Orthophonie VoxLingue Speech and Language

Printable sheet

The daytime pacifier plan: one place for the pacifier, one moment at a time, and what to say when they ask

Studies don't show that a pacifier, on its own, causes language difficulties. What matters is how long it sits in their mouth while they're awake and talking. This plan first takes it out of talking time, and leaves sleep for last.

The rule: when we talk, the pacifier goes to its place

1. Choose one place: their bed, or a little box kept up high. The same place for every adult.
2. When they talk to you with the pacifier in, take it out gently: **"The pacifier goes in its box. Tell me?"**
3. Answer what you understood. **Don't ask them to repeat.**

If they ask for it

Name what they feel and offer another comfort: **"You miss your pacifier. It's in its box. Come, let's get your teddy."**

One moment at a time, from easiest to hardest

MOMENT	THE OTHER COMFORT (STUFFED TOY, BLANKET, CUDDLE, SONG)	DONE
Playtime		☐
The car		☐
Walks, the stroller		☐
Screens		☐
Daycare drop-off		☐
Coming home		☐
Naps		☐
Night-time		☐

Start with the easiest moment for your child. Move to the next once that one has gone well for a few days. Naps and night-time come last.

What doesn't help

- Punishment or shaming
- Giving in when they ask again
- Going back
- Guilt or comparing them

When?

Around 12 months	start cutting back
As soon as they talk	out of the mouth when they talk
By about 2	gone
3 to 4 years	the limit for teeth, not a goal

Few words for their age, or hard to understand even without the pacifier?

In Québec, contact the CLSC or ask the doctor (Agir tôt, free, under 7). At the same time, a private consultation if you can. In Ontario: Preschool Speech and Language, no doctor's referral needed. The dentist checks the teeth.

Sources: Naître et grandir (2021, 2025, in French); Canadian Paediatric Society (2003, 2022); INSPQ (2026, in French); OOAQ (2026, in French); Kimberly Martins, article on childhood oral habits; Québec.ca, Agir tôt program. **General information: this sheet does not replace an assessment.**