



MTSS Tip Sheet

Spitting

PURPOSE

This tip sheet will help you help your scholars who are spitting. Below are tips that may be helpful, both in the moment and for future planning.

This list is not all encompassing, discuss with OT (and whole team) and see additional references for other suggestions.

TIPS

In the moment:

- Stay calm and model calm behavior
- Move scholar to an area away from others
- Divert scholar to a location or “safe area” with a productive activity
- Over correct the behavior
 - When the scholar spits, bring them to the sink, trashcan, toilet or give them a cup to spit in
 - Have the scholar continue to spit until they’re “done”. Repeat the over correction each time.
- Avoid blaming or verbally reprimanding scholar
- Encourage scholar to take responsibility for their behavior by apologizing (verbally or by gesture) and helping to clean area with non toxic wipes
 - within reason and considering child’s ability

Future planning:

- Determine if this is due to a physical or medical need, or is a purposeful behavior
- Encourage activities that provide oral input throughout
 - chewing toys / chewable jewelry
 - blowing toys and games
 - drinking through straws
- Use students “regulation plan” to identify meaningful alternatives

Information from (Plastino, 2021) and (Harrington, 2022)*

OT / PT WEBSITE

<https://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/occupational-physical-therapy>

* detailed references available on department website

A act calm

D de-escalate

A acknowledge feelings

P problem-solve

T think reflectively
