



TAKING STEPS TO OVERCOME RESTRICTIVE EATING AND TRANSFORM MEALTIMES

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

01

Foundations

02

Structure

03

Nutrition

04

Treatment

05

Solutions

ABOUT US

- Lauren & Elise started The Feeding Group (previously called Picky Eating Vancouver) in 2017
- Provide in-person support for families in Vancouver and virtual services across BC
- Services offered include:
 - Feeding Team (RD + OT/SLP)
 - Dietitian
 - Occupational Therapist
 - Speech Language Pathologist
- Support babies and children with various pediatric feeding issues



ABOUT YOU

Please share with the group:

- Your name
- Age of your child/children
- One word that describes your feelings about your child's eating or mealtimes



PICKY EATING & FEEDING DISORDERS



Medical Terms

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

Picky Eating

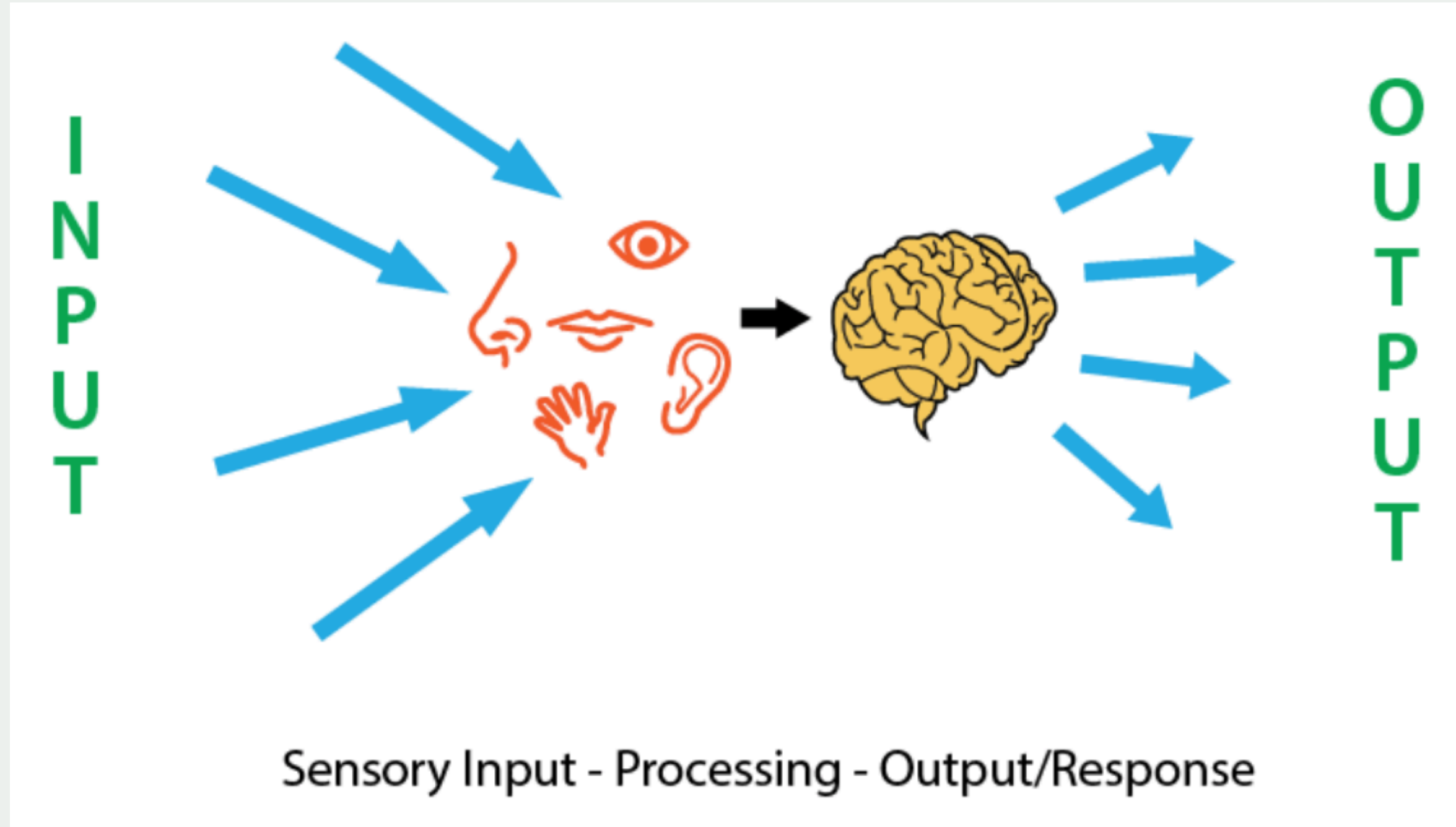
Restrictive Eating

Pediatric Feeding Disorders

PICKY EATING & FEEDING DISORDERS



SENSORY PROCESSING & FEEDING



SENSORY PROCESSING & FEEDING

Avoidant

- Covering nose
- Turning away
- Gagging with smells or tastes
- Avoids certain food textures, flavours or colours
- Prefers processed foods
- Supertasters



SENSORY PROCESSING & FEEDING

Seeking

- Mouths non-food items
- Prefers strong flavours & smells
- Likes chewy foods
- Overstuffs/pockets foods



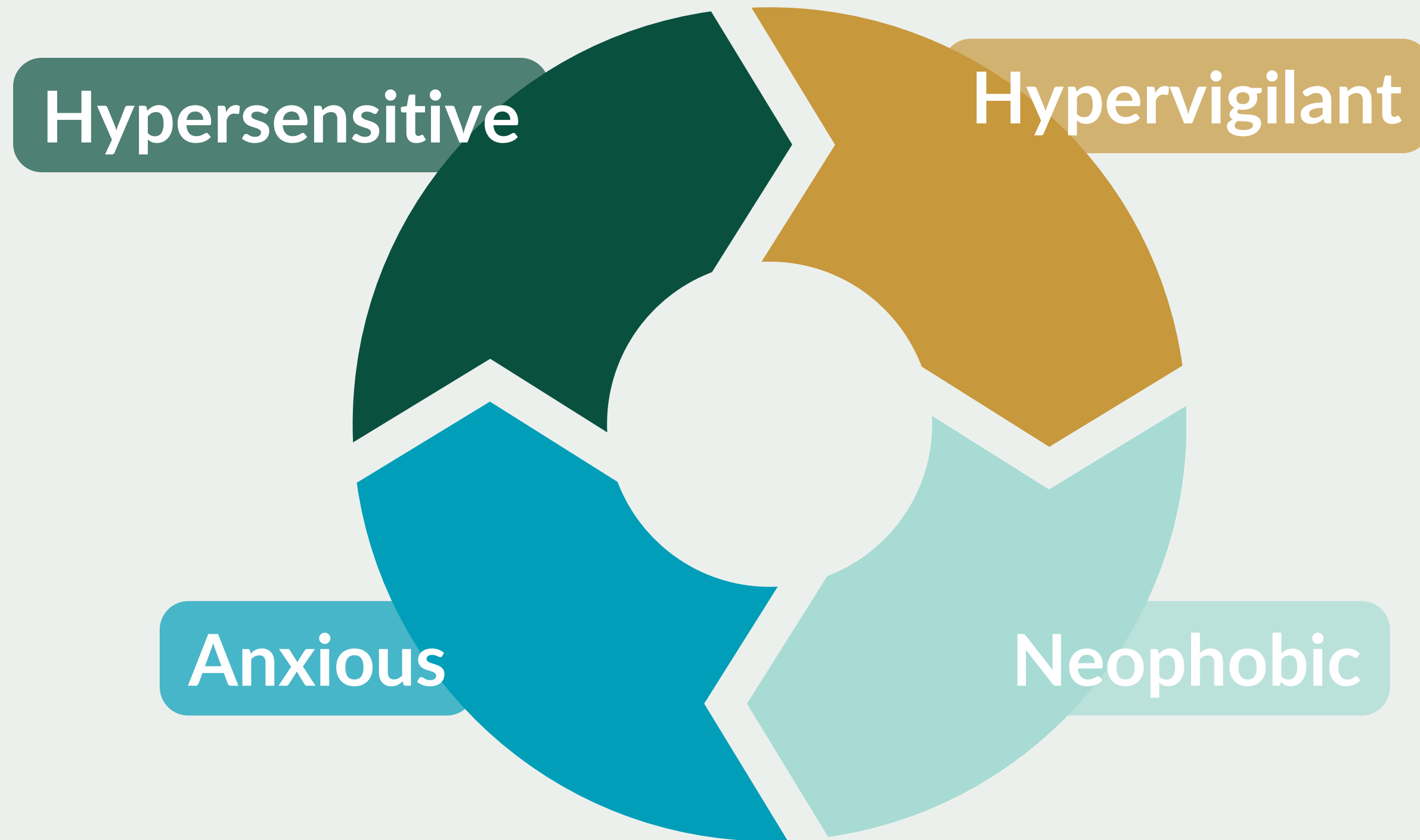
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Eating is not just a biological act but a social and emotional one too.

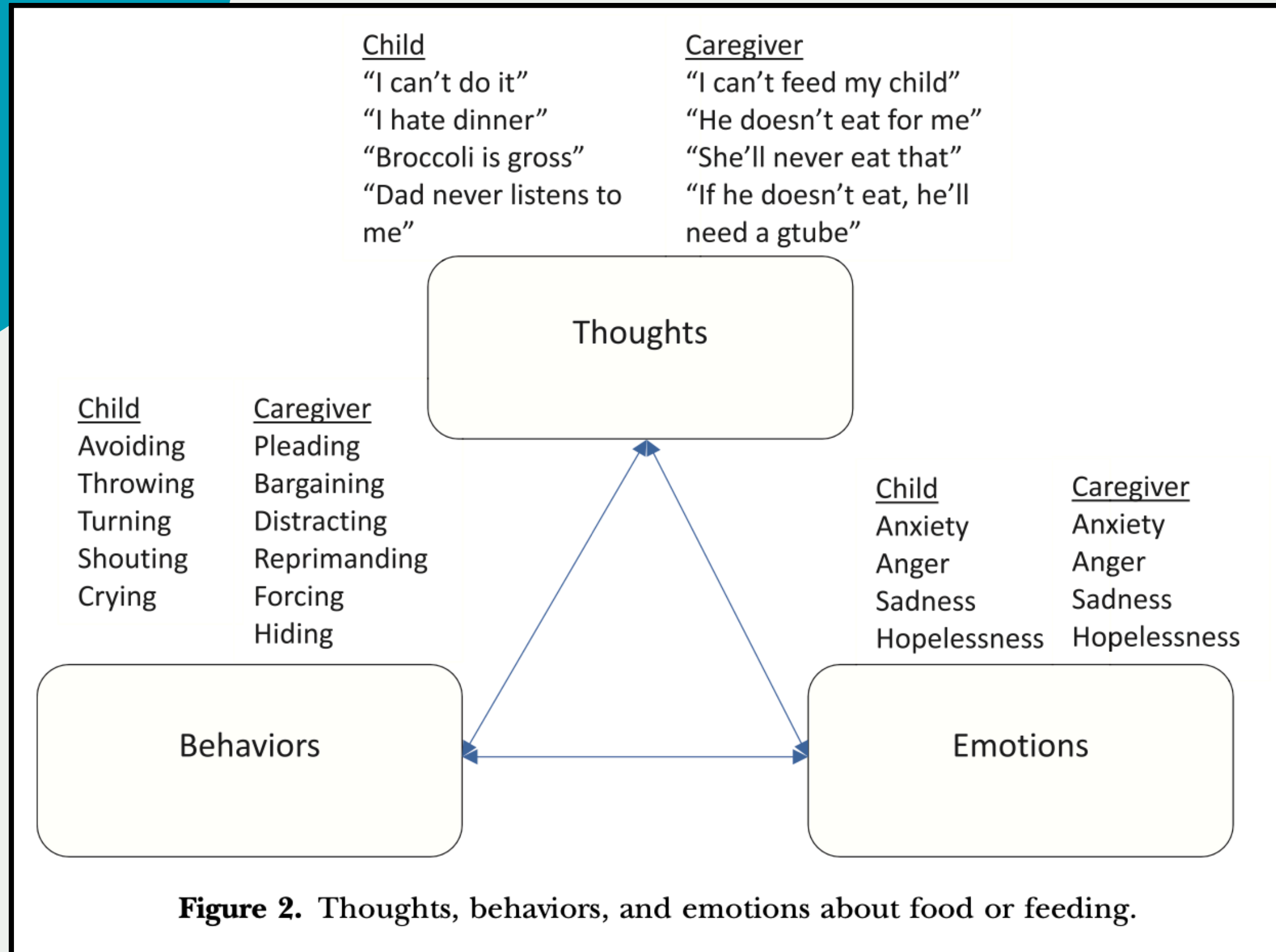
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Dr. Deborah MacNamara

ANXIETY & FEEDING



IMPACTS & FEELINGS





We can't wholly nourish our children unless food is served in the context of connection, but what does this mean, and what does it look like?



Dr. Deborah MacNamara

Autonomy

- The child's body is respected.
- Crying, gagging, or vomiting are not 'behaviors to extinguish'. They are responses to past or current negative experiences with food or eating.
- Therapeutic goals are guided by the child's current presentation, skills, and readiness

Relationship

- The connection between parent and child during feeding plays a crucial role in long-term well-being and emotional recovery.
- Heightened anxiety and tension during meals can affect the parent-child relationship beyond eating occasions.
- Lasting and beneficial transformations occur when a child experiences emotional security and a sense of well-being.

RESPONSIVE FEEDING



Internal Motivation

- Children do well with eating when they can.
- Positive meal times, regardless of the variety in diet, play a vital role in improving a child's relationship with food.
- While eating may not be enjoyable for everyone, mealtimes can become neutral or positive settings that nurture social interactions.
- Pushing for skill development beyond a child's current abilities and readiness can lead to dysregulation and impede progress.
- Anxiety in children can impact internal motivation, hunger cues, social connections, and feelings of safety.
- Sustainable, lasting changes are driven by internal motivation and desires such as hunger, enjoyment of new experiences, curiosity, and a sense of competence or mastery.

RESPONSIVE FEEDING



Individualized Care

- Every child is an individual with a unique history and differing needs.
- “Healthy foods” vary depending on each child’s context.
- Pace and nature of progress differ from one child to the next.

Competence

- Skill acquisition and development, which includes feeding and other motor skills, is best fostered through engaging activities in a natural setting.
- Interventions should align with the child's abilities and development stage, aiming to reflect typical development whenever feasible.
- Progress should not be solely measured by the amount of food consumed or the variety of foods accepted.
- Initial advancements like comfort, reduced anxiety, and curiosity lay the foundation for expanding food choices.
- Parents become more confident feeding partners as they witness early successes and progress.

RESPONSIVE FEEDING



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S FEEDING

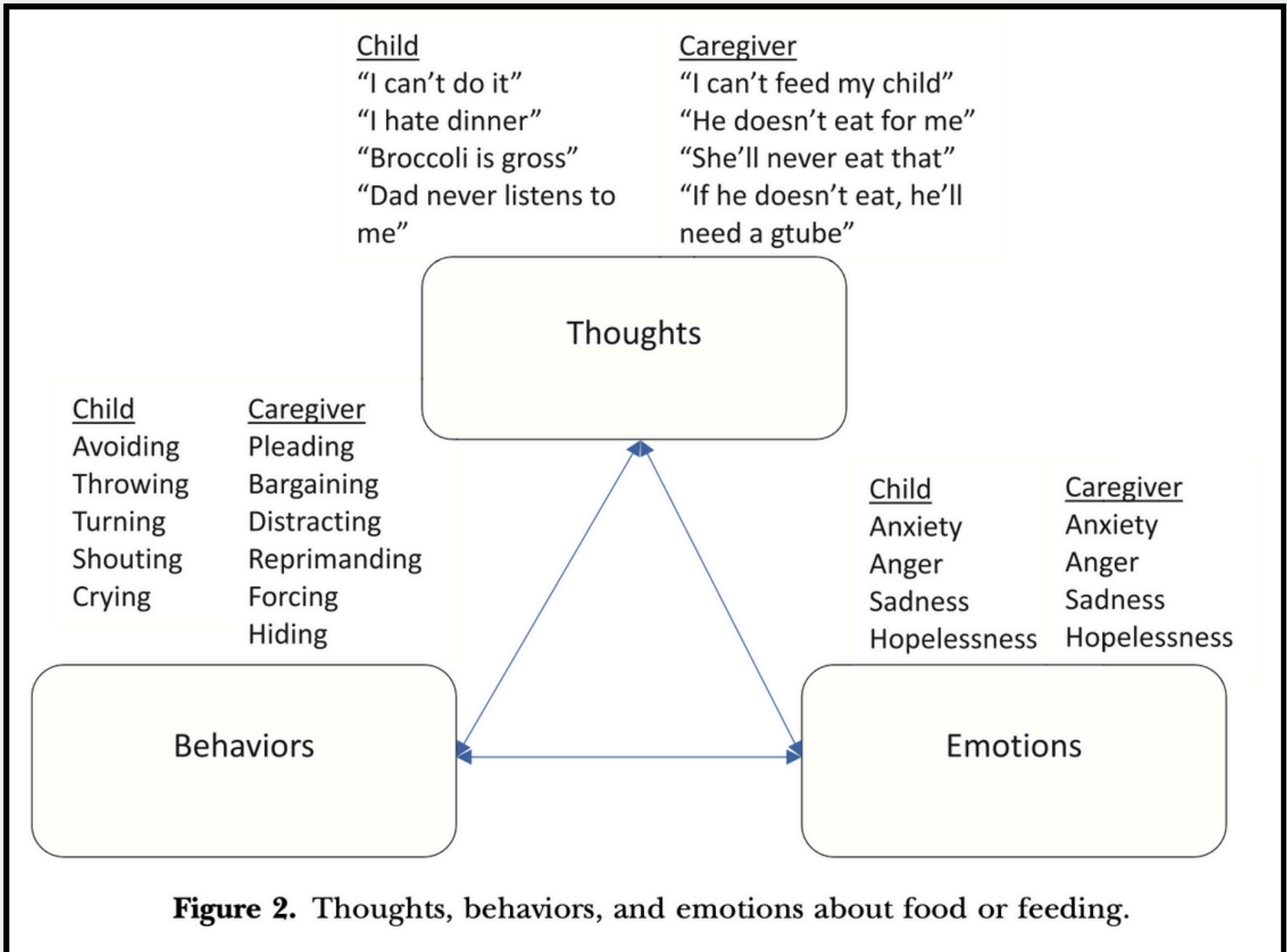


What factors do you think are contributing to your child's feeding challenges?

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S FEEDING

What thoughts, behaviours & emotions do you notice in *your child* at mealtimes?

What thoughts, behaviours & emotions do you notice in *yourself* at mealtimes?



ASSIGNMENT I

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN

Mealtime Observations



Document how your child interacts at mealtimes (over 1–2 meals this week)

- Notice if they show preferences for certain textures, colours, or flavours.
- What textures are they avoiding? Is there a pattern?
- Is there a colour or shape preference?
- Watch for nonverbal cues that indicate your child's sensory preferences.
- Are mealtimes harder at breakfast? Dinner? Weeknights? On the weekends?

Insights and Feelings



- What are the thoughts and feelings you have at mealtime?
- How do I respond to my child? How does it make me feel?
- How do I feel after the mealtime?
- Were there any moments that felt positive in your mealtime? What did that feel like?

ASSIGNMENT 2

3 DAY FOOD RECORD



We will use this food record as a base for future activities and assignments. Try to record this without pressure or judgment (on your child or yourself). It is a tool to help better understand your child's current eating habits and preferences, therefore, there's no need to change what you usually do or offer.

- Record everything your child eats and drinks for 3 days. They don't have to be consecutive, but try to include at least one weekend day and one school/daycare day if applicable.
- Include as much detail about the food, especially if your child is particular about it, for example: brand, shape, flavour, colour, preparation method.
- Provide a rough estimate of the quantity that your child eats, for example: a bite, 1 slice, 3 pieces, ~1/2 cup.
- Include details about the mealtime such as WHEN, WHERE, with WHO, HOW LONG, and WHAT ELSE is going on (distractions, big family dinner).