



Do something else instead—play a game, sing songs, read a book—and encourage your child to take his dummy out before doing an activity.

Use a reward chart to help your child 'bin the dummy'.

Make a clean break! Throw away the dummy over a weekend, or at a time where you have support. Be strong—children will soon forget if you keep firm.

Remember—Out of sight, out of mind! Hide the dummy so your child cannot see it.



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## Dummies & Talking



Babies like to suck, so dummies can help soothe at bedtime or when your baby is tired or cross. But regular and extended use of a dummy can create problems with your child's speech.

Of course, not all children who have dummies will develop speech difficulties, but we do know that dummies restrict the movement of the mouth and tongue, and these are needed to produce speech sounds correctly.

Using a dummy for too long can:

- Delay babbling
- Delay spoken language
- Cause tooth decay
- Cause a sore chin from dribbling

# Remember...

Dummies prevent babies from an important step in learning to talk, so only use it at set times, like bedtime.

If your toddler is still using a dummy, ALWAYS ask him to take it out before you talk to each other.

When your baby cries, he is trying to tell you something, so try to find out what the trouble is first, and use the dummy as a **LAST RESORT**.

Learning to talk can be tricky, so toddlers need lots of practice. A dummy will discourage your toddler from talking to you.

Try to wean your child away from dummies preferably by 12 months.

**NEVER** dip your baby's dummy in anything sweet. This can cause tooth decay.



# How to Bin the Dummy

It is a good idea to reduce and restrict the use of dummies as early as possible. It can be a daunting prospect to wean your child off a their dummy but here are some ideas on how to help with the process:

## If trying to wean children off a dummy gradually...

- Start by removing the dummy for short periods of time when your child is doing something they enjoy eg playing or looking at books
- Restrict use to night time only, taking the dummy out once the child has fallen asleep. Swap the dummy with another source of comfort e.g. a soft cuddly toy
- Use star charts or a small reward for each day and a bigger reward at the end of the week (NOT sweets!)
- Help your child accept the dummy has gone by telling them they are a big boy/girl now and they could leave it under their pillow for the dummy fairy or encourage them to put in in the bin.
- Don't try to remove the dummy whilst the child is experiencing other changes eg a new sibling, starting nursery etc.
- Don't encourage dummy sucking by dipping the dummy in food or drinks.