

BOTTLE SAFETY & PREPARATION POLICY

Rationale and Policy Considerations

As young children (particularly those under 12 months) are still developing their immune system, they are more susceptible to food borne illnesses and infection. This therefore makes it imperative that education and care services implement and maintain the highest level of hygiene practices. Our Service will ensure that safe practices are consistently maintained for handling, storing, preparing and heating breast milk and formula, and sterilising bottles and teats.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (SA)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Privacy Act (1988) Commonwealth

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Regulations 77, 78, 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education Elements 2.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2, 2.2.1

Policy Statement

To ensure our Service maintains a safe and hygienic environment for all infants and toddlers requiring a bottle, Educators will sterilise and prepare bottles safely and hygienically in accordance with recognised guidelines and best practice. All educators preparing and/or handling bottles will have undergone training in safe food handling.

Strategies for Policy implementation

During their first year of life, babies are at their most vulnerable to viruses, bacteria, and parasitic infections, due to their immune system not yet being fully developed. Unsafe or careless food handling practices can therefore lead to anything from a mild attack of thrush to a more serious condition of gastroenteritis, all of which are similar to food poisoning and can cause vomiting and diarrhoea, and subsequent dehydration.

To ensure that bottles are consistently prepared in a safe and hygienic manner Educators will adhere to Service procedures at all times.

Management will ensure:

- that the Nominated Supervisor and Educators are aware of the procedures for sterilising bottles and teats, and preparing, heating and storing bottles of formula and breast milk
- procedures for the safe sterilisation of bottles and teats are strictly adhered to
- procedures for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles are strictly adhered to
- infants over 6 months of age are given small amounts of cooled boiled water in addition to breastmilk or formula as required

- infants are given only breast milk, formula, or cooled boiled water: They are not given fruit juice in their bottle due to the increase risk of tooth decay.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person will:

- ensure that Educators adhere to the procedures for sterilising bottles and teats, and preparing, heating, and storing bottles of formula and breast milk
- adhere to the procedure for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles
- provide infants over 6 months of age with small amounts of cooled boiled water in addition to breast milk or formula as required
- ensure infants are not given fruit juice in their bottle due to the increase risk of tooth decay.
- ensure families are familiar with their responsibilities in accordance with this policy.

Educators will:

- implement safe food handling practices
- wash hands thoroughly and wear gloves when preparing bottles
- store all bottles in an appropriate area for food preparation that complies with the food safety standards for kitchens and food preparation areas
- adhere to the procedure for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles
- provide infants over 6 months of age with small amounts of cooled boiled water in addition to breast milk or formula
- not give Infants fruit juice in their bottle due to risk of tooth decay
- adhere to each child's feeding routine
- ensure families are familiar with their responsibilities in accordance with this policy
- document the amount of milk each infant consumed including the time of feeds
- Communicate regularly with families about infant and children's feeding patterns and routines

Families will:

- be informed during orientation that children's bottles must be clearly labelled with the child's name
- label bottles containing breast milk or formula with the date of preparation or date of expression
- attempt to bring enough sterilised bottles each day to meet their child's requirements
- supply breast milk in multiple small quantities to prevent wastage
- keep formula powder at the service so that the formula can be prepared as required. (Formula must be in its original tin and must be clearly labelled with the child's name.)
- provide a labelled bottle(s) for use at the service for children having regular cow's milk in their bottles
- be encouraged to communicate regularly with Educators about children's bottle and feeding requirements
- not put fruit juice in children's bottles.

PREPARING FORMULA

Before preparing formula

- Ensure your hands and the work bench are clean.

- Boil water and leave to cool for approximately 30 minutes. This will ensure that the water is not too hot (70°C is the best temperature to prepare formula as it will dissolve easily).
- The formula is to be brought in the original tin – not in a divider bowl – so that educators can read the instructions regarding formula to water ratio.

When preparing infant formula always closely follow the instructions on the tin. In general:

- Always wash hands thoroughly prior to preparing formula.
- Do not compact the formula powder in the scoop, and always ensure the correct ratio of formula to water as specified on the tin: Too little formula powder may leave the infant hungry, whilst too much can cause constipation.
- Always use a sterilised knife to level the top of the scoop when measuring the formula powder.
- Without touching the teat shake the bottle well to mix the contents.
- Cool the made-up formula as quickly as possible: If using immediately run under cold tap water or place in a large bowl of cold water (with the lid on to avoid contaminating the teat).
- If not using immediately made-up formula should be cooled and stored in the fridge.

Heating bottles

- Heat bottles once only
- Do not allow a bottle to cool and then reheat as this can allow germs to grow.
- Stand the bottle in a container of hot water for no more than 15 minutes
- Before feeding the infant, check the temperature of the milk by letting a small drop fall on the inside of your wrist
- Do not microwave breast milk or bottles
- Do not refreeze thawed breast milk
- Discard any milk that has not been used

STORING BREASTMILK AND FORMULA

For safe storage of formula and breast milk, refrigerators must be kept at 5°C or below and should have a non-mercury thermometer to monitor the temperature.

- Formula or breast milk must be kept refrigerated or frozen if not being immediately consumed.
- Whenever possible, make up formula as it is needed. Formula should not be refrigerated for more than 24 hours.
- Any remaining formula should be thrown out if an infant does not finish a bottle: It should not be frozen or reheated.
- Prior to placing bottle in the fridge staff will check that it/they are labelled with the child's name and the date the bottle was prepared.

Breast milk can be stored in several ways, which include:

1. Refrigerated for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower. Store breast milk on a shelf of the refrigerator, not in the door.
2. Frozen in a separate freezer section of a refrigerator for up to 3 months at a temperature of -18°C. If being frozen in a freezer compartment inside the refrigerator (as opposed to a freezer with a separate door), the breast milk should only be stored for 2 weeks.

Frozen breast milk can be thawed:

1. In the refrigerator and used within 24 hours.
2. If using immediately, stand the bottle in a container of lukewarm water.

Links to other Policies

Bottled Breast Milk Policy
Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
Work Health and Safety
Health and Safety

Sourced from

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Education and Care National Regulations. (2011).
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NSW Ministry of Health. (2014). Caring for children birth to 5 years: Food, nutrition and learning experiences. <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/health/Publications/caring-for-children-manual.pdf>
Safe Food and Health Service Executive. (2013). How to prepare your baby's bottle.