

Infant Bottle Safety & Preparation Policy

Children are more susceptible to food borne illness making it necessary for education and care services to implement adequate health and hygiene practices. Safe practices for handling, storing, preparing and heating breast milk or formula must be employed to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the centre

To ensure that all children requiring bottles have them prepared safely and hygienically, Educators will ensure that they adhere to centre policies and procedures at all times in order to maintain children's health and safety

Healthy lifestyles and good nutrition for each child is paramount. Breast milk contains the mother's antibodies, which help prevent illness in infants. It is important to encourage and support mothers of infants up to 12 months old to provide expressed breast milk, or to visit the education and care service to feed their infants.

Management will ensure:

- Ensure that the Nominated Supervisor and educators are aware of the procedures for preparing, heating and storing bottles of formula and breast milk.
- Ensure that children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are regularly offered food and beverages appropriate to their individual needs
- Develop procedures for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Ensure that educators implement the procedures for 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.

Educators will:

- Implement safe food handling practices.
- Seek to provide a supportive environment for breastfeeding.
- Store all bottles in an appropriate area for food preparation and storage 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.

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 expression.
- Be encouraged to supply breast milk in well labelled, multiple small quantities to prevent wastage.
- Be encouraged to keep formula powder at the centre so that the formula can be prepared as required. Tins of formula must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Be asked to provide a labelled bottle(s) for use at the centre for children having regular cow's milk in their bottles,
- Be encouraged to communicate regularly with educators about children's bottle and feeding requirements.

Preparing, Storing and Heating bottles

Bottles of breast milk and formula need to be carefully prepared, stored and heated. Breast milk contains the mother's antibodies, which help prevent illness in infants. Encourage and support mothers of infants up to 12 months old to provide expressed breast milk, or to visit the education and care service to feed their infants.



Preparing bottles

When preparing formula, always wash your hands first, and ensure that work surfaces, bottles and other equipment are clean. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Storing bottles

Formula or breast milk needs to be kept refrigerated or frozen. Keep a non-mercury thermometer in your fridge so that you can check that the temperature is below 5°C. All bottles need to be labelled with the child's name and the date the bottle was prepared or brought in by the parent.

It is best to make up fresh formula for each feed and give it to the child as soon as it has cooled. 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. Throw away any formula that is left over. Do not freeze or reheat leftover made-up formula.

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

1. Refrigerated for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower (4°C is the typical temperature of a standard fridge). Store breast milk at the back of the refrigerator, not in the door
2. Frozen in a separate freezer section of a 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. Frozen in a deep freeze (–18 °C or lower) for 6–12 months.

Frozen breast milk can be thawed by:

1. In the refrigerator and used within 24 hours
2. Standing the bottle in a container of lukewarm water and used straight away.

Heating Bottles

- 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 little drop onto the inside of your wrist—it should feel comfortably warm or even a little bit cool.
- Never microwave breast milk.
- Never refreeze thawed breast milk.
- Only warm the milk once, and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.

Bottled Breast Milk

Breastfeeding is important for infant's nutrition. Australian and international health authorities recommend exclusive breastfeeding until around 6 months. At around 6 months, solid food can then be offered while breastfeeding is continued until 12 months or longer if the mother and baby request.

Early Childhood Education and Care Services have an important role in supporting mothers to continue to breastfeed, as returning to work is a common reason given for stopping breastfeeding. Educators will inform mothers that the provision of breast milk is supported at our centre.

Our Centre maintains a hygienic premises for all infants requiring breast milk, educators will certify that bottles are prepared safely and hygienically maintaining Work Health and Safety Standards, and current Food Safety Standards.

Breast milk contains the mother's antibodies, which help prevent illness in infants. It is important to encourage and support mothers of infants up to 12 months old to provide expressed breast milk, or to visit the education and care service to feed their infants.

Management will ensure:

- Nominated Supervisor and educators are aware of the procedures for preparing, heating and storing bottles breast milk.
- Procedures for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles is developed.



- Parents are aware that the centre is a 'breastfeeding friendly' centre.
- Families are provided with breastfeeding information during enrolment and orientation.
- A welcoming environment is provided for mothers to comfortably breastfeed or express breast milk.
- Breast milk can be stored and handled safely at the centre.
- Families are provided with accurate nutrition and feeding information.
- Culturally appropriate pictures and posters of breastfeeding are displayed.
- Easily accessible brochures, pamphlets and other resources about breastfeeding are displayed.
- Staff and families are educated, that a mother may breastfeed their child at the centre, as this is their legal right.
- An individual breastfeeding support plan is developed in consultation with families, including arrangements for what we as a centre do if we do not have enough expressed breast milk to meet the child's needs.
- Literature is updated and distributed to staff as required to support 'best practice'.

A Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:

- Ensure that educators implement the procedures for preparing, heating and storing bottles of breast milk.
- Adhere to the procedure for the safe storage and heating of food provided in bottles.
- Provide mothers with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their children or express milk. This will include electrical outlet, comfortable chair, change table and nearby access to hand washing facilities.
- Stimulate participatory learning experiences with the children related to breastfeeding and offer children's books that contain pictures of breastfeeding, play dolls that are nursing and other learning experiences that normalise breastfeeding.
- Establish and maintain connections with local breastfeeding support networks, including NSW Health and the Australian Breastfeeding Association.
- Maintain current printed or electronic lactation resources available to families and employees.
- Refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources, including support services offered by VIC Health, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants.

Educators will:

- Ensure all bottles are stored in the fridge at all times until heating is to commence.
- Ensure frozen breast milk is de-frosted in the fridge until heating.
- Ensure, for occupational health and safety reasons, while bottles are heating in their containers, they are to be placed in a sink where possible or as far from all bench edges and work spaces.
- Ensure that bottles are not to be re-heated at any time.
- Discard bottle content if not used after 30 minutes.

Families will:

- Be informed during orientation that children's bottles must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Label bottles containing breast milk with the date of preparation or expression.
- Be encouraged to supply breast milk in well labelled, multiple small quantities to prevent wastage.
- Be encouraged to communicate regularly with educators about children's bottle and feeding requirements.

Storing bottles

Breast milk needs to be kept refrigerated or frozen. Keep a non-mercury thermometer in your fridge so that you can check that the temperature is below 5°C. All bottles need to be labelled with the child's name and the date the bottle was prepared or brought in by the parent.

- Breast milk can be stored in several ways, which include:
 1. Refrigerated for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower (4°C is the typical temperature of a standard fridge). Store breast milk at the back of the refrigerator, not in the door.



2. Frozen in a separate freezer section of a 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. Frozen in a deep freeze (-18 °C or lower) for 6-12 months.
- Frozen breast milk can be thawed by:
 1. Placing in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours.
 2. Standing the bottle in a container of lukewarm water and used straight away.

Staff Training

Our centre will:

- Provide orientation for new staff to the breastfeeding policy and offer appropriate training, including using a cup or spoon for feeding, where an infant will not accept a bottle.
- Ensure all staff that have responsibility for care of infants and children are able to provide basic breastfeeding information and are able to refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources, including support services offered by NSW Health, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants.
- Ensure staff encourage parents to develop babies' individual breastfeeding support plans and regularly update their plans, with support from NSW Health, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants where appropriate.
- Ensure all staff promote exclusive breastfeeding until babies are about 6 months old with continued breastfeeding to one year and beyond.

Support for Educators and Mothers who are Breastfeeding

We aim to work with families with children who are still being breastfed and provide supportive environment by feeding children breast milk supplied by the families. We support mothers who wish to breastfeed at the centre by providing a quiet, relaxing place with a comfortable chair for mothers to breastfeed or express milk. Educators will take into account mothers' preferences for privacy.

The centre will:

- Treat requests for support to continue breastfeeding sympathetically and reasonably, and make all reasonable efforts to support the staff member.
- Provide breastfeeding employees with a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide expressed breast milk for their children.
- Provide breastfeeding employees with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their babies or express milk, including an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, a change table and nearby access to hand washing facilities.

All reasonable efforts will also be made to support educators who continue breastfeeding their child when they (return to) work at the centre. For example, an educator returning from maternity leave may have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to discuss:

More flexible work arrangements

The provision of lactation breaks for the educator to express milk or breastfeed her child. Educator to child ratios will not be compromised during these breaks.

Source: Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Safe Food Australia, 2nd Edition. January 2001, Caring for Children- Food, Nutrition and Fun Activities, 4th Edition 2006, Australian Guide for Healthy Eating, National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). Staying Healthy in Child Care (5th Edition), Food Safety Standards Australia 2001, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand Act 1991, Food Standards Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994, Food Act 2003, Food Regulation 2004, Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000, Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001, Dental Association Australia, Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers, Feeding and Nutrition of Infants and Young Children, Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines.



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National Quality Standard – NQS

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

2.1	Each child’s health is promoted.
2.1.3	Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
2.1.4	Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines.
2.2	Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children
2.2.1	Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.
2.3	Each child is protected

Education and Care Service National Regulations

77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures

