

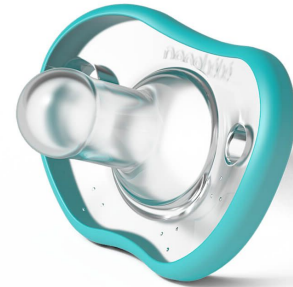
InFORParents: Pacifiers

Information FOR parents based on the research

Did you know? **84%**
of children have
used a pacifier ¹

Types of Sucking

Non-nutritive- sucking without getting nutrition
(e.g., pacifiers, finger- or thumb-sucking, clothing sucking)
Nutritive- sucking to obtain nutrition
(e.g., breastfeeding, bottle)



Pros

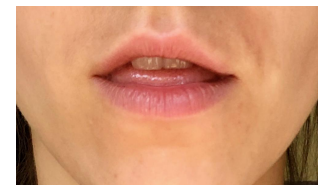
- Reduces the likelihood of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) ¹
- Non-pharmacological pain management during minor procedures (e.g., needles) ¹
- Provides 'warm up' before a nutritive feed ²
- Does not cause weaning from breastfeeding ³

Cons

- Increases risk of misaligned teeth and cavities ^{1,4}
- Increases risk of injuries to face, especially in children about 1 year of age ⁵
- Increases risk of middle ear and various other infections slightly ¹
- Encourages an open mouth posture (lips apart at rest) ⁶

Possible

- Hinder proper articulation of speech sounds, especially /s/ and /t/, through impact on misaligned teeth ^{4,7}



Notice the forward placement of the tongue between the teeth

What To Consider

As with all habits, there are many factors that would play a role in the overall impact of a pacifier:

- Frequency- how often the child uses the pacifier
- Duration- how long a child uses a pacifier for in one instance
- Type- pacifiers with a thinner neck result in less extensive issues with teeth alignment ⁴ (aka "functional" or "orthodontic"; note: this is not a regulated term and all may not be created equal)

As with all decisions for your child, you can consult various professionals (e.g., speech- language pathologists, orthodontists, dentists, family doctor, pediatrician) to compile information and make the best decision for **your** child.

Find more detailed information in the full blog post at www.wecommunicateslp.com/post/the-great-pacifier-debate
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Created in July 2019

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¹ Canadian Paediatric Society. (2003). *Recommendations for the use of pacifiers* [Position statement]. Retrieved on June 9, 2019 from <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/pacifiers>

² Zimmerman, E. (Guest). (2019, March 26). *Episode 4: Is feeding the new play? Are all pacifiers created equal?* *Pediatric Feeding, Speech, and Language with Emily Zimmerman* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/seehearspeakpodcast/id1440635512>

³ Zimmerman, E. & Thompson, K. (2015). Clarifying nipple confusion. *Journal of Perinatology*, 1-5.

⁴ Schmid, K. M., Kugler, R., Nalabothu, P., Bosch, C. & Verna, C. (2018). The effect of pacifier sucking on orofacial structures: a systematic literature review. *Progress in Orthodontics*, 19(8).

⁵ Keim, S. A., Fletcher, E. N., TePoel, M. R. W. & McKenzie, L. B. (2012). Injuries associated with bottles, pacifiers, and sippy cups in the United States, 1991-2010. *Pediatrics*, 129(6), 1104-1110.

⁶ Nihl, V. S. C., Maciel, S. M., Jarrus, M. E., Nihl, F. M., Salles, C. L. F., Pascotto, R. C., & Fujimaki, M. (2015). Pacifier-sucking habit duration and frequency on occlusal and myofunctional alterations in preschool children. *Brazilian Oral Research*, 29(1).

⁷ Leavy, K. M., Cisneros, G. J. & LeBlanc, E. M. (2016). Malocclusion and its relationship to speech sound production: Redefining the effect of malocclusal traits on sound production. *American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics*, 150(1), 116-123.