

## **Behavioral Feeding Therapy**

The behavioral feeding program strives to help create a more positive mealtime experience for children and their families.

### **Common Symptoms Treated**

- Food Selectivity; eating a select number of foods or foods of a specific brand or texture
- Low oral intake; only eating a small amount of food
- Refusing all or most food
- Anxiety surrounding trying new foods or fearful due to a traumatic event (i.e., choking episode)
- Food aversions; sensitive to the smell, temperature, taste, and/or texture of food
- Tube dependence or dependent on oral supplements
- Rigid eating patterns
- Difficulties maintaining or gaining weight
- Inappropriate mealtime behavior creating stress at mealtimes

### **WHY Behavioral Therapy?**

A number of factors contribute to the development of feeding problems. Feeding problems often result from a combination of medical, psycho-social, nutritional and feeding skill-based factors. However, in some cases where other factors have been managed or resolved, children still engage in inappropriate mealtime behaviors due to their history with feeding being associated with difficulties, discomfort and/or pain. As a result, these children may develop a fear of trying new foods and lack motivation to eat previously consumed foods or new foods. These children often fail to advance on their own and require therapy to increase exposure and practice.

### **Behavioral Assessment and Treatment**

The Behavioral Feeding Therapy Program provides evidence-based assessment and treatment of a variety of feeding problems for children between the ages of 1 and 12. The strategies used are based on the principles of applied behavioral analysis and have been shown through research to be effective in helping reduce disruptive mealtime behaviors and increase the appropriate eating behaviors.



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### **Components of the Assessment and Treatment Process**

- An initial assessment, consisting of a meal observation to identify environmental factors that result in inappropriate mealtime behaviors (IMTB) and identify factors maintaining a child's IMTBs.
- Development of individualized treatment goals and a formalized treatment plan
- Ongoing collection of data to monitor progress
- Feeding therapy with a licensed psychologist while caregivers observe therapy sessions
- Caregivers are trained to implement the treatment plan effectively through direct observation and feedback
- Ongoing collaboration with other medical providers and specialists

### **Therapy Sessions**

Therapy sessions occur weekly or multiple times per week for 8-10 weeks. Sessions include parent education, direct therapy services, and parent training. Sessions last between 45-60 minutes.

### **Referrals and Payment Options**

We accept referrals submitted by a child's healthcare provider or self-referrals. Services are insurance-based. We accept private insurance, Medicaid, and offer private pay rates.

If interested in learning more about our program or to begin the intake process please call 716-323-6403.