

# Feeding Challenges: Sensory vs. Structural vs. Experience

Danielle Carey, MS, CCC-SLP, COM

## Faculty

Danielle Carey has been a practicing speech-language pathologist over the last 12 years. During the early years of her career, Danielle worked in rehabilitation centers and hospitals. Over the last nine years, she has worked within the private practice setting. Danielle has created and launched a myofunctional program. While building the myofunctional program, Danielle was invited to complete presentations and professional training on tongue-ties and myofunctional disorders to local dental offices, orthodontists, and clinicians (ST, OT, PT). The improved awareness from related providers has resulted in a surplus of referrals. Danielle is a Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM®) through the International Association of Orofacial Myology (IAOM). She has achieved the following specialty training: TOTS (Tethered Oral Tissues Specialty Training), DIR/Floor-time Basic Certificate, VitalStim Certificate, and SOS Approach to Feeding. Danielle is a member of ASHA and the IAOM.

**Disclosure:** Danielle Carey receives a salary from Emerge Pediatric Therapy as a Clinical Manager and treating SLP/COM® receives compensation as a Clinical Instructor for Relias Rehab Therapy Education, Summit Professional Education, MedBridge, and Northern Speech Services. Danielle Carey also receives an honorarium from Education Resources Inc.

**Non-Financial Disclosure:** Danielle Carey has no non-financial relationships to disclose.

## About This Course

Feeding challenges in childhood through adulthood can arise from sensory differences, structural differences, a lack of experience with advanced textures, or all the above. Enhance your feeding knowledge with this holistic approach that acknowledges the role of structural differences, retained reflexes, sensory differences, muscle weakness, and abnormal breathing/rest posture/swallow patterns on mealtime participation and eating. Determine how to functionally assess for tongue ties and determine when releases are warranted. Learn and embrace a neurodiversity affirming approach that accounts for individual differences including emotional support and counseling techniques that contribute to positive outcomes for clients and families struggling with feeding.

## Objectives

- Identify root cause(s) of pediatric feeding difficulty in infants through adolescents
- Differentiate between sensory-based, structurally based and experience-based feeding difficulties from case history review through assessment to prioritize intervention strategies
- Recognize the impact of neurodiverse affirming care to foster a positive relationship based on trust and felt safety
- Determine when and how to best advocate for clients with functional impairments caused by structural differences
- Apply counseling strategies and active-listening techniques to facilitate caregiver collaboration for supporting children with feeding difficulties
- Choose a plan of care to achieve optimal progress with safe and enjoyable feeding based on a client's case history and individual differences
- Utilize play-based treatment to build sensory-based, structural-based, and/or-experienced-based feeding skills

## Audience

This course is recommended for OTs, PTs and SLPs practicing in the feeding and swallowing population.

## Schedule – Day 1 8:40 am to 6:00 pm EST (US)

8:40-9:00 Webinar Registration/Zoom Course Opens

### 9:00-10:30 Foundational Skills

- Typical Teeth Eruption Patterns
- Breastfeeding & Pediatric Feeding Norms
- Influence of Primitive reflexes on Feeding
- Case history analysis for signs and symptoms
- Key Questions for Parent Interviews

### 10:30-1:30 Structural Knowledge

- Tongue-Tie Grading
- Functional Tongue – Tie Assessment
- Frenectomy VIDEO (infant, child, adolescent)
- Postural Differences in relation to TOTS
- Active Wound Care Management
- Physical and Emotional Preparation for Frenectomy
- Dental Alignment, Enlarged Tonsils, High/narrow Palate and Compromised Airway

1:30-2:00 Lunch

### 2:00-4:30 Sensory Knowledge

- Influence of each sense on feeding and swallowing skills: Tactile, Visual, Gustatory, Auditory, Olfactory, Vestibular, Proprioceptive, Interoceptive

### 4:30-6:00 Experienced-Based Knowledge

- Signs of Readiness
- Preparing a child for introduction of solids, Hard Munchables
- Maintaining Nutrition/Hydration while weaning from bottle
- Baby-Led Weaning: Important considerations
- How to progress a child safely
- Food Selection, Engagement Tips, Counseling Support and helpful handouts

## Schedule – Day 2 8:40 am to 4:00 pm EST (US)

8:40-9:00 Webinar Registration/Zoom Course Opens

### 9:40-12:30 Assessment of Multifaceted Feeding Skills

- Infant Assessment
- Structural & Sensory Assessments
- Interview Questions for Experience Considerations
- We have the data, now what? Interpreting Data from your Assessment. Case Studies (infant, structural, multifaceted)
- Developing a Plan of Care: Working with the Child & Caregiver on developing the most appropriate treatment plan for each individual child.

12:30-1:00 Lunch

### 1:00-4:00 Treatment: Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies

- Infant Treatment
- Determine priority of deficits – Case Studies
- Treatment for structural differences
- Treatment for sensory-based deficits
- Treatment for experienced-based deficits

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## Credits

This course meets the criteria for 15 contact hours (1.5 CEUs) Intermediate Level.



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This course can be used toward your NBCOT renewal requirements for 15 units. Approved provider of the FL Board of Occupational Therapy-CE Broker – 18 hrs. This course meets the approval of the TX Board of OT Examiners.



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ASHA credits are accepted by the TX Department of License and Renewal.

Application has been made to the FL Physical Therapy Association for 18 continuing education contact hours.

Application has been made to the MD Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.

Application has been made to the MN Board of Physical Therapy.

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12 hours of this course qualify towards the discipline-specific hours for the 20-hour requirement for NDTA re-certification. They do NOT qualify towards the 8-hour NDTA Instructor requirement for re-certification.

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## Webinar Dates and Times

December 11 and 12, 2025

8:40 am EST • 7:40 am CST • 6:40 am MST • 5:40 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.



\$389 fee. LIMITED ENROLLMENT Cancellation will be accepted until 14 days prior to the start date of the course, minus a \$75 Administration Fee. There will be NO REFUNDS after this 14-day deadline. We encourage you to register online!

**Webinar: Feeding Challenges: Sensory vs. Structural vs. Experience**

**Presenter: Danielle Carey, SLP**

**December 11 and 12, 2025**

**Course Registration Form**

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