

Dummies and 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.

- Try to wean your child away from dummies, preferably by 12 months.
- Make a clean break – throw away the dummy over a weekend, or at time when you have support. Most babies and toddlers will fret for no more than two or three days.
- Dummies prevent babies from babbling – an important step in learning to talk, so only use them at set times, like bedtime.
- When your baby cries he's trying to tell you something, so try to find out what's troubling him first, and use the dummy as a last resort.
- Never dip your babies' dummy into anything sweet. This can cause tooth decay.



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- Remember, learning to talk can be tricky so toddlers need lots of practice. A dummy will discourage your toddler from chatting with you, which she needs to do to develop her language skills.
- If your toddler is still using a dummy, always ask him to take it out before you talk to each other.

