



**SPEECH**

**LANGUAGE**

**PATHOLOGY**

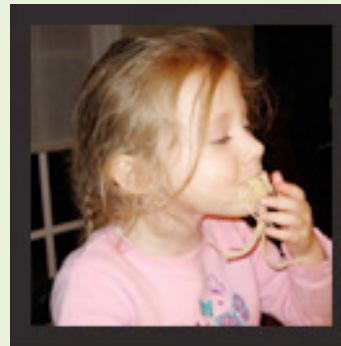
Center

If you have concerns, or would like to schedule a feeding, speech, and/or language evaluation, please contact us. Our team of therapists would love to serve you!

781-792-2700

Speech Language Pathology Center  
99 Longwater Circle, Suite 101  
Norwell, MA 02061  
[www.slpcenter.com](http://www.slpcenter.com)

## Childhood Feeding Disorders: A Resource for Parents



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### Additional Services

In addition to feeding therapy, the Speech Language Pathology Center offers a range of speech, language, and augmentative/alternative communication services for both children and adults. These services include diagnosis and treatment for the following:

#### **Speech and Language:**

- Articulation and phonological processing delays, verbal apraxia, lisp remediation
- Auditory processing and listening deficit strategies
- Language-based reading disorders/dyslexia (Wilson Reading Program)
- Pragmatic and social skills training (i.e. Autism Spectrum, nonverbal learning disability)
- Fluency and stuttering intervention plans

#### **Augmentative/Alternative Communication:**

- High-tech and low-tech solutions for individuals with communication deficits.
- iOS Applications: iPad and iTouch programming, consulting, video modeling and training using feature matching of apps. Some apps: Proloquo2go, MyTalkTools, Autismate
- Recommendations for various interactive applications that promote communication.

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## What Is a Feeding Disorder?

A feeding disorder includes difficulty bringing food to the mouth, chewing and swallowing food, and/or accepting certain sensory aspects of food (e.g., taste, texture, color). There are four main types:

### **Motor-Based**

- Difficulty with muscle tone and movement, leading to problems with coordination of muscle movements for feeding.
- Typical of children with Down syndrome or cerebral palsy.

### **Sensory-Based**

- Difficulty integrating sensory input in order to process this input for eating and drinking.
- Often affects children on the autism spectrum.

### **Structurally-Based**

- Structural deficits of the face/mouth, or physiological deficits (gastrointestinal problems) lead to feeding difficulties.
- Often seen in children who have cleft lip and palate.

### **Experientially-Based**

- Food selectivity or refusal based on behavioral choices.
- These aversions/food refusal can severely impact nutritional intake.

### **Diagnosis and Treatment**

Feeding disorders are best diagnosed by a team of professionals, including gastrointestinal physicians, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and dieticians. Treatment is dependent upon the nature of the disorder, the child's age and developmental level, and the family's needs. For more information on diagnosis and treatment, please see "How Can We Help?"

## How Can We Help?

The Speech Language Pathology Center in Norwell, MA, provides comprehensive feeding and swallowing therapy for children who have complex feeding and/or oral motor disorders. We use an eclectic approach, following best practices from leaders in the pediatric feeding industry. Our clinicians implement evidence-based programs that utilize a sensory and motor hierarchy approach for increased feeding, sensory and oral motor skills. All clinicians have received specialized training in both feeding and oral-motor therapy.

Clients are seen in an outpatient, one-on-one setting, with a focus on family-centered interventions. With access to a kitchen, tools for oral-motor therapy, and specialized feeding utensils, the Speech Language Pathology Center is devoted to meeting families' feeding needs. We offer full evaluations and therapy for children who have any one of the four types of feeding disorders. Please contact us with any questions or to set up an evaluation!

In addition, the Speech Language Pathology Center offers full evaluations and individualized therapy to children and adults with speech and/or language difficulties. Please refer to "Additional Services" to learn more.

## Developmental Milestones

### **By 12 months:**

- Takes controlled bites of crunchy solid foods
- Holds spoon handle and cup

### **By 18 months:**

- Self-feeds/grasps spoon
- Moves food from side to side with tongue
- Sometimes chews with lips closed
- Sometimes bites on spoon or cup with teeth
- Eats coarsely chopped table food

### **By 24 months:**

- Swallows food and drink with lip control; no loss of food/liquid
- Chews with jaw movements up and down, as well as side to side
- Scoops food with a spoon
- Spears food with a fork and brings it to mouth
- Starts showing like/dislike of some foods

### **By 36 months:**

- Self-feeds independently; chews with lips closed
- Has food likes and dislikes
- May become a "picky eater"