

# Monitoring Mechanical Feeding Problems Procedure

## Purpose

This tells Site/Center teams how children with mechanical feeding problems are identified, what must happen before they enter the classroom and how they are monitored in the classroom.

## Guidance

Difficulties with self-feeding often occur in children who have medical conditions such as cerebral palsy, mental retardation, or other developmental disabilities. Some children may be unable to feed themselves due to delayed oral motor skills and/or gross (large muscle) and fine (small muscle) motor skills. Mealtime for children with feeding difficulties can be stressful to both the child and the caregiver. The child may have a difficult time communicating hunger, satiety, likes and dislikes. This may lead to the child either being fed too much or too little of a variety of foods.

## Procedure

### 1. Identify

Site teams must identify children with mechanical feeding problems prior to a child entering the class:

- children who have been diagnosed as having a mechanical feeding problem by their health care provider
- parent or guardian shares information verbally
- concern is listed on *Health and Developmental History*
- diagnosis is documented on *Well Child Exam*

### 2. Document

Site teams must document children with a mechanical feeding problem prior to a child entering class:

1. ECEAP sites input information in ELMS and contact their Nurse Consultant for assistance. Head Start documents information in child/family file; if a *Child Health Plan* is created, that will be sent to the Health Information Line and uploaded into Child Plus.
2. Contact parents or guardians and discuss with them how the Early Learning program can best accommodate their child.
3. Document discussion with parents.
4. Discuss special needs of child with site team.

### 3. Develop and Monitor Child Health Plan

- Develop a *Child Health Plan*, in coordination with the Nurse Consultant (ECEAP) and/or your Regional Health Coordinator. The plan must be in place before the child enters preschool.
- Complete a *Child Supplemental Food Plan Form* if food substitutions are required to meet the child's nutritional needs.
- Discuss changes in the *Child Health Plan* with the Regional Health or Nutrition Coordinator and document any revisions.
- Document any discussions with parents, caregivers or health care providers about the child's feeding plan.

## Related Documents

*Nutrition Consultation Request Form*  
*Child Health Plan and Provider Orders*  
*Child Supplemental Food Plan Form*