

STORAGE & HANDLING OF BOTTLES & BABY FOOD

Children who must be fed or assisted with eating should be individually fed or helped. Caregivers should not simultaneously feed several children, and they should wash their hands between feeding individual children.

It is recommended that parents provide individual bottles and nipples, training cups, and pacifiers that are brought to the facility each day and returned to the child's home each evening. Bottles should always be provided with nipple guards to protect the nipple and contents of the bottle from contamination. It is not recommended that a common supply of such items be kept in child care facilities. However, if it is necessary to keep a supply of such items on hand for those instance where the parent has failed to provide the necessary feeding equipment, or a staff member has dropped or contaminated the equipment and another piece has to be substituted, it is essential that they be **sanitized** between every use and stored between uses in the kitchen in a manner that protects them from contamination.

Baby bottles and other dishes and utensils should not be rinsed in the sinks used for diapering. They may be contaminated with fecal material that would then be transferred to the kitchen when they are taken there for cleaning and sanitizing. The kitchen, and items in the kitchen, could then be contaminated with the fecal material.

The bottles, nipples, and training cups must be washed by hand with a brush in hot, soapy water and rinsed in clear, clean water. They then must be **sanitized**. If the day care facility has a commercial dishwasher that sanitizes with hot water (i.e. rinse water at or above 170°F), they can be run through a cycle of the dishwasher.

Otherwise, they may be sanitized by boiling, or by using a three compartment sink that is not used for hand washing or food preparation. If they are sanitizing in a three compartment sink, they must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized. An excellent approved sanitizing solution for bottles, nipples, training cups, and dishes is a mixture of **water and chlorine bleach in a concentration of 50-100 ppm (one teaspoon per gallon of water)** in which they must be immersed for one minute before being air dried. All washing, rinsing, and sanitizing of bottles, nipples, pacifiers, and other dishes and utensils must be done in the kitchen. All such clean and sanitized items must be stored in the kitchen.

High chair trays must be treated like dishes in that they should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized in the kitchen using the method that is used for dishes. High chair trays must be protected from contamination between uses. If the tray to the high chair will be left out, it must be washed, rinsed and sanitized and kept covered with plastic wrap until ready for use. The tables at which the children eat

must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to serving food. Cloths used to wipe tables and counters should be laundered daily and stored in a solution of 50-100 ppm (one teaspoon per gallon of water) of chlorine bleach and water during the day. The solution should be changed frequently through the day to maintain a consistent sanitizing strength.

Infant food may be prepared in the kitchen and placed in individual bowls or bottles, then covered and stored in a refrigerator in the care area until feeding time. The bowls need to be covered with plastic wrap, and all bottles provided with nipple guards, prior to being removed from the kitchen. Only enough cereal or formula, etc. for one feeding should be placed in the bowl or bottle.

All unconsumed portions must be discarded immediately following the feeding. Such food must be prepared on the day it is to be served. Spoons and other multiple use utensils must be brought from the kitchen on a daily basis, and must be stored between feedings in a clean zip lock bag and other container that will protect them from contamination. They may not be stored in the care area in a cabinet or drawer. Single use items may be used but must be handled as multiple use items.

Formula, cereal, and other infant food requiring mixing, reconstitution or similar food preparation activities must be stored in the kitchen, and all food preparation activities must take place in the kitchen. Ideally, baby bottles should be stored and heated in the kitchen, too. However, in those instances where the kitchen is too far from the infant area for this method to be practical, bottles may be heated and stored in the infant area if the bottles are otherwise ready to feed. Bottles must be stored refrigerated at 41°F or less until feeding time. The bottles should have enough formula in them for one feeding **only**. All unconsumed formula: should be discarded after the first feeding; it should never be left at room temperature until the next feeding time; and it should never be placed in a heating device until the next feeding time. Devices used to heat baby bottles that may pose a danger to children (such as crock pots etc.) must be stored and used in a manner that makes them inaccessible to the children and prevents them from becoming a potential hazard to the children's safety.

The proper handling of baby bottles is critical because milk and other formula products are excellent growth media for bacteria, and once the milk/formula has been removed from the refrigerator, heated, and partially consumed it is contaminated. Allowing it to sit at room temperature or on a heating device provides the environment needed for bacterial growth.

Commercially prepared baby food in individual sealed jars may be stored in the infant room if the kitchen is too far away for the storage to be practical. If an infant is fed from the jar, then all unused food remaining in the jar must be discarded. If the child will not consume an entire jar of food, a portion may be placed in a clean sanitized bowl and the child may be fed from the bowl. However, the remaining food in the bowl must be discarded after the feeding. The opened jar of food must be refrigerated at or below 41°F immediately after opening. The feeding spoon and bowls must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized in the kitchen, and must also be stored in the kitchen until feeding time. At

feeding time, or shortly before, they may be brought from the kitchen to the infant area in a clean, sanitized, covered container.

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Revised 2/10 by CHICS Committee during our meetings between Child Care Division and Health Department staff in the Tri-County area.