



## Oral Motor Play

Oral motor play can help to desensitize anxious eaters. Model these actions with exaggerated movements to help your child motor plan their own oral movements.

- **Blowing**
  - Cotton balls, feathers, paper balls across a table (with and without a straw)
  - Kleenex-how long can you keep it in the air? How high can it go?
  - Bubbles- both wand bubbles and bathtime bubbles
  - Whistles, pinwheels
  
- **Tongue Movement**
  - Licking popsicles, suckers, ice cream cones
  - Lick sticky texture off a spoon (honey, peanut butter)
  - Click your tongue, or see what other noises your tongue can make
  - Singing “La La La” with songs
  - Blow “raspberries” (with tongue in and out of mouth)
  - Move tongue around mouth to make silly faces
  - Balance small foods on tip of tongue
  - Play hide and seek with foods on tongue (in and out of mouth)
  - Use tongue to push cheeks out-how does it feel? watch in a mirror to see how it looks
  
- **Lip Closure/Movement**
  - Hold foods with just lips and pretend they are a horn
  - Hold foods with just lips and reach hands up and say “No hands!”
  - Use purees (ranch, applesauce, peanut butter) for “lipstick” and kiss something/one
  - Alternate puckering with smiling (like saying O-E-O-E-O-E-O)
  
- **Sucking**
  - Use straws for yogurts, milkshakes, applesauce
  - Make a fish face
  
- **Exploring teeth**
  - Use a vibrating toothbrush
  - Count your teeth with a long food item (carrot stick, licorice, celery stick, etc)
  - Make sounds by tapping hard foods against upper and lower teeth-work your way to the back teeth for different noises
  - Hold a vibrating toy to cheek/chin/lips
  - Bite items to make tooth impressions/designs with your teeth