

ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON SUCKING, BLOWING AND CHEWING

Thought I would share more ideas of keeping your children busy indoors during this extended time at home. Hopefully we will start experiencing warmer weather soon.

These ideas are based on resources you have indoors. Challenge yourself to think of other activities you can do along these lines.

Movement is good for any person and you may enjoy engaging in the activities with your children. Please do these activities under adult supervision.

Chewing

If your child chews all day long and chews on anything, please don't try to stop the habit. There is a reason why they chew. Chewing throughout the day (especially during times of stress and/or anxiety) can help them calm, focus, and self-regulate.

Chewy tubes

Chewy tubes are good for regulation. It is always available and your child can chew on it whenever they need to.

The image shows a child chewing on his chewy tube. However, in the current climate you may not be able to order one for the foreseeable future due to COVID-19.



However, he is wearing a bandana. You can easily tie a knot in the bandana and s/he can chew on the knot. You could also tie a knot in a **clean** sock or flannel.

Food or snacks

Important:

This activity should only be given to children who are able to chew their dinner, and not to children who are on pureed or soft chopped or mashed food. These children will benefit from chewy tubes or chewing a bandana, etc.

You can give the following as snacks:

- Dried fruit
- Toast

- Biscuits
- Apples
- Carrots
- Crackers
- Chewy sweets

Sucking

****Important:**

This activity should only be given to children you are able to suck through a straw, and not to children who are having difficulties swallowing. If your child needs a special cup or has thickened drinks, please do not attempt to suck liquid through a straw.

****You can use a straw to drink the following:**

- Thick milkshake
- Drinking yoghurt
- Jelly that is just beginning to set – it should easily be mixed with a spoon

*****However, all children can use a straw to suck up any of the following objects:**

*****Important:**

Only give objects that are much larger than the opening of the straw. Nothing should be small enough to be sucked up through the straw. Do these activities under adult supervision. Please do not use any plastic bags.

- Cotton balls
- Pieces of paper
- Paper shapes
- Pompoms

Challenge yourself to find other objects that can be used for this exercise

They can suck the object from one container, hold their breath and then release it into another container.

They can challenge themselves to see how long they can hold their breath before they release the object.

Blowing

This is a much easier skill for all children. You can blow the following objects with a straw or without a straw:

- Cotton balls
- Pompoms
- Pieces of paper
- Light weight toy cars
- Large feathers
- Bubbles
- Soap suds or foam
- Sock bubbles or bubble snakes (see instructions below)
- Plastic ducks, placed in shallow water in a large bowl
- Any other lightweight object that can easily be blown away

If you have a coffee table or a dining or kitchen table, you can blow the objects across the table. Challenge each other to see how far you can blow the object.

If not, you can blow the objects on the floor, but still turn it into a little challenge. Please praise your children for the effort, as this is not always easy for them.

Adults and children can engage in this fun activity. You may find it very relaxing yourself.

Sock bubbles

Cut the end of a drinks bottle. Put a sock or tights over the opening and secure with strong tape. I use Gorilla tape.

Make a strong solution of a little water and quite a bit of Fairy liquid or similar soap. You only need a little.

Dip the sock end of the bottle in the solution, take out and blow as long as you can. Believe me, it is fun.



You could also pick up some of the bubble snake afterwards, hold it in the palm of your hand and blow the bubbles from your hand.

Make up silly songs when popping the bubbles and jump around a little at the same time.

Enjoy and stay safe.