

# SOOTHERS

## What you need to know



### First steps to comforting your baby:

- respond quickly to your baby's need
- hold your baby in your arms, against your chest or shoulder
- talk to your baby with a calm voice or sing
- see if your baby is hungry, tired, cold, needs a diaper change or to be burped
- walk around with your baby or use a baby carrier
- gently pat your baby in the rhythm of a heart beat
- sit with your baby in a rocking chair
- do skin-to-skin with your baby.

### Soother use can affect your baby's health by:

- decreasing milk supply because your baby spends less time sucking at the breast
- leading your baby to prefer the soother and refuse the breast
- interfering with your baby's growth when used to delay feedings
- carrying germs if not cleaned properly
- leading to ear infections and oral problems (e.g.: malocclusion of teeth)
- being a choking hazard if not used safely
- affecting your child's ability to talk.

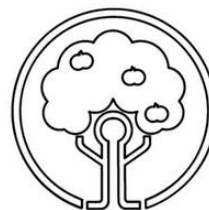
### Soother use safety tips:

If you feel that you have enough information and have decided to use a soother, here are some tips for safe use:

- ✓ Wait until breastfeeding and your milk supply are well established before introducing a soother.
- ✓ Make sure your baby is not cold, needs a diaper change or to be burped before giving a soother.
- ✓ Sterilize each new soother according to package directions.
- ✓ Make sure the soother is free of cracks. If damaged, throw it out. Soothers should be replaced every two months even if they appear to be intact.
- ✓ If needed, use clips with short ribbons to attach the soother to your baby's clothes.
- ✗ Avoid using a soother to delay your baby's feeding. Instead, follow your baby's feeding cues.
- ✗ Avoid "cleaning" a soother by sucking on it yourself as you could pass along your germs. Instead, wash the soother in hot, soapy water after each use.
- ✗ Avoid letting your baby or child chew on a soother. Instead, give them a toy that is meant for teething.
- ✗ Avoid dipping the soother in anything sweet as this can lead to tooth decay.
- ✗ Avoid making your own soother out of other materials. This could lead to choking. Instead, use products manufactured as soothers.

### To learn more:

- Talk to your health care provider
- Visit: [www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com)
- Call: Family Health Intake line at 613-735-8651, ext 589



Renfrew County and  
District Health Unit

"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

**FACT SHEET**