

Bottles and cups, which ones to pick?

Bottles

- Stopping using the bottle by 12 months is the best for your babies' health.
- Drinks other than milk and water should not be given in a bottle.
- Prolonged bottle use can cause problems such as: speech problems, tooth decay, fussy eating, poor eating habits, poor growth, iron deficiency anaemia and childhood obesity.



Open cup

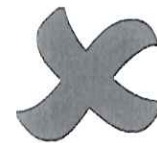
Lid-less cups encourage a child to move on from a sucking action to a sipping action. Liquid pours into the mouth rather than being sucked and a child can begin to learn cup control.

Cups

- Babies should be encouraged to drink straight from an open cup whenever possible from 6 months of age.
- Benefits of using an open cup include:
 - Helps to protect baby's teeth
 - Helps to establish good eating patterns
 - Helps to avoid speech problems
- An open, plastic cup is the best choice - although it can be messy! Hard-spouted, free-flowing beakers may be used when out and about.

Free-flowing beakers

These hard-spouted beakers can be used when out and about if you find them more convenient. They don't have a valve which means the liquid comes out much easier than a non-spill beaker. A child should be encouraged to move quickly onto a lid-less cup by the time they are 12 months old.



Cups to avoid

- Non-spill beakers/cups should be avoided.
- These may be appealing as they don't spill, however they encourage a child to carry them around whilst drinking which increases the risk of choking.
- The child is drinking from the cup for a long period of time, resulting in a poor appetite at mealtimes and increased risk of tooth decay.
- Also, similar to bottles, the child has to suck hard to get the liquid out. This delays the development of good drinking skills.

