Dysphagia
Feeding and Swallowing Issues in the Schools
Continuous Improvement Conference, February 2015
Leander ISD Dysphagia Team

What is dysphagia?
- Dysphagia is impaired swallow function or difficulty with feeding and swallowing.
- The signs and symptoms of dysphagia may involve the mouth, pharynx, larynx, and/or esophagus.

District Dysphagia Team Members
- Karla Barth, Assistant Director of Risk Management
- Amy Rudd, SPED Coordinator
- Vanessa Wiley, RN
- Kim McCollum, lead SLP
- Leslie Micus, lead OT/PT
- Darolyn Gonzales, SLP
- Veanne Torres, SLP
- Pamela Myatt, SLP
- Lynn Campbell, OT
- Sarah Edwards, RD, CNS
History of the Team

- Students with significant feeding/swallowing concerns
- Training at Region 13
- Process was designed to help campus teams
- Primary purpose is to facilitate safety, nutrition, hydration, adequate health to support student learning

Why should School systems Address Dysphagia?

- IDEA states that health services are a part of related services providing education to children.
- IDEA requires that schools provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
- To ensure that children are safe at school.
- More medically fragile children attend public school than in the past.
- Having a systematic process in place will protect school systems and their employees from liability if an adverse event occurs.
Normal Swallow
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FMnXz6o2v

Modified Barium Swallow Study (MBSS)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hf2kRD85zvc

Signs and Symptoms
- Coughing or choking when swallowing or following swallow
- Difficulty swallowing, unable to swallow food once it is in their mouth
- Food sticking in the throat
- Drooling
- Unexplained weight loss or under body weight for height
- Recurrent pneumonia and or frequent upper respiratory infections
- Nasal regurgitation
- Change in facial coloring
- Watery/teary eyes
- Excessive body tension
School-Based Dysphagia Team Members

- Speech-language Pathologist (SLP)
- School Nurse
- Physical therapist (PT)
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Dietitian
- SPED Teacher
- General Ed Teacher
- Instructional Assistant
- School Administrator
- Physician
- Cafeteria Workers

Referral Process

- If any of the school-based team members have concerns about a student’s ability to eat or drink safely and effectively at school, they can bring this to the attention of the other team members.

Initiate Referral

- Tracking teacher consults with campus nurse
- Staffing is held with ALL staff to discuss concerns
- If evaluation is needed, the tracking teacher obtains a Swallowing and Feeding Team Referral Form from the Campus Nurse
- Tracking teacher contacts parent about concerns and informs them of the district procedure
- Campus Staff completes the referral form
- Send completed referral form to District Dysphagia Team (Darolyn Gonzales, SLP)
- District Dysphagia team contacts teacher/nurse to consult and decide on action plan
If evaluation is needed, tracking teacher sets up a brief ARD

At the brief ARD:
- Campus nurse MUST be invited
- Share specific observations/concerns
- Discuss/request necessary evaluation
- Review or complete Parent Input Form
- Release of Information form signed by parent
- Notice/Consent for Evaluation in Esped
- Nurse will obtain information to include in Individualized Health Services Plan
- General education teacher can be waived with parent consent
- Member of dysphagia team may or may not be present at meeting

Evaluation—Tracking Teacher Responsibilities:
- Contact Darlynn Gonzales to initiate consultation
- Plan to be present for the entire observation/evaluation and discussion before/after
- Arrange for all relevant campus team members to be present
- Observation takes place during typical meal time
- Schedule ARD to review evaluation results
Evaluation: District Dysphagia Team Responsibilities

- Determine district team members who will conduct evaluation
- Determine which district team member will manage case
- Manager schedules the observation/evaluation at campus
- Review file prior to conducting evaluation
- Make sure all necessary medical information is gathered/available
- If Clinical Evaluation suggests the need for MBSS to be completed, support the campus team in coordinating this

After evaluation: District Dysphagia Team Responsibilities:

- Write report
- Share results of evaluation with campus nurse, classroom staff, and parents
- Provide training for classroom staff and cafeteria staff
- Document/summarize dysphagia evaluation information in the ARD (PLAAFP)
- Attach dysphagia report to ARD
- Attend brief ARD to review evaluation if possible

Handouts

- Guiding Document
- ARD Committee Guidance
Questions

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