



**COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
POLICY**

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**EFFECTIVE: 07-01-10**  
Updated

**SUBJECT:**  
BOTTLE FEEDING

**APPROVED: 10-20-10**

  
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**PURPOSE**

To ensure bottle feeding experience is positive

**POLICY**

Breast milk or iron-fortified formula are the best and only source of food needed for the first 4-6 months and remains an important nutrient until the child is at least one year of age.

**REFERENCE**

Head Start Performance Standards 1304.23 (e)(1)(2)

**PROCEDURE**

Tips for successful bottle feeding:

- Never accept or feed an unlabeled bottle to an infant.
- Do not allow bottles of breast milk or formula to stand at room temperature to prevent spoilage. Refrigerate prepared bottles until ready to use.
- For those babies who prefer a warm bottle hold the bottle under running warm (not hot) water immediately before feeding.
- Shake a bottle of breast milk before feeding because breast milk separates when it is stored.
- Never use a microwave oven to heat the bottles because they may explode or the milk may get too hot. Since the liquid heat unevenly, it can be much hotter than it feels. Microwave heating can destroy special substances in breast milk.
- Do not put cereal or other food in a bottle since this forces the baby to eat food this way.
- Always hold infants while bottle feeding, support the infant's head, making sure that it is slightly higher than the rest of the body.
- Touch the infant's lips or show the bottle and wait until he/she opens their mouth.
- Interact during the feeding by smiling, cuddling etc.
- Do not leave any bottles sitting around to prevent other babies or children from drinking them.
- If a child has been mistakenly fed or has drunk from another child's bottle of expressed breast milk, follow the newest guidance from the CDC at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- Throw out unused breast milk or formula left in a bottle after a feeding and wash the bottle with soap and hot water immediately. Clean and sterilize bottles using written procedures before reusing them.

### Feeding the Baby:

- Feed when baby indicates hunger. Respond to the early signs of hunger. Do not wait until the baby is upset or crying from hunger.
- Do not offer the bottle at nap time or let the baby carry a bottle around as this practice promotes baby bottle tooth decay.
- Wait for the baby to stop eating before burping. Burp by gently patting or rubbing the baby's back while the baby is resting on your shoulder or sitting on your lap.
- Continue to feed until the baby indicates he or she is full. Signs of fullness include sealing the lips, decrease in sucking, spitting out the nipple, and turning from bottle or pushing bottle away.
- Never force a baby to finish what is in the bottle. Babies are the best judge of how much they need.