

# PICKY EATERS VS PROBLEM FEEDERS: The SOS Approach to Feeding



Dr Kay Toomey from Colorado in the United States is returning to Australia in 2026 to present another of her hugely successful training events for paediatric health professionals. This year she is joined by colleagues Dr Erin Ross (paediatric speech pathologist) and Susan Kniffen (paediatric occupational therapist)

## THE SOS APPROACH TO FEEDING

The SOS Approach is a transdisciplinary program for assessing and treating children with feeding difficulties and poor growth (birth to 18 years of age), with a particular focus on early intervention in children from 6 months to 6 years of age. This approach integrates posture, sensory, motor, behavioural/ learning, medical, and nutritional considerations to comprehensively evaluate and manage children with feeding and growth problems.

## SOS CONFERENCES

Health professionals who attend the full SOS Training Course are eligible for accreditation to run the SOS Program. Additional SOS Special Interest training modules are open to health professionals who have completed the Training Course and are available online.



HOST

[www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)

## 2026 SOS Training Course Melbourne

**IN-PERSON TRAINING DATES**  
**February 24-27**  
**(Tuesday-Friday)**

**VENUE**  
**Sofitel Melbourne on Collins**

**PLEASE NOTE**  
**Going forward, The SOS Approach to Feeding Training Course will be run as a hybrid Course with 2 components:**

- Prerequisite, pre-recorded Online Segment  
= 9 hours of pre-recorded lecture material

- In-Person, Live Onsite Segment  
= 4 days of in-person, live lecture, interactive physical exercises, discussion, and practice of therapy strategies



## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

SOS Training Courses are designed for speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, dietitians/nutritionists, GPs, paediatricians, early childhood and community nurses, mental health workers, special educators, and other paediatric health professionals working with children with feeding difficulties.

## RESOURCES

All participants will be provided with course notes and handouts. Additional resources developed by the presenters are available for purchase at the Course.

## REGISTRATION

Registration fees and Training Course outlines are provided on the pages following. To register to attend the Training Course, please go to website: [www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)

Additional information including directions to the venues, public transport options, parking, accommodation, and additional information about the Training Course can also be found on the website, or can be obtained by emailing the host [info@feedingworkshops.com](mailto:info@feedingworkshops.com)

# The SOS Approach to Feeding

**Dr. Kay A. Toomey** is a Pediatric Psychologist who has worked with children who don't eat for over 35 years. She has developed the SOS Approach to Feeding as a family centered program for assessing and treating children with feeding problems. Dr. Toomey speaks nationally and internationally about her approach. Dr. Toomey helped to form The Children's Hospital – Denver's Pediatric Oral Feeding Clinic, as well as the Rose Medical Center's Pediatric Feeding Center. Dr. Toomey co-chaired the Pediatric Therapy Services Department at Rose Medical Center prior to entering private practice. Dr. Toomey acted as the Clinical Director for Toomey & Associates, Inc.'s Feeding Clinic, and then the SOS Feeding Solutions @ STAR before shifting into clinical consultation in order to focus on her teaching. Dr. Toomey is currently the President of Toomey & Associates, Inc.

**Dr. Erin Sundseth Ross** is a Speech Pathologist with a Doctoral degree in Clinical Sciences – Health Services Research. She completed a two-year post-doctoral training in the Section of Nutrition and is a Clinical Instructor in the School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, at the University of Colorado Denver. Dr. Ross has over 30 years of experience working in the NICU within several HealthONE hospitals, and with children when she was at the Toomey & Associates, Inc. Feeding Clinic and at SOS Feeding Solutions @ STAR in Denver, Colorado. Dr. Ross is the creator of the SOFFI Method®, a feeding program for use in the NICU. She has specialized in the development of feeding skills, and the etiology and treatment of feeding and growth problems in infants and very young children from initial hospitalization through the first 5 years of life.

**Susan Kniffen, MS, OTR/L** received her Master's degree in Occupational Therapy at Shenandoah University (VA). She spent the first two years of her career working with adults in acute care and rehabilitation settings before transferring to working in pediatric settings in 2005. Since 2006, she has been a feeding specialist in addition to working with children who have orthopedic, neurological, and complex medical needs. She is currently an occupational therapist and feeding specialist in the early intervention program for The Resource Exchange. Previously she provided pediatric outpatient feeding and rehabilitation services through Memorial Hospital, Toomey & Associates Inc., and Children's Hospital Colorado. Educating and empowering parents to be students of their children is her passion.

**The SOS Approach to Feeding** is a transdisciplinary program for assessing and treating children with feeding difficulties and weight/ growth problems. It has been developed and refined through the clinical work of Dr Kay Toomey in conjunction with colleagues from several different disciplines including: paediatricians, registered dietitians, speech pathologists, and occupational therapists. This program integrates posture, sensory, motor, behavioural/ learning, social/ emotional, medical, and nutritional factors with approaches to comprehensively evaluate and manage children with feeding/ growth problems. It is based on, and grounded philosophically in, the "normal" developmental steps, stages, and skills of feeding found in typically developing children. The treatment component utilises these typical developmental steps towards feeding to create a systematic desensitisation hierarchy of skills/ behaviours necessary for children to progress with eating various textures, and achieve appropriate growth. The assessment component of the program ensures that all physical reasons for atypical feeding development. are examined and appropriately treated. The SOS Approach works to identify any nutritional deficits and to develop recommendations as appropriate to each individual child's growth parameters and needs. Skills across all developmental areas are assessed with regards to feeding, as well as an examination of learning capabilities with regards to using the SOS program.

**Website:** [www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)

**Email enquiries:** [info@feedingworkshops.com](mailto:info@feedingworkshops.com)



# SOS TRAINING COURSE 2026

## SOS TRAINING COURSE OBJECTIVES

- List the seven areas of human function that need to be examined to provide a comprehensive Feeding Assessment.
- Identify at least five of the oral, sensory, motor, cognitive or emotional developmental milestones key to being able to eat well.
- List three reasons why children won't eat, as based on learning theory principles.
- Differentiate classical and operant conditioning principles as applied to resolving feeding problems.
- Identify at least four of the necessary components of an SOS Approach to Feeding program for babies, toddlers and young children in either an individual or group therapy session.
- List all three requirements for building a Food Hierarchy.
- Identify at least one play based strategy for progressing a child up each of the 6 major Steps on the Steps to Eating Hierarchy.

HOST



[www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)

## CERTIFICATE OF TRIANING

Registrants are expected to attend the Training Course and participate fully *for the entire length of each day* in order to receive their Certificate of Training.

For the 2026 Melbourne Training Course, key dates are as follows:

- In-Person, Live Onsite Segment: **February 24-27, 2026 (Tuesday–Friday).**
- Prerequisite, pre-recorded Online Segment: Open from December 1, 2025. **Must be completed prior to February 16, 2026.**

Note:

- ◆ Participants will be expected to complete the first 9 hours of the Training Course independently online PRIOR to the start of the 4 days of In-Person Segment of the Training Course.
- ◆ Participants are required to pass a test covering the first 9 hours of the Training, with at least 80% accuracy, at least ONE week BEFORE the first day of the In-Person Segment of the 4 Day Training Course in order to participate and attend the In-Person Segment of the Training Course.
- ◆ For the 4 day In-Person, Live Onsite Segment, participants are expected to attend from 8am to 5pm daily. Participants will miss crucial information needed to be able to correctly use the SOS Approach to Feeding program if they come late or leave the course early on any day.
- ◆ Any and all missed lecture time must be made-up before the end of the Training Course in order for a Certificate to be received and/or permission to use the program to be given.
- ◆ Participants leaving before 5pm on the last day of the Training Course will not receive a Certificate nor permission to use the program. Hence, please make sure to make travel arrangements to leave the Training Course AFTER 5pm on the last day.

Prerequisite, pre-recorded Online Training open from December 1, 2025;  
**Must be completed prior to February 16, 2026**  
 on order to attend In-Person, Live Onsite Training:  
**February 24-27, 2026 (Tuesday–Friday).**

## ONLINE TRAINING SEGMENT

15mins	<b>Chapter 1: Introduction and Requirements</b>
	Host Introduction
	Course logistics and requirements to pass
2hours, 30mins	<b>Chapter 2: Prevalence and Scope of Problem</b>
	A. Scope of Problem & Development of SOS
	B. Prevalence Data – Growth Problems
	C. Prevalence Data – Feeding Problems
	D. Feeding Prevalence & Neurodivergent Populations
	E. SOS Iceberg
2hours, 30mins	<b>Chapter 3: SOS Tenets and Top Ten Myths</b>
	A. Complexity of Feeding/Eating & the Role of the Environment
	B. Tenets of SOS & Top 10 Myths - Overview
	C. Myth 8: Picky Eaters vs Problem Feeders and PFD vs ARFID
2hours	<b>Chapter 4: The Role of Learning in Feeding - How children learn to AND not to eat</b>
	A. Learning Theory
	B. Feeding Therapy Options
	C. Conditioning Video
1hour	<b>Chapter 5: Foundations of Feeding Development - Motor and Sensory</b>
	A. Motor Milestones
	B. Sensory Milestones
1hour	<b>Chapter 6: Foundations of Feeding Development - Cognitive</b>
	A. Cognitive Milestones



## SOS TRAINING COURSE 2026

# IN-PERSON TRAINING SEGMENT

DAY 1:	
7:30-8:00am	Registration
8:00-8:15am	Course Announcements – Logistics and Requirements
8:15-10:00am	<b>I. Introduction</b>
	A. Overview – SOS Tenets & PFD
	<b>II. Feeding Theory &amp; Milestones - How children learn to AND not to eat</b>
	A. Myth 1 = Breathing
	B. Myth 1 = Posture
	C. Oral-Motor Skill Acquisition & Developmental Food Continuum
10:00-10:20am	Break
10:20am-12:00pm	II. Feeding Theory & Milestones - Continued C. Oral-Motor Skills & Developmental Food Continuum - Continued
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-3:00pm	II. Feeding Theory & Milestones - Continued
	D. Sensory Skill Acquisition
	E. Understanding the Role of Sensory Integration In Feeding
3:00-3:20 pm	Break
3:20-5:00pm	II. Feeding Theory & Milestones - Continued
	F. Steps to Eating - Overview
	G. Cognitive Development

DAY 2:	
8:00-10:00am	II. Feeding Theory & Milestones - Continued
	G. Cognitive Development - Continued
	H. Psychological Developmental Stages
	<b>III. Treatment/Interventions</b>
	A. General Treatment Strategies
	1. Social Role Modeling
10:00-10:20am	Break
10:20am-12:00pm	III. Treatment/Interventions - Continued
	A. General Treatment Strategies - Continued
	2. Structure/Routine
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-3:00pm	III. Treatment/Interventions - Continued
	A. General Treatment Strategies - Continued
	3. The Correct Use of Reinforcement
	4. Accessing the Cognitive
	B. Food Jags
	<b>IV. Assessment of Feeding Problems</b>
	A. Referral Candidates
	Break
3:20-5:00pm	IV. Assessment of Feeding Problems - Continued
	B. Assessment Process
	C. Assessment by Subsystems
	1. Reasons Children Won't Eat
	2. What to Observe
	3. Practice Videos
	D. Assessment Vignette 1 - Medically Complicated
	E. Assessment Vignette 2 - Family
	F. Parents' Experience

## SOS TRAINING COURSE 2026

# IN-PERSON TRAINING SEGMENT

DAY 3:	
8:00-10:00am	<b>V. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Theoretical Requirements</b>
	A. Systematic Desensitization
	B. Cues to Eating
	C. Language Use
10:00-10:20am	Break
10:20am-12:00pm	<b>VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions</b>
	A. Therapy Format - Child
	1. Room Set-Up + Modifications
	2. Session Structure & Routine
	B. Therapy Format – Parent
	C. Modifications Across Settings
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-3:00pm	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions
	D. Sensory Based Problem Solving
	E. Progression Across Sessions
	F. Graduation Criteria & SOS Data
3:00-3:20pm	Break
3:20-5:00pm	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions - Continued
	G. Building a Food Hierarchy
	1. Requirements
	2. Practice

DAY 4:	
8:00-10:00am	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions
	G. Building a Food Hierarchy - continued
	2. Practice – continued
	H. Hierarchy Strategies – Moving Children Up the Steps
	1. Disciplines' Roles
	2. Play with a Purpose
10:00-10:20am	Break
10:20am-12:00pm	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions- Continued
	H. Hierarchy Strategies – Moving Children Up the Steps - Continued
	3. Play techniques per Step
	4. Practicing hierarchy strategies
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-3:00pm	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions- Continued
	I. Hierarchy Strategies – Oral Motor Steps to Eating
	J. Videos: Progression Within Session (Sessions 1 & 12)
3:00-3:20pm	Break
3:20-5:00pm	VI. The SOS Approach to Feeding – Therapy Sessions
	K. SOS Data
	VII. Managing Other Maladaptive Behaviors
	A. Vomiting
	B. Emotion Based Discipline
	Certificate of Training available

## SOS TRAINING COURSE 2026



# The SOS Approach to Feeding 2026 Training Course

## DISCLAIMER

Information contained in this brochure is correct at the time of publishing. The organisers reserve the right to change the program, topics, and presenters if necessary.

**Registrations:** There will be no refunds given should registrants be unable to attend part of the Training Course or for no-shows.

**Cancellation Policy:** A refund on registration (less \$100 cancellation fee) will be made on cancellations received in writing before 16/01/2026. There will be no refunds after this date, although substitute delegates will be welcome.

**Liability Waiver:** The organisers assume no liability for any loss, injury, or other adverse event that may occur while attending the Training Course or travelling to or from the Conference.

**Pandemic Restrictions:** This Training Course is planned to be an in-person event. Government safety guidelines will be followed. If circumstances do not allow an in-person event, a virtual event will be offered. In such circumstances, those who are registered will be given the option of attending the virtual Training Course or having their registration refunded. The host and speakers take no responsibility for any other costs incurred by registrants.



## REGISTRATION FEES 2026 TRAINING COURSE

REGISTRATION	Early bird (Until October 30, 2025)	Regular (From November 1, 2025)
SOS Training Course	\$1950 (inc GST)	\$2200 (inc GST)

**Note:** A booking fee, payable directly to the ticketing agent at the time of booking, also applies. See Oztix website for details.

Registration fees include: Training Course handouts and notes and a certificate for health professionals who attend the full Training Course. Morning and afternoon tea and a light lunch (finger food) will be provided. Vegetarian, non-vegetarian, and gluten-free options will be available. Participants are welcome to bring their own snacks and/or meals, and those with special dietary requirements are encouraged to do so.

## TO REGISTER:

1. Go to the website [www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)
2. Click on the link to the Oztix registration site

Have the following information available prior to registering online:

### REGISTRANT DETAILS

(This section is related to the clinician who will be attending the course)

- Name of clinician attending (this is the name that will appear on the certificate of attendance);
- Clinician's profession;
- Clinician's workplace;
- Clinician's personal email;
- Clinician's Personal Mobile phone number;

### PAYMENT DETAILS

(This section is related to the person who will be paying for the registration)

- Name on card;
- Credit card number, expiry date, and CCV
- Work Email address;
- Work Phone number;
- Workplace;

Website: [www.feedingworkshops.com](http://www.feedingworkshops.com)  
Email Enquiries: [info@feedingworkshops.com](mailto:info@feedingworkshops.com)