



Management of Swallowing and Feeding Disorders in Schools

Emily M. Homer

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Management of Swallowing and Feeding Disorders in Schools examines the most significant issues in swallowing and feeding facing school-based speech-language pathologists (SLPs). Topics addressed are unique to the school setting, ranging from organizing a team procedure in a district to serving children with complex medical issues, behavioral feeding disorders, and neurological feeding disorders. Ethical, legal, and cultural issues are also addressed.

Many students in school districts across the country exhibit the signs and symptoms of dysphagia, and children who were originally treated for dysphagia in hospitals and other settings often begin attending public schools at three years old. The difficulty they had with swallowing and feeding frequently follows them to the school setting. Further, there are many students who develop swallowing and feeding disorders as a result of traumatic brain injury, neurological disorders and syndromes, behavioral disorders, and so forth. The range of students needing services for swallowing and feeding disorders in the school setting can be from three to twenty-two years of age and from mild dysphagia to tube feeding.

The identification and treatment of swallowing and feeding disorders in schools is relatively new. There are still many districts in the country and internationally that do not address the needs of children with dysphagia. As school-based SLPs take on the challenge of this population there is a need for information that is current, accurate, and thorough. University programs include very little training, if any, at this time in the area of swallowing and feeding in the school setting. This text is appropriate for both a dysphagia course as well as courses that train SLP students to work with school-aged students.

From the Foreword:

I am privileged to be asked to write this foreword to Management of Swallowing and Feeding Disorders in Schools. This book is anticipated to become a major resource for speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and other professionals in a variety of school settings as they are increasingly being faced with children demonstrating a range of swallowing problems (dysphagia) as well as broader based feeding problems. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association has developed guidelines for SLPs that include knowledge and skills needed, roles and responsibilities, and stressed the need for interdisciplinary teams. A major strength of this book is that it provides guidance in practical ways that covers a wide range of topics important to optimizing evaluation and intervention for these children so that they can function in their educational environments in the best ways possible.

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