



Tips for breaking the pacifier habit

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By **Amy Wang, The Oregonian**



A mom asks: "Will my 2-year-old son eventually get tired of his binky, or do I need to do a cold-turkey program on him?"

Rebecca Magby, a **Portland-area parent coach** and former nanny, says, "Yes, eventually the 2-year-old will get over the binky."

Magby says she thinks pacifiers are important for soothing in infancy and points out that research has shown pacifiers can reduce the incidence of **SIDS, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**.

Once a child is past his first birthday and starting to talk, that's a good time for the pacifier to go, Magby says, mainly because a pacifier can affect how well a child verbalizes.

That said, "I also encourage parents to do what they feel is important," Magby says. "Let them outgrow it if you don't care."

For parents who do care, "I encourage using some other attachment device," such as a stuffed animal or blanket. Children hang onto pacifiers for comfort; if Mom or Dad can transfer that feeling to another object, that helps the child to let go.

One thing Magby definitely does not recommend is going cold-turkey: "It's tough on everybody." And, she adds, "if you yank away their soothing tool then you're going to cause trauma -- it's going to take so much longer for that child to adjust."

Here are more tips on weaning your child off the binky:

"Bye-Bye Binky" -- from American Baby magazine

"Breaking the Pacifier Habit" -- from <http://baby.lovetoknow.com>

"How can I get my child off the pacifier?" -- from a pediatric dentist

– **Amy Wang**

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