

Oral Motor Exercises/Oral Exercises

Oral Motor Exercises & Oral Exercises -- do these to get your children's oral muscles in shape for speech and better function.

Oral-Motor Exercises

1. Tongue Push-Ups

Objective: to strengthen tongue

Procedure: child holds up an M&M, cheerio, etc. on upper ridge just behind teeth (not on teeth) and pushes up with tongue.

2. Tongue Pops

Objective: To strengthen tongue

Procedure: Suck tongue up on the top of the mouth, pull it back and release it, making a popping sound.

3. Back and Forth

Objective: To increase oral-motor coordination

Procedure: Protrude tongue and move it from side-to-side, outside of the mouth making sure that the tongue does not touch the lips.

4. Find the Stick

Objective: To increase tongue movement and coordination.

Procedure: Move a dull stick, tongue depressor or spoon around the inside and outside of the mouth and have the child put their tongue on it or to where you have touched their mouth with the stick, depressor or spoon.

5. Pointy Tongue

Objective: To increase tongue movement and coordination.

Procedure: Protrude tongue and point it at the tip.

6. Quick Strength

Objective: To increase tongue strength.

Procedure: Using gauze, pull tongue out gently while child tries to pull tongue back in.

7. Throat Scratches

Objective: To strengthen the back of the tongue.

Procedure: Move tongue back in the mouth and move it in a downward, circular motion, scratching the back of the throat.

8. Tapping

Objective: To stimulate jaw masseter muscle.

Procedure: Tap masseter while muscle is relaxed and contracted.

9. Icing

Objective: To increase oral stimulation and awareness.

Procedure: Using popsicles, ice, etc. move over the lips from the middle outward and then ask child to smile.

10. Brushing

Objective: To increase tactile stimulation/awareness for the lips.

Procedure: Brush lips with different textures (i.e. toothbrush, cotton swab, tongue depressor, spoon)

11. Whistle

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Have child pucker lips and blow attempting to whistle.

12. Fish Mouth

Objective: To increase oral-motor strength.

Procedure: Pucker lips and suck cheeks in to make a "fish-face"

13. Pucker-Smile

Objective: To increase oral-motor coordination.

Procedure: have child close mouth with back teeth together. Have child pucker lips (while keeping back teeth together). Once mastered, have child alternate a pucker with a smile.

14. Jaw Aerobics

Objective: To increase range of motion of the jaw.

Procedure: Have child move chin from side to side and up and down at different degrees and with varying speed.

15. Jaw Curls

Objective: To increase jaw strength.

Procedure: Gently pull child's chin down while the child tries to close mouth. Child closes mouth while you gently try to pull chin down.

16. Watch the Muscle

Objective: To increase movement of the jaw muscle.

Procedure: Have child close mouth and clench teeth until the jaw muscle bulges. Let child use a mirror to watch it and feel it.

17. Massage

Objective: To stimulate the jaw muscle (masseter).

Procedure: Massage using circular and up/down motions.

18. Sucking

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Suck on banana, sucker, popsicle, etc.

19. Water Hold

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Hold a small amount of warm water in mouth with cheeks puffed out.

20. Cotton

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Put a small cotton pad between the upper lip and upper gum and hold it there. Repeat with lower lip and lower gum.

21. Wide Mouth Grog Pulls

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Gently pull on sides of mouth laterally while child tries to pucker.

22. Tactile Stimulation for Lips

Objective: To increase tactile stimulation and awareness.

Procedure: have child rub chapstick on lips and wash off while rubbing lips.

23. Chewing Gum

Objective: To increase jaw strength.

Procedure: Have child chew a piece of gum both up and down and in a circular motion.

24. Tongue-Ins

Objective: To increase lip strength.

Procedure: Open mouth wide and continuously move the tongue forward and backward toward the throat.

25. K Swallows

Objective: To increase tongue movement and coordination.

Procedure: Have child gather saliva in the groove of the middle of the tongue. Move the saliva back by saying the "K" sound and then swallow.

26. Tongue Pushes

Objective: To increase tongue strength.

Procedure: Child sticks out tongue directly in front of the mouth. He or She pushes against the spoon or tongue depressor with their tongue tip while you push against their tongue.

27. Say "Ah"

Objective: To increase strength of soft palate.

Procedure: While using a mirror child watches the soft palate move while saying "ah".

28. Sucking

Objective: To increase soft palate strength.

Procedure: Use a straw to suck up liquids. Also try holding a piece of paper at the end of a straw while sucking.

29. Tongue in Cheek

Objective: To increase tongue strength.

Procedure: Have child put his tongue inside his cheek so cheeks puff out. You press against his tongue on his cheek while child resists with tongue.

30. Blowing

Objective: To increase tongue strength.

Procedure: Have child blow objects (small balls, feathers, cotton balls, kleenex tissues) or bubbles through a straw.

*** Oral Exercises ***

Use a mirror to help you do these exercises. Practice 2 to 3 times a day for about 10 to 20 minutes. Try them all.

1. Open and close your mouth slowly several times. Be sure lips are all the way closed.
2. Pucker your lips, as for a kiss, hold, then relax. Repeat several times.
3. Spread lips into a big smile, hold, then relax. Repeat several times.
4. Pucker, hold, smile, hold. Repeat this alternating movement several times.
5. Open your mouth then try to pucker with your mouth wide open. Don't close your jaw. Hold, relax and repeat several times.
6. Close your lips tightly and press together. Relax and repeat.
7. Close your lips firmly, slurp all the saliva onto the top of your tongue.
8. Open your mouth and stick out your tongue. Be sure your tongue comes straight out of your mouth and doesn't go off to the side. Hold, relax and repeat several times. Work toward sticking your tongue out farther each day, but still pointing straight ahead.
9. Stick out your tongue and move it slowly from corner to corner of your lips. Hold in each corner, relax and repeat several times. Be sure your tongue actually touches each corner each time.
10. Stick out your tongue and try to reach your chin with the tongue tip. Hold at farthest point. Relax; repeat.