

QA2 – BOTTLE FEEDING AND PREPARATION PROCEDURE

INFORMATION

We are committed to ensuring that children feel safe, secure and cared for during bottle feeding; it is a routine caregiving experience that offers many opportunities to build strong relationships between Educators and children. We also offer, encourage and support mothers to come to the centre to breastfeed.

We ensure that the process of handling, storing, preparing and heating breast milk or formula is a safe and hygienic one by following the recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

RESPONSIBILITIES

All team members, visitors, students and volunteers must comply with this procedure.

PROCEDURE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

- Families need to supply labelled, sterilised bottles for their child – these will be rinsed after use and provided back to families at the end of the day.
- Families providing formula will need to ensure that the required amount of pre-boiled, cooled water as per the formula's instructions is included in each bottle provided. Children over 12 months do not require pre-boiled water.
- We encourage families to supply breast milk in well labelled, multiple small quantities to prevent wastage – the date of expressing must be included on the label.
- We encourage families to provide formula powder to us to keep at the centre so that it can be prepared as required. When doing so, the container needs to be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Cow's milk is only recommended for children over 12 months of age. For children having cow's milk in a bottle, families are to provide labelled, clean bottles.
- Infants over 6 months of age will be offered small amounts of cooled, boiled tap water in addition to breastmilk or formula.
- Infants and children will not be given fruit juice, or drinks other than water/parent-advised milk.

STORING BOTTLES

- Bottles will be stored in an appropriate area that complies with food safety standards and the food safety program (if applicable).
- Formula and breast milk will always be kept in a refrigerator.
- A non-mercury thermometer will be in the refrigerator for regular checking to ensure that the temperature is below 5°C.

- Any pre-prepared formula/expressed breastmilk should be stored in the back of the refrigerator, where it is coldest – do not store it in the door of a refrigerator.

Extra information for storing breast milk:

1. Store in a refrigerator for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower, or
2. Frozen in a separate freezer section of the refrigerator for up to 3 months. If your freezer is a compartment inside the refrigerator, rather than a separate section with its own door, then only store the breast milk for 2 weeks.

PREPARING BOTTLES**Preparing formula:**

1. Wash your hands.
2. Ensure the bottle and any other equipment you need is clean.
3. Follow the instructions carefully in accordance with the amount advised by the parent/guardian.

Please note: It is best to make up fresh formula for each feed and give it to the child as soon as the temperature is suitable. If this is not possible, the freshly made formula should be cooled immediately and stored in the back of the refrigerator (where it is coldest) for no more than 24 hours.

Heating formula/expressed breast milk:

- Stand the bottle (formulae) in a container of water or bottle warmer for no more than 15 minutes.
- Stand the bottle (breast milk) in a container of tap water for no more than 15 minutes.
- Before feeding the infant, check the temperature of the milk by letting a little drop onto the inside of your wrist—it should feel comfortably warm or even a little bit cool.
- Never microwave formula or breast milk.
- Never refreeze thawed breast milk or made-up formula.
- Only warm the milk once and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.
- Do not reheat leftover made-up formula.

Please note: Frozen breast milk can be thawed either in the refrigerator, where it must be used within 24 hours, or by standing the bottle in a container of tap water, where it needs to be used straight away.

BOTTLE FEEDING

- Make yourself comfortable and bring the child close to you, holding them gently but firmly. Ensure the child is on a slight incline so any air bubbles rise to the top, making burping easier. Being on an angle also helps to prevent ear infections, as when a baby is lying flat the milk can flow into their ear cavity.
- Put the teat against the child's lips; they will open their mouth and start to suck. Keep the neck of the bottle at an angle so it's filled with formula or milk.
- When the child stops sucking strongly or when they have drunk about half the bottle, gently remove the bottle and see whether they want to burp. Once you've tried burping, offer the bottle again.

- It's a good idea to change the direction the child is facing for part of the feed or at different feeds. This helps to stimulate the child's senses equally.
- Bottle feeding is an important caregiving routine and provides Educators with a wonderful opportunity to build a strong connection with each child – use this time to engage in eye contact, softly talk to the child, or sing songs.

Please note:

- It is important to communicate with families and learn about any specific techniques or approaches they use to feed their child and where appropriate and possible, implement them into your practice with the child.
- Children will not be given bottles in their cot or bed, unless they are directly supervised by an adult.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Eat for Health: Infant feeding guidelines – Summary*. Retrieved 14 May, 2019 from https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56b_infant_feeding_summary_130808.pdf

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date Reviewed	Modifications
June 2019	Created new policy document and format.
31 January 2022	No change