
CHEWIES

Eyas Landing & Blue Bird Day

What are they?

Chewies are any specially designed object that a child can safely chew on instead of their clothes, hands, hair, or writing utensils. A chewy is typically a piece of rubber-like material that comes in different textures and shapes. An occupational or speech therapist can assist you in choosing the correct resistance and texture chewy for your child.

Why use it?

Children who chew on non-food objects may benefit from a chewy in order to reduce damage to their clothes, body, or tools. Chewing on something can provide a calming and focusing effect on a child who seeks sensation in their mouth. Just as an infant may suck on objects like a pacifier in order to calm themselves, a chewy provides an age-appropriate substitution for children to use to calm down. Chewy tubes may also be used for children to build muscle strength in their mouth in order to safely eat different types of food. Just like lifting weights, the muscles in our mouth need to get stronger before they can chew tough foods like meats.

Who can use it?

A chewy may be appropriate for a child if they:

- Always chew on non-food items
- Have increased biting behaviors
- Becomes anxious and chews on objects
- Constantly seeks sensation in their mouth
- Have a low frustration tolerance and chew/bite when frustrated
- A child with low muscle strength in their mouth



Types of chewies

Chewies come in all different shapes and thicknesses. The thicker the chewy, the more resistant and the more it challenges the child's oral muscles. Chewies have different textures to meet a child's sensory needs. The most common shape is a "T" shaped chewy tube, but you can also get some shaped like a "O" or "P". As children get older, they can use Chewelry. Chewelry is designed to look like jewelry but is made from the same durable and safe material as a chewy tube.



T Smooth Chewy



Q Rough Chewy



P Rough Chewy



Chewelry

Price

\$8-\$15

Resources

Autism Speaks: Chewing on Clothes

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/blog/2016/04/22/autism-dilemma-why-teen-chewing-clothes-swallowing-objects>

American Occupational Therapy Association Research on Chewy Tubes

<http://ajot.aota.org/article.aspx?articleid=1874479&resultClick=3>