

Dummies can help.....

- To soothe and relax a tired or unwell baby.
- Parents to manage during difficult times.



So why not use a dummy all the time?

Research shows major problems when dummies are used too much.

What about bottle sucking?

Regular sucking on bottles may lead to the same problems listed overleaf.

Speech sounds and talking

- ◆ It reduces the amount of babbling, a vital stage needed before a child can talk. Children need to practice this at all times
- ◆ Children learn words by listening to & copying adults. A dummy prevents a child from copying words & sounds back correctly.
- ◆ Many speech sounds are made at the front of the mouth (p, b, t, d, s) Regular dummy/bottle users will struggle to develop these sounds and may then need speech therapy.
- ◆ The more a child talks with a dummy the higher the risk of needing long term speech therapy.
- ◆ A child is much less likely to talk if they have an object in their mouth.
- ◆ A Manchester study has shown that over half of all dummy users in the area were referred for speech therapy

Mouth movements

- ◆ To develop speech, babies and young children need to explore a range of mouth movements e.g. opening and closing the mouth, smiling, sticking their tongue out. Dummies limit these movements.

Drooling

- ◆ Children need to learn to control saliva by closing the mouth and swallowing. Overuse of dummies & bottle sucking stops this, leading to drooling and saliva problems. This can then lead to soreness around the mouth.

Learning and exploring

- ◆ Children need to be wide awake to learn, and explore. Dummies have the opposite effect by soothing & relaxing a child.

Teeth development

- ◆ Regular dummy/bottle use can severely affect teeth development. The front teeth in particular are at higher risk of decay.

Ideas to help....

- Don't use the dummy as an instant plug, try to identify the problem.
- Use the dummy as a last resort if a baby is unwell or going to sleep
- Always take the dummy out when a child is awake.
- Never allow your child to talk with a dummy in his/her mouth



- See the dummy as a short-term solution, not a long term habit.
- Wean your baby off a dummy as soon as possible, certainly by 10-12 months.
- Never dip your child's dummy in to anything sweet. This can lead to tooth decay.
- Don't allow your baby to suck on a bottle all day
- Seek advice from the Health visitor about drinking from cup when the baby is around 4-6months.

Practical ideas to help

- ♦ Give the dummy to Santa or the dummy fairy
- ♦ Swap a dummy for a reward
- ♦ Offer a comfort blanket or try reading a story instead
- ♦ Pretend to give the dummy to a friend's baby
- ♦ Get your child to throw the dummy in the bin now they are grown up
- ♦ Once you remove the dummy, don't be tempted to give it back

The following organisations provide useful advice and information about Speech and Language Therapy.

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
2 White Hart Yard, SE1 1NX
020 73781200
www.rcslt.org

Talking Point
www.talkingpoint.org.uk

If you have any concerns about your child's Speech, Language or communication skills then please contact us:

Children's Speech and Language Therapy Services
New St. Health Centre, Upper New St.,
Barnsley, S70 1 LP
01226 433119/ 433115

Children's Speech & Language Therapy Service

Dummies all day keep talking away



Information about dummies and bottles



With all of us in mind