

Dummies

The use of dummies is often important in helping to soothe a young child or baby. However, using the dummy whilst talking can cause a child to learn how to say their sounds incorrectly and lead to speech difficulties later on. Below is a list of strategies to use with your child and their dummy.

Take it out - Dummies are ok when soothing your child. However, when your child is playing, out and about and particularly when your child is talking encourage your to take their dummy out.

Try to limit dummy use to only when you are soothing your child and when they are going to sleep.

Distraction - If your child keeps asking for their dummy try and distract them to help them to forget about it. For example, start a new activity or game, sing nursery rhymes etc.

Give it away! - It can be very exciting for a child to give their dummy away to someone special. Why not try to give it to Father Christmas, the Tooth Fairy or the Easter Bunny and to see what small present they leave in return e.g. bubbles etc.

Try limiting dummy use to short periods of time e.g. 15 minutes. Gradually reduce the time to 10 minutes then 5 minutes etc.

Limit use - Try and limit the amount of time that your child uses their dummy. Tell them that they are allowed to have their dummy for a certain amount time and then they have to put it away. Reassure them that they can have it back later if they become upset.

Children's Centres - Many children's centres have dummy trees when children can hang their dummy on the tree and get a small present in return. However, you could also do this at home on a tree in the garden or at the park.

