

Comforters and their impact on a child's communication



Tip - Try using dummies just as a comforter, rather than to keep a child quiet or occupied. You could try keeping them just for bedtime.

We know that if your child has their dummy regularly then weaning them can be difficult but it will create positive impacts.

"Always having a dummy in can result in reduced babbling and experimentation with sounds. When a baby or young child has a dummy in their mouth they are less likely to copy sounds that adults make or attempt to babble and play with sounds themselves. This is important in the development of speech skills."
(<https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/parents/do-dummies-affect-speech/>)



We know that dummies and thumb sucking provide great comfort to children in their early years but did you know that **they can hinder a child's speech development and cause delays?**

For example, one reason more and more children are having a speech delay is because they are too busy with the dummy in to take it out and talk.

The NHS recommend that you aim to stop using dummies completely by 12 months.

"Heavy dummy use has been linked to weakness in the masseter muscles of the mouth, which can sometimes cause speech problems. An older baby's ability to swallow may also be impaired which can result in difficulties with speech. Once they start to speak, they may talk from the back of the mouth instead of the front, and get into the habit of saying 'k' instead of 't' for example.

(<http://www.mymulberrybush.com/?pforparents=dummies-and-language-development>).

If your child struggles with wanting to give up their dummy, there are websites, books and youtube videos that can help.

- https://baby.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Breaking_the_Pacifier_Habit.
- Bea Gives Up Her Dummy
 - Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdgn_UtcDsI.
 - Amazon: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Bea-Gives-Up-Her-Dummy/dp/0992616700>.
- The Diddy Tree
 - Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKck_tffpXE.

And as always the nursery staff are happy to try and help too.