's often a multi-pronged approach. So the first is really relaxation, just taking the time to poop. If we are rushing to get breakfast in and get the backpacks on and get the shoes on and get out the door to be at school by 8:15. When you have that sensation that you have to poop, but you don't have the time, you've lost that moment. So really trying to slow things down. So kids can have the time to sit on the potty, relax, and try to have a poop. I mean this is the same for adults.

DR. KEESHA: It's absolutely the same for adults. And another way I look at it is, if you're constipated you're holding onto your crap, a lot of times there's a mental component to that,

holding onto your crap. There's a stress component and you're a zebra being chased by a lion, it's not safe to stop and have a bowel movement. Your body knows that so it shuts down everything associated with parastolic action in the gut and you hold on to everything and run like mad for survival and then you're not taking your trash out. When we don't empty our trash we get vermin.

DR. ELISA SONG: That's exactly right. I tell kids "That poop in your body is the garbage that your body's trying to get rid of." And if you're trying to get rid of it, imagine if you did not take out the garbage under your sink for a week. I mean how awful would that be. And I tell parents just exactly what you're saying. There's a reason there's that term "Anal Retentive". When we're stressed, our anal sphincter literally tightens up and holds on to everything, we just can't let go. So then also moving, I mean kids just have to move. Whether it's a trampoline or running around the house... the block... going for a bike rides. But that lymphatic system has to get moving. They have to get their legs moving so that things just flow. And a lot of kids aren't moving.

DR. KEESHA: Hard to get excited to poop if you're in the level on the video game that you're trying to master.

DR. ELISA SONG: Exactly. I guess they say Pokémon Go at least gets you outside... right? [Laughs] And then... magnesium. Magnesium could be almost considered a miracle mineral. I forgot to mention it with anxiety but so many of us are deficient in magnesium. And magnesium I will measure red blood cell magnesium levels. But if a kid doesn't want to get their blood drawn, I start with magnesium. For kids with anxiety, magnesium is a must. You can give magnesium in different forms. Ideally you get it in foods and those foods are high in fiber, which we really need when we're constipated. So what foods are high in magnesium? Dark, leafy greens. Kale and spinach, also going to provide good fiber. Nuts and seeds, beans, lentils, legumes. Dark chocolate is high in magnesium too. But apart from that, giving extra magnesium. I'll use a supplement and when we're really constipated what I'll have parents do is start at a low dose, because it loosens up the bowels it can cause diarrhea. So we start at a low dose and work up gradually to what we call bowel tolerance, the point of which the points are soft and easy but not runny. And I keep kids on that dose for a good 2-4 weeks or as long as it takes for that kid to feel confident that they're going to have a soft easy poop every day. At the least every other day.

Once their sphincter and their rectum and their anus learn how to work again properly, emotionally, psychologically kids know that their body can work properly. Then we gradually wean off the magnesium. So that's a really easy thing that parents can do at home. You don't want to go off too fast, cause that can get them backed up really quickly. Again. The other thing that's really helpful is "Epsom salt", magnesium sulfate. And I love Epsom salt baths. If you're giving your kids a bath anyway just put a cup or half a cup of Epsom salts in their bath. And they'll absorb that magnesium through their skin. And it helps their muscles to relax and helps them unwind mentally for bedtime. It's a great way to end the day. If they don't take baths, a lot of kids don't take baths... You can actually make a footbath. Take a big bowl of warm water, put some Epsom salts in it. They can soak their feet in it while doing their homework or reading a book. There are also magnesium sulfate creams or oils that you can rub on the skin. That's

another option. The biggest, biggest food culprit is dairy. And this is something, if parents haven't tried a 100% dairy elimination, they have to try it. I've had some kids that maybe going off of the actual milk and cheese helps and they can tolerate a little bit of yogurt. But if they're really backed up and having problems with chronic constipation, then stopping all dairy is often important. Not forever, but just until the dairy sensitivity has resolved. Which usually takes about 3 months of a dairy elimination.

So that's one thing that I always, always have parents work towards. And some kids are drinking so much milk, which I don't recommend because so much milk can interfere with the absorption of many essential minerals. Probiotics are key, and I love getting probiotics from fermented foods, if possible, but unfortunately most kids nowadays grow up eating sauerkraut and Kimchi and miso, but if you can get them to have kombucha and some kefir, get your probiotics as a supplement, or even better, in the foods.

DR. KEESHA: You mean Go-Gurt's not your highest recommendation? [Laughs]

DR. ELISA SONG: You can get real yogurt and I love Greek yogurt, of course with yogurt, the dairy yogurt we're eliminating anyway. But once kids can tolerate dairy, then Greek yogurts are better because they have so much protein in them.

DR. KEESHA: And you know it's so much easier to make yogurt at home and then it's not been pasteurized to kill off all of the bugs.

DR. ELISA SONG: Absolutely.

DR. KEESHA: And homemade yogurt will give you the fermentation that store-bought yogurt will not. And you can make it with coconut milk and you'll never go back to dairy yogurt again. It is amazingly delicious

DR. ELISA SONG: It is. I personally like almond yogurt too, and I love almond milk. So... and you can make it delicious. And then acupuncture or acupressure. So I have had kids come into the office and I do acupuncture and literally as we're finishing up the session they have to run to the bathroom. Acupuncture's really interesting for kids. A lot of adults who have acupuncture have this image of lying on the table for half an hour, listening to Zen music, and just zoning out. And they think "There is no way my kid's going to do that." But with kids under 8 years of age, they don't have to sit on the table. We don't have to retain the needle, literally it's in and out. The whole session might take 5 minutes, it's really fast. And for babies when I've done acupuncture, I just follow them around the room. They're picking up a toy and I grab them and do a point and they're done in 2 seconds and I move to another point. So just go with it. But acupuncture can be really helpful.

If they're not into acupuncture, then acupressure. And the #1 point for constipation is large intestine #4, which you can look up, but this is if you open up your hand and find the webbing

between your thumb and your index finger, you just squeeze in that web space. You rub, you squeeze, make circular motions with firm but gentle pressure. This is not a point we do when we're pregnant, some people will call it the "down and out" point, because it can push things out, like poop. It's really helpful for headaches, or sinus headaches or sinus pressure. But it's a point that is used by some acupunctures to induce labor. But if you speak with most acupuncturists, they say you can't make the baby come out when the baby's not ready. But I just, as a caution, I say "Don't do it if you're pregnant", but little kids with constipation, we don't have to worry about that. So those are some tools that you can use when your kids are constipated. And you might try all of these or you might find that you try a couple and that's enough. But there are so many things we can do for constipation to get rid of it. Really once and for all.

DR. KEESHA: Very great recommendations. We are almost out of time but I don't want to leave out ADHD, I think ADD/ADHD has been such a chronic issue for kids in the last 2 generations that I want to address it.

DR. ELISA SONG: Yes, so ADD/ADHD I see so many kids in the office whose parents recognize their kids have attention issues, but want to try to avoid medications. Or kids who have tried medications and either they're not working or they're having too many side effects. Like they're totally losing their appetite or they stopped gaining weight or stopped growing. Or they've developed ticks from the stimulant medication. So I let them know there's so much we can do. So like any condition you start with the gut, you heal the gut, identify food sensitivities, and get rid of any abnormal bugs in the gut. And then for ADD in particular. The one thing that is critical to eliminate our artificial flavors, preservatives dyes and something called phenols in our foods. So there is something called "The Fine Gold Diet" which is a diet that was really developed by an allergist in San Francisco in the 70s, who found that certain components of foods could trigger attention problems in kids.

And if you look up phenols in foods you can find a whole list of food that contains moderate or high levels of phenols. Unfortunately the foods that contain phenols are often some of the healthiest foods. They are the really colorful foods. Like strawberries and berries. And there's no way to be 100% phenol-free, but what I have parents do, is for a 2-3 week trial, I give them a food list of negligible low-phenol high contents of foods. And I tell them to go for 3 weeks on a very low, negligible to low level of phenol diet. And then after those three weeks go back full force to a high-phenol diet. And really watch and assess what their kids behavior, mood, focus, attention, sleep is like. Some of the symptoms that might give us a tip off that phenols are a problem for kids are dark circles under the eyes, cheeks or ears turn red, when they eat. Auditory processing issues, where they're really sensitive to certain sounds. Really any sensory issue, whether or not they have ADD. So that's really critical. Fish oils, high amounts of fish oils. Really important. And there are some really tasty fish oils nowadays that come in swirl forms that are kind of like orange creamsicle flavor. So there's different ways to get fish oils into them. But it's got to be high amount, and I can help parents work on what the appropriate dosage would be for them. Also supporting an amino acid called dopamine.

If we do the genetic testing, they have mutations in the COMT, the COMT mutation. And they are processing, running/burning through their dopamine levels too quickly so their frontal lobe doesn't have enough dopamine and dopamine is really important for attention and focus, executive functioning. We can support dopamine with an amino acid called Tyrosine. We can also increase the amount of tyrosine-including foods that our kids are getting. So the foods that contain tyrosine, eggs, spinach, fava beans, you can look up lists of high-tyrosine containing foods. There are also some supplements. You can also take a supplement called Mucuna, Pruens that increases our own dopamine levels. So anyway that we can support dopamine is great, really helpful.

DR. KEESHA: So here's a little insert, give one to your child, the mucuna, two to yourself, eat a diet high in tyrosine, it'll help your libido ladies. [Laughs] Dopamine is what makes you want to have sex

DR. ELISA SONG: That's awesome. My mommas will love that. That is going to be a pearl I share with every mom from now on. So yes. Definitely. You can look up lists of foods. But that is very helpful. Helpful for moms and dads. And you know, again life stuff factors are super important. When our brain is stressed, when we aren't getting enough sleep, there's no way we can focus. Think about when your baby, they weren't sleeping through the night. Then you were trying to remember your grocery list! Or remember where you were heading to in the car. There's no way our kids can function and have enough attention for school if they have high anxiety. Anxiety is a huge condition; many kids with anxiety also have ADHD. And sometimes the ADHD is really a result of anxiety. You take care of their anxiety and their anxiety and ADD symptoms go away. And it's also helping parents understand how to assist their kid's assessment development skills. Especially if they don't have the teachers in their lives to help them in school. And there's a book that I think is a must for all parents.

Whether or not their kids have ADHD, just to really help their kids understand how to organize and manage their time more effectively. And that's called "Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parent's Guide To Helping Children With Executive Functioning." So that's a really great read. For kids I'd let them know "You're not alone". There are so many kids who have these problems. So many kids who have trouble organizing, and remembering their homework. Because so much of what we need to do as practitioners of parents is to support their children so that they don't lose their self confidence, and they don't start losing friendships and their love of learning. And so there's a book written for kids called "Where's My Stuff?" by Samantha Moss. And that's a great book for kids to read so that they can be empowered and understand and learn how to help themselves too.

DR. KEESHA: This is all really great because I see a lot of adults with the same problem. We're a multitasking culture these days. As we all know from all the research that's out there, multitasking DOES NOT work. And so we're low on dopamine because a lot of people are on antidepressants that are serotonin re-uptake inhibitors. And when you're working with serotonin your dopamine goes down. Because they compete for the same synapse. So there's a lot of this

out there, where the contentment, the ability to be motivated, the ability to focus and concentrate and stay on task is missing. Adults and children alike. And so I think that your advice around all of this is really wonderful for the parents as well as the children. And definitely dopamine is a big one. And is the same vice-versa. If you're taking a bunch of stuff to regulate your dopamine, your serotonin can go down. So it's all in balance.

DR. ELISA SONG: Exactly.

DR. KEESHA: All right. Well Dr. Elisa, it has been such a pleasure to have you do this interview. This is the longest interview I've done on the summit, and it's because it's such important information. You're the only one addressing children's health. And I just think it's so important. This next generation is vital. So thanks so much for being so generous with your time and your wisdom.

DR. ELISA SONG: Oh no problem. Thank you for having me. Just want to get the word out to parents everywhere. The work you're doing is so important, thank you for having this opportunity to really share this information.

DR. KEESHA: How do people find you? I'm having you give that here but then you're going to have some bonus material that you're giving that's on the website. You have it there now. That people will be able to look at. But if they want to find your blog. Will you repeat again? You said it earlier in the interview but I want to make sure that I have it.

DR. ELISA SONG: My blog site is called healthykidshappykids.com . It's so much fun for me. I share my holistic advice. I share all of my momma adventures, so you know nobody's perfect so you can learn from my mistakes. And that website, the URL is healthykidshappykids.com

DR. KEESHA: Alright, thanks so much, once again. Remember everybody to live, love, laugh and have a fantastic day. Keep on learning.