



Bottle Do's and Don'ts – Guidelines for Child Care Providers

Feeding infants is a key part of your job. It is important to feed them the right way. Below are some important tips for you to know when feeding the infants in your care.

Do's

- ✓ Hold the infant upright or feed him/her sitting up. This prevents choking and decreases the risk of ear infections.
- ✓ Infants who are not able to sit should always be held when bottle feeding.
- ✓ Use hard plastic bottles or hard plastic bottles with liners to decrease the risk of breaking.
- ✓ It is best to not bottle feed more than one infant at a time, because it may be hard to act on feeding cues (e.g. pulling away from the bottle) if feeding more than one infant.
- ✓ Offer infants fluids from a “sippy” cup when they are developmentally ready, which may be as early as 7 months. To prevent dental cavities, only offer juice in a “sippy” cup and never in a bottle.

Don'ts

- ✓ Infants should not have bottles in their cribs or carry bottles around with them during the day.
- ✓ Do not force infants to finish their bottles; it is important to know signs that the infant is full (e.g. turning head away, not wanting bottle anymore).
- ✓ Bottle propping should never be done. It can cause choking and may lead to ear infections, cavities, speech and nutrition problems.
- ✓ Milk left in a bottle for greater than 1 hour is not good to drink because of bacteria from the infant's saliva. It should be thrown away.
- ✓ Bottles should only be used for formula or breastmilk. Juice or other foods such as infant cereal should **NEVER** be put into a bottle.
 - Although many people think that infants sleep better after eating solid foods, this is not true! Researchers have shown that sleeping through the night is due to developmental reasons and not nutrition reasons.
- ✓ Bottles should never be used as pacifiers. This can lead to dental cavities and extra calories that the infant may not need.