

GENERAL TREATMENT STRATEGIES

A. Social Modeling: Teaching the Social Experience of Eating

1. family meals
2. model good feeding behaviors
3. discuss food properties, varieties, preparation, preferences
4. over-exaggerate biting, chewing and swallowing (discuss also)
5. imitate child's eating
6. child is not to be the focus of the meal
7. meals are to be enjoyable and food is to be interesting
8. do not criticize, yell or punish child
9. child should be involved in all aspects of meal; preparation, serving oneself, clean up
10. child needs to stay at the table for exposure to the social experience and food

B. Structure Meal and Snacktimes

1. use same place for meals
2. follow approximately the same time schedule
3. routine to meal; child helps prepare and serve, child is ignored or mildly reinforced for first 10-20 minutes of the meal, program is implemented, child helps clean up
4. present foods in small, easily chewable bites that can be finger fed if needed
5. present only 3 foods on the child's plate at any one time
6. each food amount should be approximately 1 tablespoon per 1 year of age
7. at least one preferred food at every meal
8. several foods should be on the table for exposure
9. limit snacks to 15 minutes and meals to 30 minutes
10. allow spitting/vomiting into chosen containers only

C. Reinforcement

1. verbal praise in the appropriate amounts works best
2. create a play program outside of meals if parent has a low reinforcement value
3. reinforce siblings' appropriate eating
4. reinforce child for ANY positive food behavior
5. touching and playing with food desensitizes child
6. ONLY very carefully, use preferred food as reinforcers
7. IF have to use an object reinforcer – make sure it disappears quickly to motivate to continue

D. Accessing the Cognitive

1. allow crushing of the foods with the fingers and talk about how this is just what your teeth do to the food in your mouth (ie. crush up the foods into powder that then dissolves in your spit)
2. use mini-choppers and talk about how it has teeth just like yours, and proceed to show and talk about how the mini-chopper works (have child use the chopper)
3. when brushing teeth, count the back molars (upper and lower) as “molar 1, molar 2, molar 3”. During meals, verbally cue child to put foods back onto their molars 1-3
4. Watch videos such as “Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree” and talk about Pooh’s tummy as rumbling as “his tummy is talking to him”. “It is saying he is hungry. He needs to go eat”. Also do this if you hear your own or your child’s stomach rumbling. Make sure after eating that you emphasize how your “tummy feels so much better and is telling you its’ happy because it ate some food”.