Scope of Practice and Competency in the Assessment and Treatment of Pediatric Feeding Disorders

Abstract:
The application of behavior change principles to the amelioration of pediatric feeding disorders is becoming widespread in the field of behavior analysis. Pediatric feeding disorders occur frequently in children and especially those diagnosed with neurological or developmental disabilities. If untreated, feeding problems can result in negative health outcomes (e.g., weight loss, malnourishment). Behavior analytic approaches to the assessment and treatment of feeding problems have substantial empirical support in increasing appropriate eating while decreasing inappropriate mealtime behavior. However, due to the complex etiology and technical skills needed to provide competent clinical care, it is important that professionals providing services have the requisite training to work with this population. Drs. Fernand and Hernández Eslava will provide an overview of the assessment and treatment of pediatric feeding problems, discuss the importance of competency and ethical considerations during training. The presenters will highlight the importance of families seeking services from competent clinicians, as well as for individuals either currently or interested in providing feeding services to obtain appropriate training from experienced behavior analysts to maintain rigorous levels of competency within this specialty area.

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