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Dummies and Talking

Dummies are optional but sometimes used...

...to help a baby sleep, keep them calm and happy and to get some peace!

But children over 1 year do not need to use a dummy or a bottle!

Dummies can be useful for...

For children under 12 months of age, dummies can be useful to help...

- Your baby sleep
- Keep your baby calm

...however, children **over 12 months** of age **do not need a dummy**...

...The dummy could harm their speech and language development.

→ It is easier to get rid of a dummy at 12 months than when they are older, more strong willed and may have tantrums or scream when they can't have it.

What's wrong with dummies...

Long term use of dummies and bottles means your child may...

- Have tooth decay and the front teeth may not meet up.
- Get a sore chin from dribbling.
- Have lots of ear infections
- Have limited tongue movement.
Good tongue movement is important for eating and speaking clearly.
- Stop your child from babbling which is an important step from learning to talk.

Children should be encouraged to **drink from a cup**, with an adult's help if needed...
...this **helps the muscles in the face and mouth to develop**.

Getting rid of a dummy...

When is the best time?

Try to **get rid** of it by the **first birthday**...

...it is most likely going to be hard, but so much easier than letting a habit grow and having tantrums when you want to send them to nursery without it!

Ideas for older children.....

Work towards getting rid of the dummy by:

- asking your child to take it out when talking to you;
- keeping it just for sleep times;
- distracting your child with a toy or book;
- collecting together **all** the dummies around the house so you are in charge of when it is used;
- giving it away to the "dummy fairy" or "dummy tree" in return for small reward.

"I encourage my child to leave the dummy with a favourite toy in the morning who will look after it until bedtime"

"I ask my child to put the dummy in a special box when he is playing"

Other ideas at

<http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/parents/speech-and-language/do-dummies-affect-speech>

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0310/dummiesenglish.pdf>