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NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER, 2018

LET'S MAKE MEALTIME MORE FUN!

Karan and his parents are attending his Granddad's birthday. It's almost like a family reunion. Karan is happily playing with all his cousins; everyone is having a great time. Until it's time for dinner! All the kids run to the dinner table and attack their food, but Karan zooms off in the opposite direction. Karan's mum has to run behind him and force him back to the table. On his way back, he is shouting and refusing to eat. Eventually he sits beside his mother, but as soon as he takes his first bite, he gags and throws up. Karan's parents have to excuse themselves from the rest of their relatives and leave the party early to go home. When they reach home Karan's mum cooks him his favourite bland daal with khichdi, which he happily eats and goes to bed.

How many of you have experienced this; if not this then at least something similar to this with your own child? Are mealtimes stressful in your house too? How often do you cook separate meals specifically for your child? Does your child have limited food preferences? Do you struggle to give your child the right kind of food/a healthy diet?

Very often you may come across children who are picky about the food they eat and have specific eating habits. Parents often worry about providing their child with a nutritive balanced diet to support their physical growth and development. If, your answer to any of these questions is YES, then join us for our workshop Easy 'Pea'sy, on the 21st of October, 2018 from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. This is a workshop specially catered for parents and professionals working with children having eating difficulties. This workshop will help you'll understand normal oral motor development, different factors contributing to eating challenges (sensory, motor and others), evidence based fun intervention strategies to help your child overcome his/her

EASY 'PEA'SY'
EASING OUT FOOD STRUGGLES WITH PICKY EATERS

SUNDAY 21 OCTOBER, 8.30AM-1PM, MUMBAI

Content to be Covered:

- Stages of sensory-motor development for feeding
- Sensory, motor, behavioral and environmental factors affecting feeding
- Difference between a Picky eater v/s problem feeder
- Practical, evidence based and effective strategies to help your child

Speakers:
Hiral Sangol
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Contact us to know about early bird and group charges

difficulties.

Some kids hate their greens while others run away from their lentils. There are kids who may detest meal times as being force fed by their concerned parents can be extremely overwhelming.

Every parent wishes their child has a well-balanced meal and is open to newer food experiences to provide them with the right nourishment, and support their cognitive and physical development. However, for some children mealtime and food are far from an enjoyable experience. With this workshop we hope to give parents and professionals the necessary tools to make eating and food a fun experience and strengthen your emotional bond with your child. – *Chaula Badiani*

HOW LONG DO I USE A SCHEDULE WITH MY AUTISTIC CHILD?

In a world of chaos, children with Autism are trying hard to make sense of the world around them. A structure in the form of a visual schedule is like the glue that helps them keep everything together.

Children with Autism spectrum disorder:

- Like sameness
- Prefer fixed routines and repetitive behaviour
- Are visual thinkers with excellent visual memory

Using a structure is the best way to help them stay organized through their day. The structure can be a visual schedule (with objects, photos, icons, words, sentences, etc.) or a to do list (telling them how to do certain tasks). The type of structure you use depends upon your child's cognitive abilities and communication skills.



The use of the visual cues in form of a schedule, really empowers your child, as it gives them a sense of control and helps them understand what is expected of them in the given situation. It provides them the predictability they like, thereby reducing their stress, confusion, anxiety and behaviours.

These children have a knack to retain the minutest visual details in an image. Hence preparing your child by using a visual structure will ensure that he/she remembers what is going to come next as opposed to just being told verbally.

Your child finds comfort in routine and repetitive tasks; using a visual schedule will favour this as it incorporates all of his/her basic activities through the day. Long term use of the structured schedule will enable your child's

independence in activities of daily living. However, your child also dislikes change, so in case of any new event or change of tasks on a particular day, add it into his/her schedule. This will ensure that your child is well prepared in advance. Also, validate your child's feelings and specify to him/her what the new activity is replacing to promote compliance and avoid anxiety or behaviours.

What happens frequently is that, while you begin to use the schedule consistently at first, as your child becomes independent and organized, you may feel like it's okay to reduce his/her reliance on the schedule. This may lead you to stop using the schedule all together. Please understand that no longer using the schedule is like ripping off the bandage that is holding everything together for your child. It is absolutely okay to evolve on the type of schedule you use with your child as he/she grows. Such that you can progress from using photo schedules to drawn picture schedules to maybe even just written schedule and eventually have the child use a to-do list as he/she grows up.

Remember that the visual schedule is not a crutch but rather an aide helping your child to stand tall and move forwards independently in life. So as a parent it is best if you encourage the use of this structure in whichever form best suited to your child.

“In a world of chaos, children with Autism are trying hard to make sense of the world around them. A structure in the form of a visual schedule is like the glue that helps them keep everything together.”

For any question or concerns regarding the newsletter please write to us on: reachtherapycenterforchildren@gmail.com

- Simoni Parikh
Occupational therapist
Reach Therapy Center for Children

Special thank you to Onissia Rebello, Occupational therapist, for her ideas, inputs and proof reading.