

PACIFIER WEANING

GOING AT THEIR PACE



A calm, pressure-free guide to helping your child say goodbye to the paci without making it a big deal.



Pacifiers aren't the enemy. They're soothing and most kids let go on their own. The goal is a gentle, gradual exit, ideally by age 2-3, before the teeth and jaw are affected long-term.

WHAT TO EXPECT BY AGE

0-12

months

All good

12-24

months

Fine for now

2-3

years

Start weaning

3+

years

Bite risk rises

STRATEGIES THAT TEND TO WORK

Limit it gradually: no cold turkey

Start by removing the paci during daytime only. Once that's comfortable for a week or two, tackle naps. Bedtime is last, and it's the hardest and should come once the habit is already fading.

Make it a ritual, not a loss

The "Paci Fairy," donating it to a new baby, or a special goodbye ceremony works surprisingly well. Kids process transitions better when there's a story attached. Let them be part of it.

Replace with a comfort object

Introduce a stuffed animal or blanket at the same time the paci disappears – a new comfort object makes the transition smoother. For finger or thumb habits, T-Guard is a child-safe option worth trying.

Celebrate every step, not just the finish line

Sticker charts, small rewards, and genuine praise for "only using it at night" or "leaving it in the crib" matter a lot at this age. Progress is worth celebrating even before the habit is fully gone.

Time it well: avoid big life changes

Moving, a new sibling, starting daycare, or any stressful transition is the wrong time to wean. Wait for a calm, stable stretch. A child who feels secure is far more ready to give up the paci

THINGS TO AVOID

Cutting holes in the paci tip (a safety risk)

Shaming or mocking ("only babies use pacis")

Going cold turkey during a stressful time

Dipping the paci in anything sweet

The Paci Fairy story

Tell your child that when big kids are ready, they can leave their paci out for the Paci Fairy, who brings it to new babies who need it. In the morning, a small surprise or note appears. Simple, joyful, and child-led, and it works more often than you'd expect.