

## Types of Oral motor input

**Mouthing**—putting objects into the mouth but not attempting to ingest: Often as a way of getting increased tactile information

**Pica**—Eating non food items

**Licking**—People [skin; hair] Objects [metal; glass; toys]

**Biting (Self or others)**. Can be related to needing increased 'proprioceptive/tactile' input or result from frustration/ attention seeking

**Chewing**—Clothing, objects, self. Can be a self calming/ self regulating activity

Oral motor activities may include—smoking, chewing nails & pen tops,

## Specific Advice:

Name:

**If you have any queries please contact your therapist.**

Our details:

Therapist name:

**Children's Therapy**  
Oaks Building  
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Doncaster Road  
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S70 3RD

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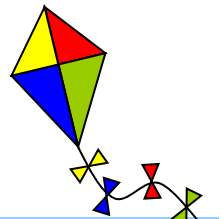
**These activities should be carried out in a safe environment and supervised by a responsible adult.**

# Oral motor activity ideas

Advice to support  
Mouthing, Licking,  
Chewing & Biting



## Secondary School



## ADVICE TO SUPPORT MOUTHING, LICKING, CHEWING AND BITING

Oral motor activities are those that involve input in and around the mouth, they can often be neglected especially as children get older.

Many young people need this input to help them focus on learning and leisure activities.

There are a number of reasons why teenagers mouth, lick, chew and bite objects....

**Exploration:** Mouthing can be appropriate for younger children as a way of exploring an object but is rarely appropriate for a teenager

**Proprioception:** Mouthing can provide proprioceptive input which can have a calming or alerting effect depending on the activity. This can be provided in alternative ways by increasing the range of 'Heavy work' activities students complete.

**Tactile:** Some students may enjoy the 'feel' of objects in their mouth. Generally offering additional tactile experience (eg. through hands, feet & body) may help to reduce the need to use the mouth.

**Taste:** Students may like the taste of certain objects (licking glass & metal can be a favourite) as this can be a way of seeking very specific tastes. It can be helpful to look at diet and introduce similar tastes into meals & snacks.

**Self-regulation:** Students may be trying to gain additional sensory information to meet their needs. Often oral motor input can be calming

**Communication:** Biting can be a way of expressing frustration, especially if students have difficulty voicing their needs or emotions. Providing alternative communication systems such as visuals may help

## How you can help



- Some students may need oral input almost constantly while others need it just occasionally.
- Support the need to explore the world through the mouth by providing 'Heavy work' (proprioceptive) and deep touch (tactile) input to the mouth which can help organise and calm the nervous system.

Try..

**Increasing the amount of 'Chewy foods'** included at meal & snack times eg.– dried fruits, liquorice, bagels, cereal bars, pop corn and chewing gum.

**Resistive sucking' activities** – using curly straws, sports bottle with long straw, milk shake through a straw, 'magic sippers'

**Playing musical instruments** eg. woodwind (recorder, flute, clarinet, saxophone)

**Chewelry or chewy tubes**—give at regular intervals for 10 minutes and/ or redirect to when observed to be seeking oral feedback.



- Use distraction to break the habitual nature of mouthing/ chewing

Introduce activities that involve both hands to reduce reaching for new things to put in the mouth

Offer a drink or a snack instead