Hands off Oral Motor: Practical Strategies for Kids In the Home

Presentation Date: Thursday, March 12, 2020

Presentation Time(s): 12:30:00 PM – 2:30:00 PM

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1.) Thrive by Spectrum Pediatrics Treatment Pyramid
   - Build Trust and Relationship with Food
   - Importance of Parent Coaching Strategies
   - Skill Progression within a meaningful context of hunger

2.) Current feeding practice and what the evidence shows us
   a. What do typical therapy sessions look like?
   b. What else does the evidence show us?
      - Children need to learn skills within a meaningful environment
      - There are critical windows of development where children’s brains are wired to learn specific skills
      - Certain techniques or strategies add more pressure to the environment and lead to further fear or lack of trust of food
      - When there is added pressure or it is an adult-directed strategy, it is harder for the parents to carry over strategies and children feel less comfortable around food

3.) Responsive Feeding
• What is responsive feeding?

• How is this related to the progression of oral motor skills?

• Division of Responsibility: Discussing roles and how they play a role in the development of oral motor skills

4.) Oral Motor Skill Progression and the Context in which they develop

• Oral Motor skill progression within the child’s natural environment

• Based on child’s interest, readiness and natural drives

• What missing pieces might need to be addressed so that oral skills can progress?

• Video analysis of oral motor progression seen in treatment in a natural environment

5.) Scale of oral Skills for Eating

• When do we do this assessment and what is it showing us?

• The progression we see with various cases has one thing in common, responsive feeding as the basis of treatment

6.) Case Studies

3 case studies of medically and developmentally complex children demonstrating the implementation of responsive feeding and the progression of oral motor skills within their natural environment.

• Share outcomes utilizing the Scale of Oral Skills for Eating
• All children were able to develop oral motor skills within the context of responsive feeding and without using adult-directed or behavioral strategies

7.) Goal Writing for Children who are NPO to Picky Eaters in their natural environment

• These goals can include oral motor progression, but the focus of the goal is not to directly improve a strategy or a specific movement

• Goals include mealtime environment and family involvement as well

• Using the pyramid, write goals for children in various stages of the pyramid and what should be targeted first
  o Child 1:
  o Child 2:
  o Child 3:

8.) When and How to Refer

• Review foundations necessary to build on oral motor skills

• What to do when it’s “just not working”

References and Helpful Resources:


