
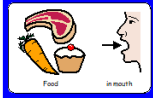


Tools and Intervention Strategies

for the Exploration of Oral Sensory Seeking Behaviours/Mouthing

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<p>Non-toxic/sturdy chew tool</p> 	<p>Clip tool onto shirt or belt loop via retractable key chain, or try 'chew-ellery' 'chew-buddy'</p> <p>https://www.sensorydirect.com/chewbuddy.html?gclid=CjwKCAjwqpP2BRBTEiwAfpID--l3VpD78_q1nYadkLgW3vuxUMHXNXeFFOORrTJeJXJAUxykguaRxRoCTdsQAvD_BwE#138=5</p> <p>Vast array available including: chewy tubes, pencil toppers, chewlery pendants and bracelets...</p>
<p>Provide 'chewy' or 'crunchy' foods</p>	<p>Dried fruit, bagels, baguettes, beef/turkey jerky ... rice crackers , cereals, pretzels</p>
<p>Provide strongly flavoured food</p>	<p>For maximum sensory impact</p>
<p>Provide cold foods</p>	<p>Chilled carrots, ice</p>
<p>Provide 'tent', an escape space</p>	<p>A calm space with minimal distractions/stimulation to enable self- regulation</p>
<p>Offer appropriate replacement behaviours</p>	<p>Motivating activities:</p>
<p>Facilitate engagement in general sensory activities</p>	<p>Rocking horse, swing, giant bubble wrap, trampoline</p>
<p>Provide movement breaks</p>	<p>https://family.gonoodle.com/</p>
<p>Assess environment to reduce excessive visual/auditory input (wall displays/lighting/types of flooring)</p>	
<p>Provide 'sensory boxes' with one sensory experience in each, to be accessed at pre-determined times of the day</p>	<p>https://www.pinterest.co.uk/kirstinebeeley/early-years-sensory-play/</p>
<p>Musical instruments</p>	<p>Harmonica or recorder</p>
<p>Whistles/Party blowers</p>	
<p>Bubble blowing</p>	
<p>Drinking through a straw</p>	
<p>Oral-motor Activities</p>	<p>https://www.nhsaaa.net/media/7931/ot19-002-gd-children-and-young-peoples-pt-oral-motor-skills.pdf</p>
<p>Social Story</p>	<p>https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx</p>
<p>Consistent visual/verbal prompt</p> 	<p>'It's ok to put <u>food in your mouth</u>', alongside 'widgit' symbol</p> <p>https://widgitonline.com</p>
<p>Analyse for triggers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency at home/setting • Frequency morning/afternoon/evening • What events trigger mouthing? • Does mouthing occur more, when tired? • Anxious/overloaded/unsure/unmotivated

- Sensory processing/integration is a normal developmental process involving the ability of the central nervous system to organise sensory feedback from the body and the environment in order to make successful adaptive responses.
- Oral sensory seeking behaviour, or mouthing items, is a normal behaviour in babies and infants; they use sucking to help calm themselves and self soothe. This self-soothing can also be self-regulation. It explains why dummies work so well. Sucking is also an important survival reflex, which is essential for feeding.
- Mouthing may stem purely from the need to obtain sensory input in the mouth. It may also be a self-regulation tool, when experiencing anxiety.
- It may result from overstimulation or under-stimulation from the environment. Gradually, sensory integration can positively impact the ability of the brain to process sensory information by strengthening, balancing and developing the central nervous system and the way it processes sensory stimuli.
- A focus on the integration of movement with different senses may help support. Try to add the following sensory activities throughout the day: listening to music; watching coloured lights; playing on swings and trampolines; being wrapped in fabric; swinging in a hammock; dancing to music; playing in boxes filled with beans; crawling through tunnels, hitting swinging balls; balancing on a beam...

Referral Routes:	Speak to GP practice about a referral to Occupational Therapy
	The Royal College of Occupational Therapists lists qualified and registered occupational therapists, if a privately funded appointment is wished
Resources:	<p>Sensory Processing e-learning https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/childrens-therapies-the-pod/occupational-therapy/sensory-processing/</p> <p>Pinterest – lots of fun sensory activity ideas for home and setting https://www.pinterest.co.uk/kbus/sensory-play-for-kids/</p> <p>Sensory Smart – ‘Raising a Sensory Smart Child’ https://www.sensorysmarts.com/index.html</p>