

Avoid.....

- ☹ Using the dummy or at the very least reduce its use for sleep only. 
- ☹  Using a baby bottle after a year old. Move your child to a sippy cup.
- ☹ Telling your child to swallow as this can be very difficult on demand and may make them self-conscious.
- ☹ Wiping across the mouth, as this can stimulate further saliva production. Dabbing excess saliva is recommended.



Do.....

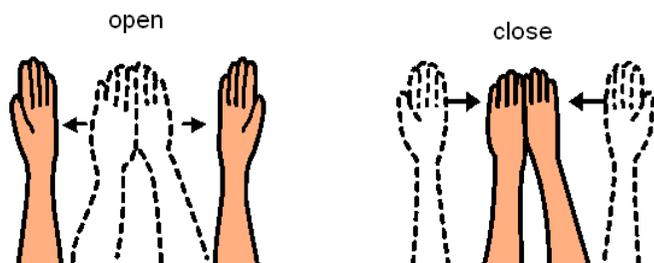
- ☺ Encourage your child to drink from a sippy cup and use a straw.
- ☺ Try activities to develop oro-motor skills for example:
 - Blowing bubbles 
 - Licking foods such as yoghurt from around their lips. If this is hard for him then first try the lip creases (sides) then go to bottom then top lip. A mirror helps here too.
 - Sucking thicker drinks through a straw e.g. yoghurt and milkshake.
 - Licking food from a flat surface like a plate or lid is great to help with mouth/tongue coordination.
 - Playing mouth games such as blowing raspberries or kisses.

Helping Children with Dribbling



All children dribble as part of their normal development. Controlling saliva is a skill which has to be learned. Usually this happens when a child develops head and upper body control over the first few years of life. Teething may also increase dribbling.

Awareness of 'open' vs. 'closed'

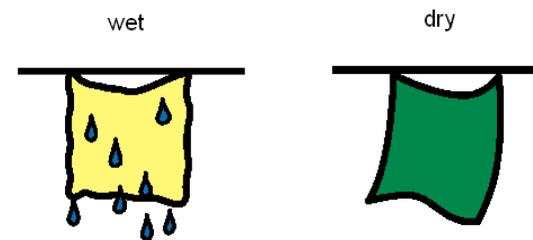


Initially work on the concepts of 'open' and 'closed' with your child. Talk about the general concepts by e.g. emphasising when doors/books/curtains are open or closed. Check that they have understood what the concepts mean by asking them to finish off a sentence for you, e.g., "the door is.....". If they can't, provide the appropriate answer for them.

Once your child understands these concepts, help them begin to monitor whether their mouths are open or closed. This will help them develop greater control of their saliva. Ask them to tell you whether their mouth is open or closed at certain points throughout the day (making sure you don't only ask when their mouths are open). Encourage them to feel with their fingers if it is open or closed.

Make sure that your child does not have a cold whilst doing these activities, as they will need to breathe through their mouths if their nose is blocked.

Awareness of 'wet' vs. 'dry'



Again, initially work on the concepts before relating it to your child's chin. Comment on things that are wet and dry as and when you encounter them, e.g. a sponge at bath time, whilst washing hands, washing hair etc, making sure you emphasise what is wet and what is dry.

Once your child understands the difference between these concepts, you can begin to get them to relate the concepts to their chins. You can do this by asking them "is your chin wet or dry?". Make sure you do this at different times and when it is wet and dry, so that they will begin to experience what each feels like. Initially, you may have to tell them whether their chin is wet or dry. Again, encourage them to feel their chin with their fingers so that they know what each feels like.

You can then begin to encourage your child to dry their own chin. The best way to do this is to use 3 dabs on their chin, firmly and slowly. Use a small tight wad of tissue and only apply it to the wet area. You may need to demonstrate how this should be done/do it for them initially. Once your child has dried their chin, encourage them to check whether it is dry.