

DECREASING DROOLING BEHAVIOUR

Strong smelling saliva can be very noticeable on a student's hands and clothing. It is an important social issue to deal with in relation to their time spent with both adults and peers. The student may not have a lot of control over this behaviour. However, with support from caregivers and therapists, we may be able to assist the student in managing this behaviour more effectively.

The following strategies may be considered...

- **Positioning** - When the student is well positioned in sitting or standing he may be more able to straighten the upper back, tuck the chin down and close the mouth, without hanging the head forward. This may reduce the effect of gravity on the spilling of saliva.
- **Stimulation of hands** - When the student is weight-bearing on his arms the student is less able to bring hands to mouth. Keeping hands out of the mouth may lessen the production of saliva.
- **Neckerchiefs/collars** - These can be worn to protect the student's tops and jackets. They should be changed frequently as they may carry an odour.
- **Firm patting** - Pat firmly on the mouth area, rather than wipe sideways, when you need to clean up the student's face at any time. Try a warm, wet cloth or disposable wipe that will not irritate the skin.
- **Simplify the activity** - When the student is involved with activities using his hands, increased saliva may be produced because of the effort being exerted. Consider simplifying the activity to require less effort as a way to reduce drooling.