

JESSE

and the

Snack Food Genie



Erik Talkin
illustrated by
Maine Diaz


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All the staff, board, and volunteers at the Foodbank of Santa Barbara
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Getting off the bus after school, my stomach's got the **GROWLS**.

Gabriel offers me his extra apple.

I look at it skeptically but take it. "I guess it'll do. Thanks!"

I'm about to bite into the apple, when . . .



... I'm in luck! This store is a marshmallow miracle, right before my eyes. Even better? I just got my allowance.



Mom and Dad are still at work when I get home with my haul. I really should start my homework.



But first, it's time for the "Cooking with Jesse Show"!

How You Can Tell the Snack Food Genie When Enough Is Enough



The Food Justice Books for Kids series is all about food justice. This means having enough fresh, healthy, and affordable food, including locally grown food that is right for your culture. It also means that people who work in the food system are treated and paid fairly.

I work with the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County to make sure everyone in our community can get the food they need. But guess what? Having enough to eat isn't the whole story.

Once you have enough food that you don't feel hungry all the time, the next step is to start thinking about whether the food in your belly is giving you the energy you need to grow and be healthy. The Snack Food Genie can make that tough. He likes to have fun and always wants to be your buddy. But he also thinks sweet and salty snacks are the only things you should eat. Snack foods taste yummy. But sometimes they can leave you feeling sluggish or grouchy later.

What can you do to keep the Snack Food Genie from being in charge all the time?



EAT THE RAINBOW. Snack foods tend to be full of bright colors, and they usually have strong flavors. Often, that can mean a lot of artificial colors, sugar, or salt are covering the fact that what you are eating doesn't have a lot of nutrition. But fruits and vegetables have bright colors too! So try to eat a wide variety of them. When you have an apple or banana, or some carrots or broccoli, your body knows exactly what it's getting.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY. Remember to listen to the cues your body sends you about what effect different foods have on your body. For example, if your body tells you something you ate isn't giving you energy or isn't making you feel good after a few minutes, you might not want to eat as much of that food in the future. It can take a while to get used to noticing these cues, so keep at it.

DRINK LOTS OF WATER. Sometimes when we crave a snack, our body is really asking for water. Plus, staying hydrated is a healthy habit no matter what.

