



Dummies all day keep talking away

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

Speech sounds and talking

- dummies limit the amount of babbling. This is an important stage before talking. Children need to babble all day
- a child is much less likely to talk if they have an object in their mouth
- children learn words by copying adults. A dummy stops them from copying words and sounds 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
- more dummy use means a higher risk of needing long term speech therapy
- over half of all dummy users were referred for speech therapy in a Manchester study

Mouth movements

- babies and children need to practice different mouth movements to develop speech, e.g. opening and closing the mouth, smiling, sticking their tongue out. Dummies limit these movements

Drooling

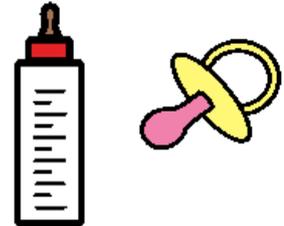
- children need to learn to control saliva by closing the mouth and swallowing. Too much dummy use and bottle sucking stops this. This can cause drooling and saliva problems

Learning and exploring

- children need to be wide awake to learn, and explore. Dummies do the opposite - they soothe and relax a child

Teeth development

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



With all of us in mind

Children's speech and language therapy

The Lodge, Kendray Hospital, Doncaster Road, Barnsley, S70 3RD
Tel: 01226 644331 Email: swy-tr.barnsleyspeechtherapy@nhs.net
Website: www.barnsleyspeechtherapy.co.uk





Ideas to help

Don't use the dummy as an instant plug, try to work out 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 let your child to talk with a dummy in their mouth
- see the dummy as a short-term help, 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 cause tooth decay
- don't let your baby suck on a bottle all day

Ask your Health Visitor for advice on drinking from a cup when the baby is around 4 – 6 months

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

For more help and information about Speech and Language Therapy go to:

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 are worried about your child's
speech, language or communication then please contact us:

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