

PARENTS ADVISED TO RETHINK DUMMY USE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A comprehensive review of scientific studies on the use of baby pacifiers (dummies) has found that they interfere with successful breastfeeding.

The review was conducted by child health nurses led by researchers at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in conjunction with the Western Australian Centre for Evidence Based Nursing and Midwifery and Curtin University of Technology.

Report co-author, Dr Garth Kendall from the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, said repeated studies have found that dummies result in a reduction of breastfeeding duration or exclusivity.

"Given the overwhelming evidence about the benefits of breastfeeding, it is generally advisable that mothers avoid the use of dummies in order to increase the likelihood that their babies will breastfeed more effectively and for a longer period," Dr Kendall said.

Dr Kendall said the review had also found that the use of pacifiers reduces the risk for SIDS - but the mechanism of the effect is not understood.

"This type of mixed result poses quite a quandary for parents and researchers," Dr Kendall said.

"Every parent would want to do all they can to reduce the risk of a SIDS tragedy, so what we've tried to do is weigh up the various risks and benefits.

"As breastfeeding provides a host of health and developmental benefits to the child, we have concluded that, on balance, dummies should not be used but individual circumstances should be taken into account."

The information has been published in a Best Practice Information Sheet for Health Professionals by the Joanna Briggs Institute.

The paper is available at <http://www.joannabriggs.edu.au>

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