

# GROWING HEALTHY AIRWAYS




E - G U I D E F O R P A R E N T S


W W W . A I R W A Y S M Y O . C A

# ABOUT *us*

Hey there! We're Michelle & Chantal - myofunctional therapists, registered dental hygienists, and dedicated moms, we're excited to be your companions on this journey. Our personal and professional experiences have equipped us with invaluable insights into promoting craniofacial health and fostering optimal airway development in young children. Join us in our e-guide, where we'll share practical tips, evidence-based techniques, and heartfelt advice to empower you in nurturing your child's growth during the crucial years from infancy to preschool.

**Check out our**  
**PROGRAMS!** 

@airways.myo 

(705) 302-1136 



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**Thank You!**



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# Hey, Parents!

## WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!

Firstly, we'd like to say that we're so happy you're here! Parenting can be so tricky, and airway health is just another one of those things. If you're here, you probably know a little bit about myofunctional therapy, but have realized that therapy programs start around age 4. So, what can you do between birth and age 4 to promote healthy growth and airways? We're about to deep dive!



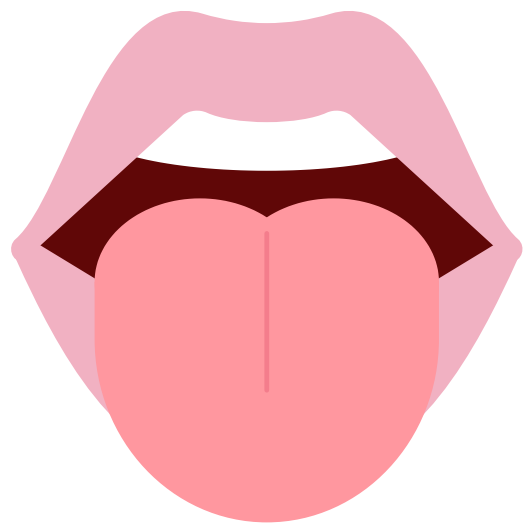


# WHAT IS AN OROFACIAL MYOFUNCTIONAL DISORDER?

Orofacial myofunctional disorders (OMDs) are conditions that affect the muscles and functions of the face and mouth. These disorders involve abnormal patterns of muscle movement or coordination in the lips, tongue, jaw, and throat.

Some common symptoms and characteristics of orofacial myofunctional disorders include:

1. Tongue thrusting
2. Incorrect swallowing patterns
3. Mouth breathing
4. Speech difficulties
5. Poor oral posture
6. Sleep disordered breathing
7. Enlarged tonsils & adenoids
8. Crooked & crowded teeth
9. High vaulted palate
10. Body tension



These disorders can lead to various issues such as dental problems, speech difficulties, facial muscle imbalances, and even skeletal changes over time

What is Myo?

# WHAT IS MYOFUNCTIONAL THERAPY?

Think of it like a workout routine, but for your mouth and face muscles! It's all about training those muscles to work together properly, just like you'd train your muscles at the gym.

You see, our mouth and face muscles play a big role in how we breathe, swallow, and even speak. Sometimes, though, these muscles might not be doing their job quite right. Maybe we're breathing through our mouths instead of our noses, or perhaps our tongue doesn't quite rest where it should.

That's where myofunctional therapy comes in. It's like a coach for your mouth muscles, helping them get into tip-top shape. With exercises and techniques tailored to your needs, myofunctional therapy can help improve things like breathing, swallowing, and even the alignment of your teeth and jaw.

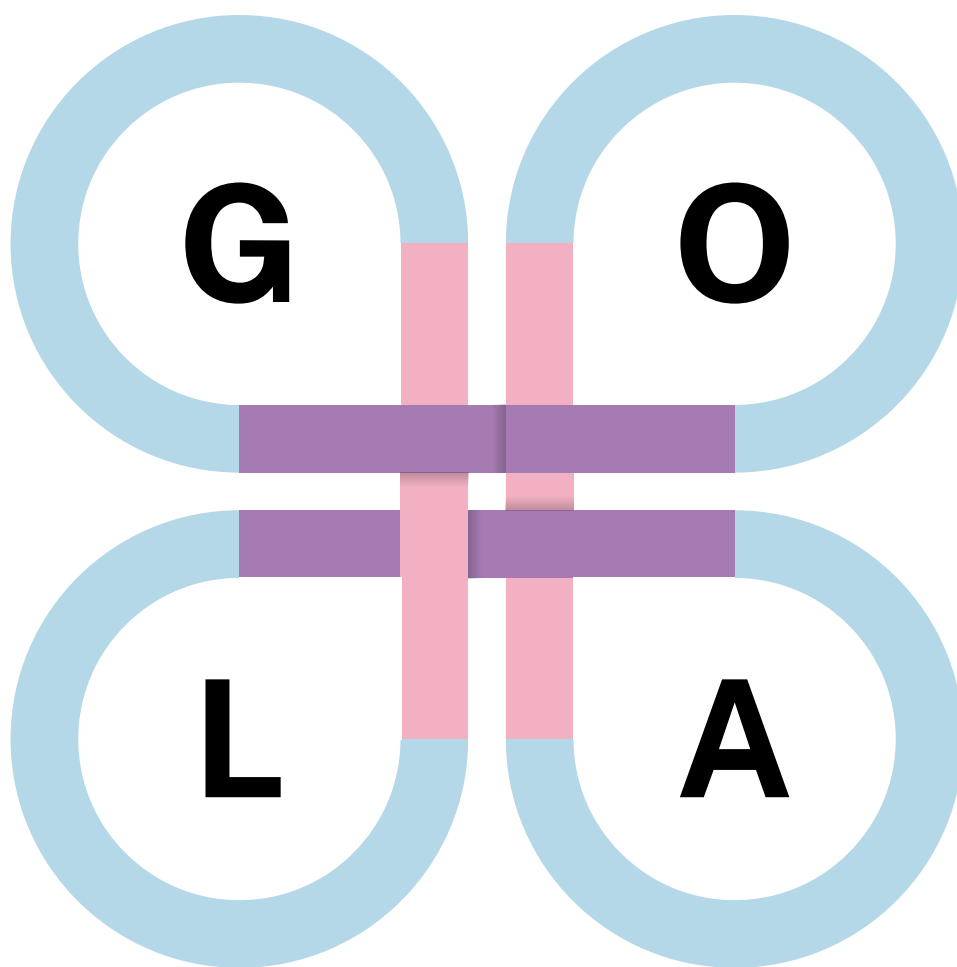
**SEE OUR PROGRAMS!** 



# 4 Goals of Myofunctional Therapy

1. Lip Seal

2. Correct tongue resting position



4. Nasal Breathing

3. Correct Swallow Pattern



# #1

# NASAL BREATHING

Children aged 0-4 years old is a crucial time to instill nasal breathing as this is a developmental stage where habits are formed and health outcomes can be greatly influenced. Here is why we encourage nasal breathing:

1. **Facilitates Proper Development:** Nasal breathing is the natural and optimal way for children to breathe. It helps in the proper development of the respiratory system, including the nose, sinuses, and lungs. The nasal passages are designed to filter, warm, and humidify the air before it reaches the lungs, which is essential for respiratory health.

2. **Promotes Better Sleep:** Nasal breathing plays a key role in ensuring restful sleep for children. Breathing through the nose helps regulate oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in the body, leading to deeper and more restorative sleep. In contrast, mouth breathing can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to issues such as snoring, sleep apnea, and restless sleep.



3. **Supports Dental and Facial Development:** Nasal breathing is closely linked to proper dental and facial development. When children breathe through their nose, it encourages the correct positioning of the tongue against the roof of the mouth and proper alignment of the teeth and jaws. Mouth breathing, on the other hand, can lead to dental malocclusions, crowded teeth, and changes in facial structure over time.

4. **Maintains Healthy Airways:** Nasal breathing helps maintain healthy airways by promoting the production of nitric oxide, a molecule with antibacterial properties that dilates blood vessels and supports immune function. Nasal breathing also reduces the risk of respiratory infections by filtering out airborne pathogens and allergens.

5. **Prevents Speech and Language Issues:** Proper nasal breathing is essential for speech and language development in children. Breathing through the nose allows for better control of airflow during speech production and facilitates the proper positioning of the tongue and lips for articulating sounds.

6. **Encourages Mind-Body Connection:** Nasal breathing has been linked to relaxation and stress reduction. Teaching children to breathe through their noses can help them develop mindfulness and self-regulation skills from an early age, which can be beneficial for their overall well-being.

7. **Prevents Bad Habits:** Encouraging nasal breathing in young children can help prevent the development of harmful habits such as chronic mouth breathing, which can have long-term consequences for their health and development.



# Nasal Breathing CHECK *list*



Daily nasal hygiene



Remove known allergens



Support immune system



Investigate physical obstructions



Get assessed for oral ties



Nasal breathing activities



# #2

## ORAL HABITS

Oral habits like thumb sucking, finger sucking, and prolonged use of bottles and pacifiers can have a **significant impact** on oral development, particularly in young children. These habits can lead to **tongue weakness** and a **low lying tongue position**, where the tongue rests against the bottom of the mouth instead of the roof. As a result, proper tongue posture, essential for speech development, swallowing, and maintaining an open airway, is compromised. Persistent thumb or finger sucking can also alter the **alignment of the teeth** and the shape of the palate, potentially leading to dental issues such as malocclusion and improper jaw development. Early intervention to discourage these habits and promote healthy oral behaviors is essential to prevent long-term consequences and ensure optimal oral function in children.

Need help? Our [habit breaking guide](#)  can help!





# ORAL PROPS TIME *line*



# #3

## SLEEP DISORDERED BREATHING

Sleep-disordered breathing (SDB) encompasses a range of breathing difficulties during sleep, including snoring, mouth breathing, and **sleep apnea**, and can significantly impact children's **growth and development**. SDB disrupts the quality of sleep, leading to daytime drowsiness, irritability, and difficulty concentrating, which can impair cognitive function and academic performance. Moreover, inadequate sleep due to SDB can hinder the release of **growth hormones**, potentially stunting physical growth and delaying development milestones. Additionally, untreated SDB can contribute to behavioral issues, such as **hyperactivity** and attention deficits. Prompt recognition and management of SDB are crucial to ensuring children receive the restorative sleep needed for healthy growth, cognitive function, and **overall well-being**.





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RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL SLEEP MEDICINE REVIEWS HIGHLIGHTS THAT MAINTAINING PROPER ORAL REST POSTURE, CHARACTERIZED BY THE TONGUE RESTING AGAINST THE ROOF OF THE MOUTH AND LIPS CLOSED, ALONG WITH NASAL BREATHING, CAN HELP MITIGATE THE SEVERITY OF OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA

*Guilleminault C*





# WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

1. Loud or frequent snoring
2. Pauses in breathing during sleep
3. Gasping or choking sounds during sleep
4. Mouth breathing during sleep
5. Restless sleep or frequent awakenings
6. Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
7. Daytime drowsiness or fatigue
8. Difficulty concentrating or behavioral problems
9. Headaches upon waking
10. Bedwetting (enuresis)
11. Night sweats
12. Irritability or mood swings
13. Difficulty waking up in the morning
14. Breathing through the mouth during the day
15. Failure to thrive or poor growth
16. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms may worsen
17. Enlarged tonsils or adenoids

THESE SYMPTOMS, ESPECIALLY WHEN OBSERVED TOGETHER, MAY SUGGEST THE PRESENCE OF SLEEP-DISORDERED BREATHING IN CHILDREN AND SHOULD PROMPT FURTHER EVALUATION BY A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL.



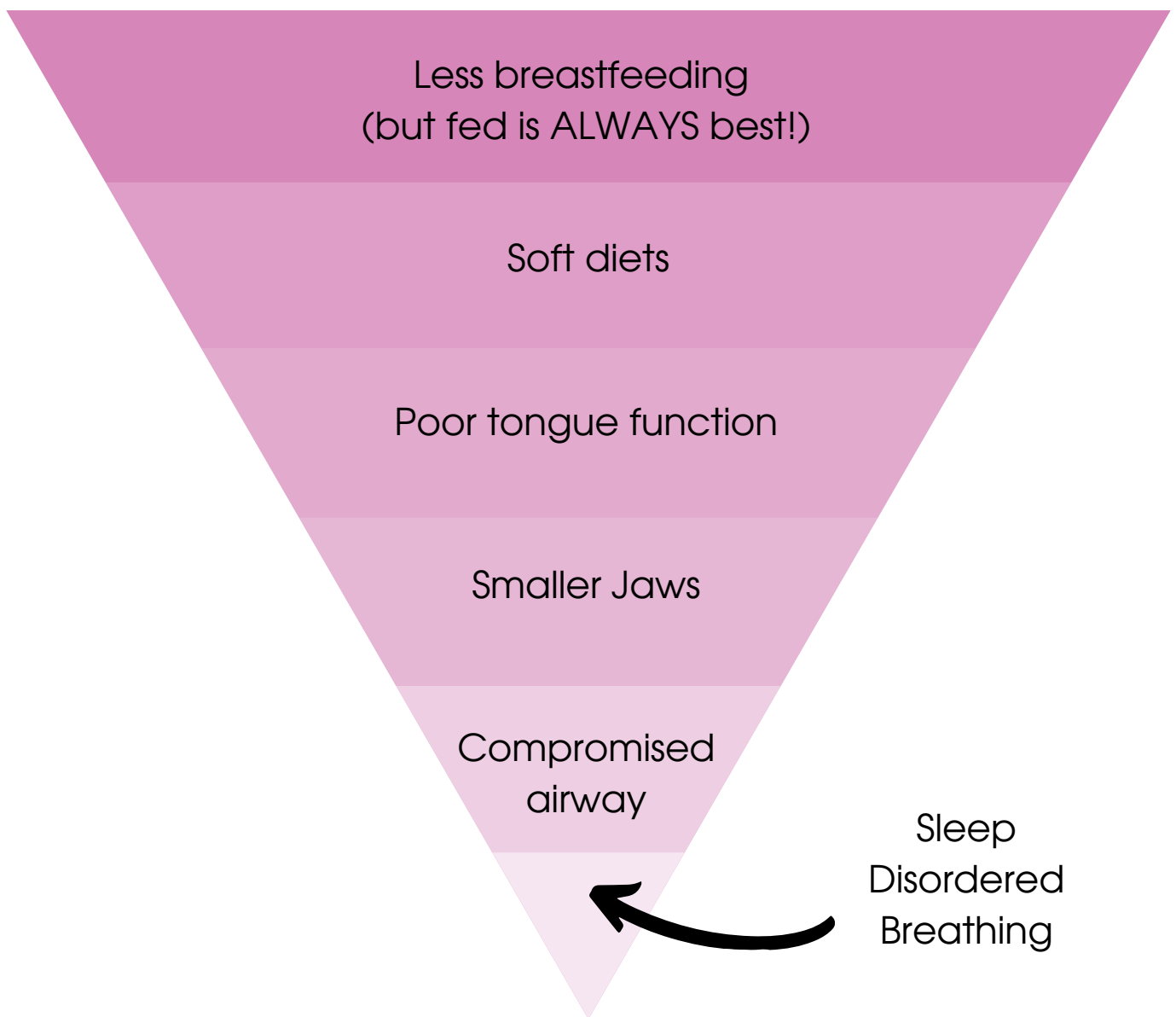
”

Current literature demonstrates that myofunctional therapy decreases apnea-hypopnea index by approximately 50% in adults and 62% in children.

*Macaris Camacho, MD*

# CAUSES

## *Pyramid Chart*



# #4

## BABY LED WEANING

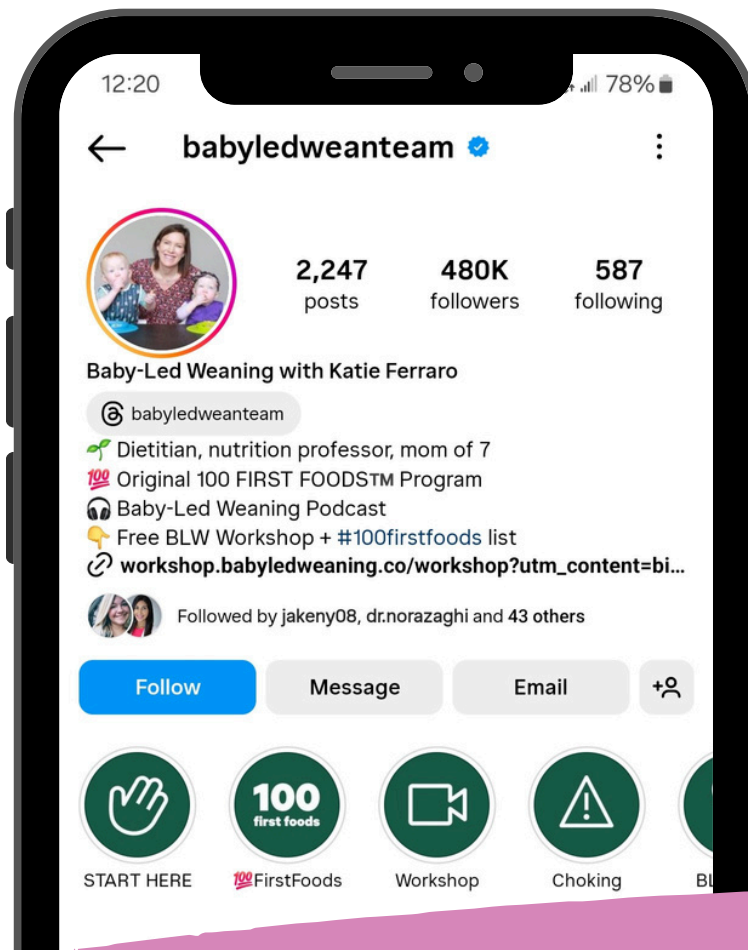
**Baby-led weaning** is a method of introducing solid foods to infants that allows them to feed themselves from the start, rather than being spoon-fed purées. This approach encourages babies to explore a variety of textures and tastes at their own pace, promoting independence and developing **oral motor skills**. One significant benefit of baby-led weaning is its positive effect on **jaw growth and development**. Chewing on solid foods requires a range of jaw movements, which helps strengthen the muscles and bones of the jaw. This stimulation supports **proper alignment** and growth of the jaw, contributing to the development of a well-formed **palate and airway**. By allowing infants to engage in self-feeding and chewing from an early age, baby-led weaning lays the foundation for healthy oral function and optimal jaw development, ultimately promoting better respiratory health and overall well-being.



# WANT TO *learn more?*

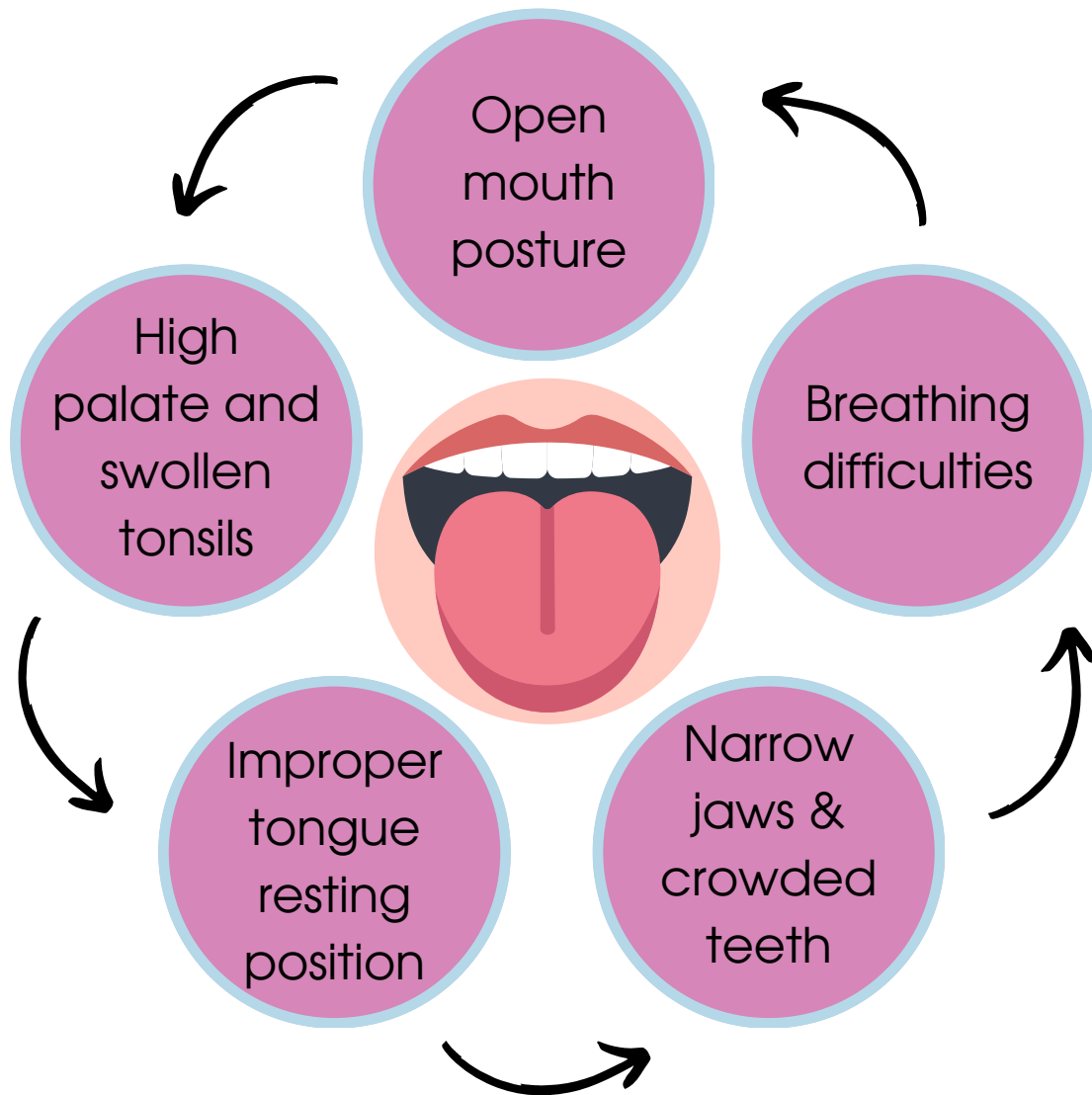
Baby-led weaning can be scary. Follow some of these recommended accounts on Instagram to help you feel more comfortable!

**FOLLOW @BABYLEDWEANTEAM**





# CIRCLE *chart*



OMD's can be a vicious cycle...but we can break the cycle!

# #5

## BREAST FEEDING

Breastfeeding offers numerous benefits for infants, including important contributions to **jaw and facial muscle development**. The natural sucking motion required during breastfeeding engages a variety of facial muscles, promoting **strength and coordination**. This muscular activity helps stimulate the growth of the jawbone and surrounding structures, supporting proper **alignment** of the teeth and palate. Additionally, the act of breastfeeding encourages the baby to open wide and latch deeply, which further exercises the jaw muscles and promotes healthy oral development. It's important to note that while breastfeeding can provide these benefits, it's **not the only way to support a child's oral health**. Formula feeding and other feeding methods also nourish babies and support their growth and development. Every family's feeding journey is unique, and all parents should be supported in making the best choices for their child's well-being **without judgment or shame**.





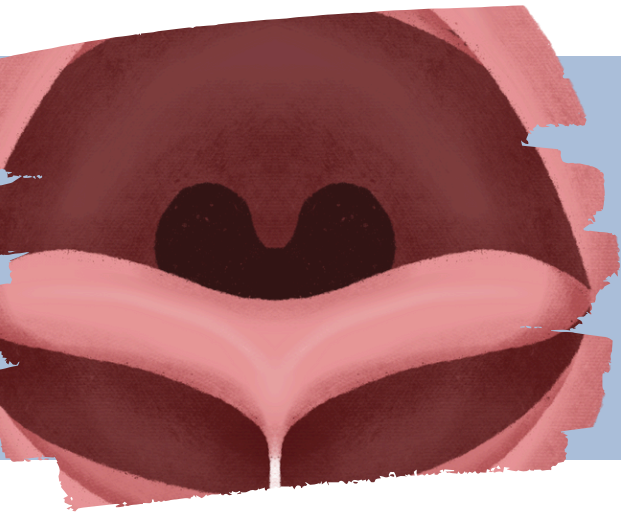
# LET'S BREAK IT DOWN: BOTTLE FEEDING

To encourage babies to work for their milk, several tips can be helpful. Firstly, using a slow-flow nipple can mimic the slower flow of breast milk, requiring babies to suck more actively. Holding the bottle in a semi-upright position can also help control the flow and encourage a natural feeding rhythm. Additionally, taking breaks during feeding sessions to burp the baby can mimic the pauses often experienced during breastfeeding, promoting better digestion and reducing the risk of overfeeding. Finally, ensuring skin-to-skin contact and maintaining eye contact with the baby during bottle feeding can help create a nurturing environment reminiscent of breastfeeding, fostering a stronger bond between caregiver and child.

## *Recommended Product:*

Evenflo Balance Bottles





## LET'S BREAK IT DOWN: TONGUE TIES

Tongue ties occur when the tissue connecting the tongue to the floor of the mouth is overly tight or short, **restricting the tongue's movement**. This condition can significantly inhibit oral function, impacting breastfeeding, speech development, and oral hygiene. Babies with tongue ties may have difficulty latching onto the breast or bottle properly, leading to feeding challenges and inadequate milk transfer. As they grow, tongue ties CAN **(but not always)** affect speech articulation, causing speech impediments and difficulty with certain sounds.

Additionally, tongue ties may contribute to oral health issues such as **tooth decay** and gum disease due to inadequate tongue movement for cleaning. They can **make it difficult to breathe through the nose**. It's essential to note that diagnosing and treating tongue ties requires specialized training and expertise, as family doctors and dentists may not be equipped to accurately assess or address this condition. Consulting with a trained tie release provider, such as a lactation consultant, myofunctional therapist or pediatric dentist experienced in frenectomy procedures, is **crucial for proper evaluation** and management of tongue ties in affected individuals.



# READY TO *level up!*

YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS!



Programs available for all ages!

18 months to 99+



Not sure  
where to  
start?

**Screening  
Quiz**



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# MYO PROGRAMS

## *For Everyone*



### BOOK AN EVALUATION


[» Learn more](#)

- Available for ages 4 & up
- Optionally start with a free 15-minute consult
- Customized Myofunctional therapy treatment plan



### MYO EARLY START PROGRAM

[» Learn more](#)

- 18m - 4 years old
- 8-Week Myo program
- Everfit© App
- Preventative
- Online community
- Resource Centre
- Product recommendations
- Parent-led
- Printable activities
- & More!
- BONUS: Includes habit breaking guide 



### HABIT BREAKING GUIDE

[» Learn more](#)

- 20 pages
- Step by step guide
- Tackle thumb/finger sucking, bottles, pacifiers & more
- Worksheet
- Habit tracker
- Printable Certificate

[Click here for services & pricing!](#)



# Thank You!



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