Feeding Development Program
Childrens Hospital Los Angeles, UCEDD
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Clinical Services Information
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Referrals / Scheduling
Please contact Dr. Alice Kibele at (323) 361-8362 or Heidi Rivas at (323) 361-7827 to determine eligibility for services. For children who do not meet current eligibility requirements, referral assistance will be provided.

Program Faculty and Staff
Gregory Smookler, MD
Alice Kibele, PhD/ OTR/L
Hope Wills, MA, RD, CSP
The Program

The Pediatric Feeding Development Program at the UCEDD at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles provides a range of interdisciplinary services for children with developmental feeding problems and their families.

Population Served

Children with feeding/eating difficulties requiring the expertise of an interdisciplinary team are appropriate for referral.

We see infants, children, and adolescents with a complex array of barriers to feeding, and mealtime participation, including those with:
- Complex medical diagnoses
- Gastrointestinal difficulties
- Oral-motor delays and deficits
- Errors of metabolism and absorption/inadequate nutrition
- Difficulties with self-regulation
- Psychosocial and behavioral issues impacting mealtime participation

A. Feeding Assessment

The Feeding Assessment Clinic conducts comprehensive assessments of children with feeding problems using an interdisciplinary team approach. The team consists of feeding specialists from the following disciplines:
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Social Work
- Psychology
- Developmental Pediatrics

The assessment components include:
- Behavioral/psychosocial
- Medical
- Nutrition assessments
- Oral motor/oral structural
- Sensory processing/modulation

The assessment identifies primary barriers to optimal feeding development and provides treatment recommendations.

B. Feeding Consultation

The Feeding Intervention Consultation Team provides interdisciplinary consultation services for children 0-18 who have pediatric feeding disorders or weight management needs. Consultation may be provided to other providers in the community who treat the child. The consultation team includes Nutrition, Mental Health, and Occupational Therapy or Speech Therapy.

C. Outpatient Individual/Family Treatment

Children who have received an assessment from the clinic may be eligible for outpatient feeding services from one or more disciplines on the team to address specific feeding goals. Treatment of the child always involves the parent or caregiver.

Outpatient group services are offered periodically. Children receive individually tailored feeding intervention in the context of mealtime or snack experience with peers.

A concurrent parent support group addresses the difficulties of parenting a child with special feeding needs. In addition, parents learn specific strategies to address their child’s feeding challenges.