



Why do children refuse foods? Understanding avoidant and restrictive eating – a course for professionals

Wednesday 21st April 2021

Online (zoom) interactive training

This course is designed for professionals working with families of children who are difficult to feed. You will discover how children develop feeding skills and learn to like foods, how and why this can go wrong and what you can do to help. You will learn how to differentiate between normal food fussiness and Avoidant and Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID). You will receive online handouts and a list of useful resources.

Your tutors are Dr Gillian Harris and Sarah Mason who have over 50 years combined experience of working in the field of childhood feeding and eating disorders. Dr Harris has a national and an international reputation for her clinical and research work. Sarah Mason was a lead specialist in dysphagia (swallowing problems) at Birmingham Children's Hospital for twenty years.

There are 10 places available.



To book your place, please email
sarah.mason@foodrefusal.co.uk



Due to Covid 19, this course will be online, using zoom. It will consist of 5 hours of tuition between 10 am and 3.45 pm.

Fee: £180 per person (Please note, we need direct payment from applicants in advance.)

Course Details

This course is aimed at any professionals who work with toddlers, children and adolescents, who are difficult to feed. The children may refuse foods in an extreme way or may seem uninterested in food and lacking appetite. The range of food that they accept may be very restricted and there may be concerns about health and well-being. The child may dislike social situations involving food or be uncomfortable with certain smells, textures or look of foods. Many of the children may reach the criteria for a diagnosis of Avoidant and Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID). It is not a course about the eating disorders Anorexia Nervosa or Bulimia, although there will be discussion about the differences between these disorders and ARFID.

The workshop will cover the following:

- How children learn to eat – the key milestones in learning feeding skills and developing food likes and dislikes
- The sensory aspects of eating – the taste, texture, smell and look of food – and the oral-motor skills required to eat different food textures and consistencies.
- Why some children have difficulties with eating – this may be related to a combination of genetic, medical factors and learning experiences. We will explore Avoidant and Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) which is commonly associated with children on the autistic spectrum.
- We will explore the strategies that parents can use to make mealtimes less stressful and discuss the interventions that can help a child widen their food choices.
- The final session will be an opportunity to look at case studies and have questions and answers.

We allocate places on a first come first served.

You are welcome to email us - sarah.mason@foodrefusal.co.uk - if you have any questions about the workshop.