



# Dump that Dummy!



For babies, dummies may be a comfort, but as they get older they do not need to rely on dummies as much. The best time for your child to give up their dummy is by the time they are one year old.



Children need to practice using their mouth, lips, and tongue in order to learn to talk. Activities such as licking lips, blowing bubbles, sucking through a straw, making funny faces, smiling, laughing and sticking out your tongue, can all help to develop these skills.



You and your child can practice these in front of the mirror. Look at how your mouths move. Practice singing Old Macdonald had a farm, watch your mouth movements when singing EE-I-EE-I-OH.



With a dummy in their mouth, a child's mouth movements are limited. This may affect their speech sounds and how clearly they can talk. Try saying 'fish', 'Hello' or any word with a knuckle or finger in your mouth.



Having a dummy can increase the chances of children having regular colds. Over-using a dummy is linked to having ear infections, which can cause glue ear.

Using dummies can cause dental problems. Dummies affect the teeth growth and development; so it is really important to stop dummy use long before children's second teeth come through. Do not dip dummies into sweet substances as over time this can cause tooth decay.



# How to help your child give up their dummy

- If your child is upset or needs some comfort limit the dummy to bedtime or naps only.
- If your child is playing happily take the dummy out of their mouth.
- If your child is talking to you with a dummy in, ask your child to take it out so you can hear what they are trying to say to you.



# Top Tips from Mums

'I take it out when she's playing'

'Be strong, they soon forget it if you keep firm'

'I hide it in the cupboard so he doesn't see it'

'I never used one so it's never become a habit'

'Give it to the dummy fairy'

'My child swapped it for a new toy'

