

Promoting Caregiver Competency Through Home Programs and Educational Handouts



Educational Handouts

Casey Lawson, OTD/s

Site Mentors: Sarah Stulberger OTR/L, Elizabeth Restivo OTD, OTR/L

Faculty Mentor: Kendra King, OTR/L



About Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA):

- 501(c)3 non-profit children's hospital based in Los Angeles, established in 1901 (CHLA, 2023).
- **Mission:** To create hope and build healthier futures.
- Care includes the Fetal and Neonatal Institute, Heart Institute, Orthopedic Institute, Radiology and Imaging, Cancer and Blood Disease Institute, and more.

Identified Needs:

1. Develop cohesive home programs that are approachable and accessible in multiple formats.
2. Create educational handouts for parents related to feeding difficulties and dysphagia.
3. Establish support groups for parents and caregivers of children with feeding difficulties.

Literature Review:

- Parents and caregivers should be treated as partners in their child's care, making them an equal part of the multidisciplinary team (Sorra et al., 2021).
- Transitional care training is seen to be correlated with improved patient health outcomes; such as physical, mental, and emotional health (Sorra et al., 2021).

Learning Objectives:

1. By seven weeks, the capstone student will have researched and observed five feeding treatment sessions to create home programs and educational materials for parents of children with feeding difficulties.
2. By the end of DCE, the capstone student will have completed the home programs and educational materials and submitted them to the dysphagia committee for review.
3. By the end of DCE, the capstone student will have advanced their clinical practice skills in dysphagia.

Project Description:

Primary Focus Area: clinical practice skills

Secondary Focus Area: program development

Weeks 1-6

Outpatient wing:
 • Observed, shadowed, treatment planned, co-treated, completed documentation for children with feeding difficulties.

Weeks 3-6

- Finalized needs assessment.
- Solidified what resources and home programs were needed.
- Researched dysphagia in the pediatric population.

Weeks 7-14

Acute:
 • Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).
 • Shadowed, treatment planned, co-treated, and documented for newborns, infants, and medically complex children.

Weeks 9-14

- Created one educational handout and three home programs for parents with children with feeding difficulties.
- Presented deliverables to occupational therapy department.
- Submitted to dysphagia committee.

Scholarly Deliverables:

1. Educational Handout
 - key takeaways of dysphagia
2. Home Programs
 - swallowing exercises
 - oral motor exercises
 - transitioning to solids



Dysphagia
 The following exercises can be used to strengthen the muscles in and around your child's mouth to improve their swallow. For a video demonstration scan the QR code next to each exercise.

Types of Dysphagia
Oral
 Difficulty controlling your mouth, lips, and tongue to create back and forth suction.
Oropharyngeal
 Difficulty triggering the swallow reflex or creating the suction needed to swallow.
Esophageal
 Difficulty with the passage of food and liquids through the esophagus and into the stomach.

What is Aspiration?
 Aspiration occurs when food and/or liquids enter above the airway (instead of the esophagus) and travel to the lungs.

What is Silent Aspiration?
 Some individuals who aspirate do not show visible symptoms, making it challenging to know if they are aspirating. Clinical testing, such as an X-ray, may be used to identify aspiration.

Some Signs & Symptoms of Aspiration
 • Feeling sick in the chest after eating or drinking
 • Wet or raspy sounding voice or dry after eating or drinking
 • Coughing or choking during feed
 • Gagging during feed
 • Arching or stiffening of the body during feed

Getting sick often with colds or pneumonia
 • Frustrated during feeds
 • Single line

If you need additional help:
 • If you have any questions or concerns please contact:
 • Department: _____
 • Location: _____
 *References available upon request

Swallowing Exercises
 The following exercises can be used to strengthen the muscles in and around your child's mouth to improve their swallow. For a video demonstration scan the QR code next to each exercise.

Masako Maneuver
 • Sit your tongue out of your mouth.
 • Sit your lips on your tongue to hold a "fish face."
 • Swallow while sitting down in tongue.
 • Repeat _____ times a day.

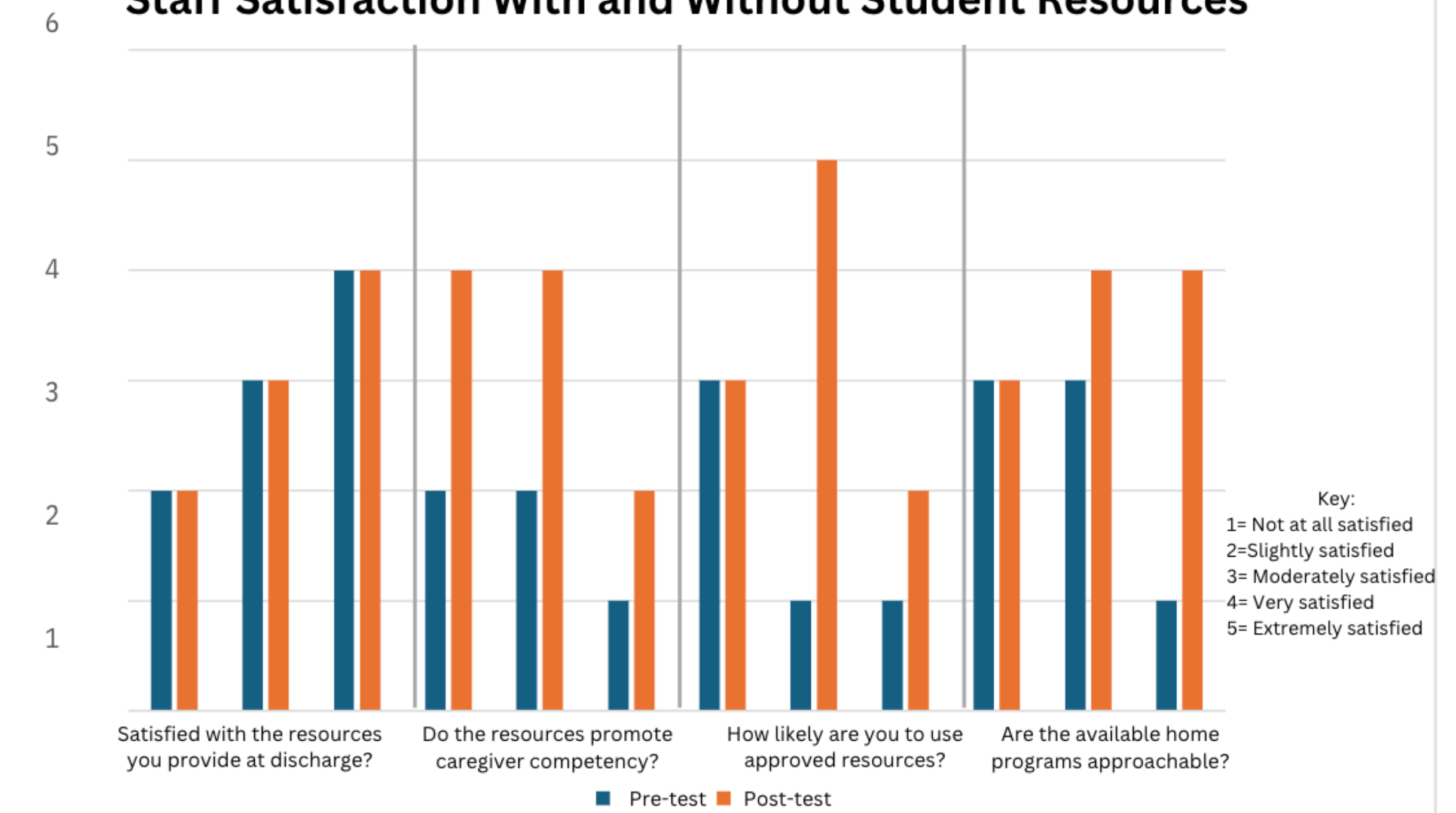
Jaw Thrust
 • Push your lower jaw forward as far as possible. Your lower teeth should be in front of your upper teeth.
 • Hold the position for 3 seconds.
 • Repeat _____ times a day.

Supraglottic Maneuver
 • Collect a bit of water in your mouth.
 • Take a deep breath and hold the water in your mouth.
 • Swallow while holding your breath.
 • Immediately after swallowing, cough.
 • Repeat _____ times each _____ times a day.

Mendelsohn Maneuver
 • Press your tongue, middle, and ring finger of one hand on your neck to locate your larynx (the small bump at the front of your neck, below your throat).
 • Swallow, hold your larynx's middle muscles and draw them up as you swallow.
 • Swallow again. This time, squeeze your throat muscles and hold your larynx up as high as you can.
 • Repeat _____ times each _____ times a day.

Outcomes:

Staff Satisfaction With and Without Student Resources



- n=3
- No increase in practitioner satisfaction with the scholarly deliverables.
- An increase in having approachable resources to promote caregiver competency was noted.

Acknowledgments:

- Biggest thank you to Ellie, Sarah, and everyone at CHLA for the greatest guidance and support this experience. It would not have been possible without you.

References available upon request