

MANAGING MOUTHING



WHY IS MY CHILD MOUTHING?

There are many reasons why children engage in mouthing behaviors. Here are some of the most common reasons:

1. Sensory Needs/Stimulation
2. Proprioception/body/Oral awareness
3. Pica
4. Teething
5. Stress/Anxiety
6. Focus/Concentration
7. Boredom/ Habit

IDEAS TO HELP MANAGE MOUTHING



MUSIC INSTRUMENTS

Instruments such as harmonicas, whistles, and party blowers



EDIBLE FOODS

Chewing on foods can also provide similar sensation. You can try:

- Sucking frozen fruits or ice cubes
- Lollipops or candies with strong flavors
- dried food
- crunchy foods



GUM MASSAGE

Provide gentle, but consistent pressure to the cheeks/jaw/gum throughout the day.

Here's a video showing a technique you can do right at home:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQYgmQ_rxEl&t=116s



DRINKS

Thickened liquid drinks such as milkshakes, apple sauce, yogurt through a straw can increase resistance and make the mouth work harder.

Water bottles, such as camel backs can also provide strong resistance.



HEAVY WORK

Often when there are sensory needs in the mouth, there may be sensory needs outside too. Try engaging your child in "heavy work" such as:

- hanging on monkey bars
- tug of war
- pushing heavy items
- crawling through a tunnel



VIBRATION OR CHEWIES

Try vibrating or electric toothbrush or have your child explore child-friendly chewies!



Teamwork Therapies
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EXAMPLES OF MOUTHING STRATEGIES & TOOLS



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