

Thumbs and Soothers

Sucking is normal – it helps babies relax!

Soothers, Thumbs and Fingers

- Most babies stop sucking by age two.
- Wait until breastfeeding is well established before introducing your baby to a soother.*
- Choose a soother that is **one piece**.
- Do not dip soothers in sugar or honey.
- Avoid cleaning soothers with your mouth as this can transfer **cavity-causing bacteria**.
- Try to stop thumb and soother habits **by age three**.
- Long-term soother use and thumb sucking can create crowded, crooked teeth or bite problems.



Try This!

Use a soother *instead* of a bottle to comfort your child. Bottle use is linked to cavities!

Singing, rocking and cuddling are other great ways to soothe your child!



Breaking the Habit

- Reward your child when they do not suck.
- Finding ways to reduce your child's anxiety may reduce sucking urges.
- Avoid harsh words, teasing or punishment when helping your child move away from habits.
- **Visit the dentist by your child's first birthday!** Dentists are experts on the growth of young teeth.
- Ask your healthcare professional for more info.

*Health Canada recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months and sustained breastfeeding for two years and beyond.