



## **SOS Approach to Feeding: Sequential-Oral-Sensory**

Developed by Dr. Kay Toomey

The SOS Approach to Feeding is a Transdisciplinary Program for assessing and treating children with feeding and weight/growth difficulties. It has been developed over the course of 12+ years through the clinical work of Dr. Kay Toomey, in conjunction with colleagues from several different disciplines including: Pediatricians, Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, and Dietitians. This program integrates sensory, motor, oral, behavioral/learning, medical and nutritional factors and approaches in order to comprehensively evaluate and manage children with feeding/growth problems. It is based on, and grounded philosophically in, the “normal” developmental steps, stages and skills of feeding found in typically developing children. The treatment component of the program utilizes these typical developmental steps towards feeding to create a systematic desensitization hierarchy of skills/behaviors necessary for children to progress with eating various textures, and with growing at an appropriate rate for them. The assessment component of the program makes sure that all physical reasons for atypical feeding development are examined and appropriately treated medically. In addition, the SOS Approach works to identify and develop recommendations appropriate to each individual child’s feeding.

Candidates for SOS Therapy may include:

- Child who is transitioning from Tube to Oral feeding
- Child who has a low volume of oral intake
- Child who has poor weight gain
- Child who has a limited variety of tastes and textures in diet
- Child who has difficulties transitioning to advanced textures
- Child who demonstrates food refusal
- Child who has maladaptive behaviors around eating
- Families who power struggle at meals

SOS Therapy goals:

- To learn to have positive experiences with food
- To learn mealtime routine and cues to eating
- To decrease resistance to touching, tasting, and swallowing food
- To increase range of foods child will try
- To increase volume of food ingested

***Contact St. Luke’s Pediatric Rehabilitation at 484-526-3200 for more information and to learn about the therapists who are trained in this specialized approach.***