

# Treatment Strategies for the Improvement of Oral, Pharyngeal, Feeding/Swallowing, and Respiratory Coordination Function: The Child with Neuromuscular Involvement

Rona Alexander, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, C/NDT

## Faculty

Rona Alexander, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, C/NDT is a speech-language pathologist specializing in the assessment and treatment of oral, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing, and respiratory coordination function in infants, children, adolescents, and young adults with primary neuromotor, musculoskeletal, and sensory systems impairments. She maintains a private practice; provides consultation services; provides short-term treatment intensives; and conducts workshops/courses/seminars/webinars on oral movement, oral sensory, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing, and thoracic cage/respiratory coordination development, assessment, and treatment. Dr. Alexander is an active advanced speech instructor in Neuro-Developmental Treatment (NDT). She has contributed chapters on oral, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing, and rib cage/respiratory coordination function to numerous publications; is co-author of the book entitled, *Normal Development of Functional Motor Skills: The First Year of Life*; is author of the CEU product, *Focus on the Rib Cage for Improvement of Respiration, Phonation, Movement, and Postural Control*; and is co-developer of the CEU product, *The ABCs of Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing*.

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## About this Course

This course delivers clinically relevant assessment and intervention strategies for infants and children with neuromuscular impairments and challenges to their oral, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing and respiratory function. Special emphasis is on postural alignment and control as well as on sensory factors that can influence a child's feeding and swallowing. Effective intervention strategies to improve cheeks/lips, tongue, jaw, pharyngeal and rib cage/diaphragm function will be highlighted. Participants will engage in extensive clinical problem-solving via group case analysis and patient demonstration sessions.

## Learning Objectives

- Clinically assess oral, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing and respiratory coordination function in infants and young children.
- Detail the essential components of comprehensive intervention programming for young children with neuromuscular involvement.
- Implement effective body alignment/positioning for the modification of oral, pharyngeal, and respiratory function in intervention programming.
- Perform treatment strategies to improve the function of the cheeks/lips, tongue, and jaw in children with neuromuscular involvement.

## Audience

Professionals who have a foundation of knowledge in the components of typical and atypical oral, pharyngeal, feeding/swallowing, respiratory, and general movement development. Participants should have practical experience in providing assessment and intervention services for infants and children with neuromuscular involvement who exhibit problems in oral motor, oral sensory, pharyngeal, feeding, swallowing, phonatory, and respiratory coordination function.

## Schedule – Day 1 9:10 am - 5:00 pm EST (US)

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>9:10-9:30</b>    | Webinar Registration/Zoom Course Opens   |
| <b>9:30-9:45</b>    | Introduction/Discussion of Workshop Plan   |
| <b>9:45 – 10:30</b> | The ICF Model and Its Relationship to Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing   |
| <b>10:30-11:30</b>  | Primary Influences on a Child's Feeding and Swallowing Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral Impairments</li> <li>• Pharyngeal Impairments</li> <li>• Gastrointestinal Impairments</li> <li>• Respiratory/Airway Impairments</li> <li>• Behavioral Management Issues</li> </ul> |
| <b>11:30-11:45</b>  | Break  |
| <b>11:45-1:30</b>   | Primary Influences on Feeding and Swallowing Function (cont.)  |
| <b>1:30-2:00</b>    | Lunch  |
| <b>2:00-3:30</b>    | Primary Influences on Feeding and Swallowing Function (cont.)<br>Comprehensive Oral, Pharyngeal, Feeding/Swallowing, and Respiratory Coordination Clinical Assessment  |
| <b>3:30-3:45</b>    | Break  |
| <b>3:45-5:00</b>    | Comprehensive Oral, Pharyngeal, Feeding/Swallowing and Respiratory Coordination Clinical Assessment and Intervention Program Development   |

## Schedule – Day 2 9:10 am - 5:00 pm EST (US)

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>9:10-9:30</b>   | Webinar Registration/Zoom Course Opens  |
| <b>9:30-11:30</b>  | Intervention Strategies: The Influences of Body Movements and Postural Alignment on Oral, Pharyngeal, and Rib Cage/Respiratory Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapeutic Handling in Direct Treatment</li> <li>• Body Alignment and Positioning for Improved Oral Function</li> </ul> |
| <b>11:30-11:45</b> | Break   |
| <b>11:45-1:30</b>  | Strategies to Prepare the Oral Mechanism for Function   |
| <b>1:30-2:00</b>   | Lunch   |
| <b>2:00-3:30</b>   | Mealtime Feeding Strategies and Direct Treatment Strategies: Sensory Influences, Utensils, Presentation, Timing, and Modifying Oral and Pharyngeal Function   |
| <b>3:30-3:45</b>   | Break   |
| <b>3:45-5:00</b>   | Mealtime Feeding Strategies and Direct Treatment Strategies (cont.)<br>Wrap-Up  |

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### Webinar Dates and Times

June 19 and 20, 2025

9:10 am EST • 8:10 am CST • 7:10 am MST • 6:10 am PST (US)

Registration is for both sessions. Zoom log-in instructions and course materials will be emailed/added to your ERI account 5-7 days prior to the first date of the Webinar.



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### Treatment Strategies for the Improvement of Oral, Pharyngeal, Feeding/Swallowing, and Respiratory Coordination Function - Rona Alexander

June 19 and 20, 2025

#### Course Registration Form

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