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## **Behaviour and learning problems in school-aged children causally linked to omega-3 deficiency**

Australia's relatively poor school performances are at least partly due to a widespread omega-3 deficiency in children's diets.

**Dr Paul Montgomery**, Professor of Psycho-Social Intervention at the University of Oxford, published a study<sup>1</sup> in June 2013 on nearly 500 English school children.

From it he reported that children's' behaviour and their ability to learn were linked to omega-3 levels in their blood.

This helps answer recent questions about poor Australian school results. More than 300,000 year four students in 48 countries were recently tested in reading, maths and science. Australia ranked 22nd in reading and comprehension, 18th in maths and 19th in science.

At the beginning of his study Dr Montgomery measured the levels of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) omega-3 fatty acids in the children's blood. He ran a battery of tests to measure their reading abilities and behaviour.

Then he gave the children 600 mg a day of **algal DHA omega-3 oil** and re-tested the children after four months. What he found was a significant improvement in their reading, behaviour and sleep patterns.

A recent Australian study by **Associate Professor Barbara Meyer** at the University of Wollongong showed that Australian children are also severely lacking in Omega-3s.

"There's only about 20 per cent of Australian children that consume fish and seafood and of these children are still not really consuming enough Omega-3, particularly DHA, which is very important for our health," Dr Meyer said.

Dr Montgomery is confident that DHA omega-3 fatty acids improves reading and behaviour in kids who are struggling at school. "I'd really like parents to try and take on board the importance of this and how Omega-3 DHA can contribute to their kid's life chances downstream. If they can improve their education in this really simple way what a difference it will make later."

Qponics Limited is developing a unique aquaculture-algaeculture system for the sustainable production of algae and extraction of their OmegR3® oils for sale into the global US\$2.5 billion market. The anticipated 2014 growth in demand for omega-3 oil sourced from marine animals is 12.9% p.a. and 15.4% for algal omega-3 oil, as a direct result of the growing awareness of the health and cognitive benefits of EPA/DHA omega-3 supplementation.

### **Dr Graeme Barnett**

Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director  
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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0066697>