

Oral Sensory Chew Objects, Tools & Devices

Prepared by the Inclusion Specialist Team at Child Care Aware[®] of North Dakota

There are several reasons why a child may find a chewy item helpful:

- Aids in oral self-regulation
- Helps with anxiety and can help calm down a child with special needs
- When overstimulated, a child with special needs may feel the need to bite or chew to help regain balance
- Chewing may be due to a condition called Pica (eating non-food items)
- Aids in jaw muscle strengthening

Guidelines for Purchasing and Using

- Purchase only non-toxic; washable, bpa, pvc, lead and latex free items
- Inspect before each use
- Replace when signs of wear are visible
- All chewy tools and chewy jewelry require adult supervision
- The life span of any oral motor chewy tool depends on the frequency and degree of use



There are a variety of chewy options including chew tubes, noodles and coils that can be clipped to a tether.

Guidelines for Attaching/Detaching

- Attaching to clothing is preferred over wearing around the neck
- If attached with a clip it should be 7 inches or less
- It is recommended to remove clips from clothing for diapering or toileting to prevent chewy item from becoming contaminated
- Lanyards or similar items that are worn around the neck are not preferred. If an item is worn around the neck, it should have a break away clasp to prevent strangulation
- If worn around the neck it should be removed before sleep, active play indoor and outdoor

Cleaning Instructions

- Read cleaning instructions on package
- Wash with mild soap and water before use and as need needed throughout use
- Clean after falling on floor or if mouthed by another child

Storage

- Label with child's name
- Keep separate from diapering area, diapering items, or other children's personal items

Please consult a Child Care Aware of North Dakota inclusion specialist to learn more:

800-997-8515 Press #5 | inclusion@ndchildcare.org

Sources:

<http://chewytubes.com/products/chewy-tubes/>

<https://chewnoodle.com/>

<https://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/10/07/10-sensory-chew-toys-for-children-with-autism-other-special-needs/>

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