

## Chewing as a sensory behaviour

Students may chew on a variety of objects, clothing, hair or fingers. They may do this to decrease stress or anxiety or as a way of gathering sensory input. Being able to bite, chew or suck can provide inputs that calm or help with focus.

### Options:

- Bubble gum – allows for that repeated chewing movement.
- Snacks – choose snacks that require effort to chew, are hard or crunchy.
- Drink from straws of various lengths and widths with thicker substances such as milk shakes, thinned yogurt, slushies, firm Jell-O cubes, apple juice with apple sauce
- Blow bubbles with a wand, pipe or straw
- Blow sound makers, party horns, pinwheels
- Blow a harmonica and alternate inhale/exhale to make different sounds.
- Blow feathers, cotton balls, ping pong balls, candles, whistles, bubbles
- Chewelry – rubber items designed for chewing, can be on necklace, bracelet, handheld. They come in variety of shapes, sizes, textures and densities. Confirm with parent/caregiver that this is an acceptable option.

Allow students to have this input. They will seek it out regardless to meet their needs.