

Early Intervention Increased Food Acceptance in Children with Visual Impairment

Abstract: Limited literature exists documenting mealtime challenges and evidence for early intervention for children with visual impairment (VI). The objective of this pilot study was to determine whether a mealtime routines intervention for children with VI from 6 to 24 months would affect food texture, variety, and healthy food choices. The intervention occurred in homes/childcare settings involving children with VI, their caretakers, and their early interventionists. The intervention group scored higher than the control group for acceptance of food textures at 6–24 months ($p \leq .005$) and at 13–24 months ($p \leq .007$) and for consuming a greater variety of foods between 6 and 12 months ($p \leq .04$). Assessment scores for positive caregiver and child mealtime behaviors were higher for the intervention group, $p = .0000$. The intervention showed promise for enhancing positive mealtime behaviors, feeding skills, and food acceptance.