



It's Time for a Cup

Start at 4 **months** to teach baby to drink from a cup.

By 9 **months**, your baby can drink better from the cup. Nurse baby less and give fewer bottles. Replace them with drinks from a cup.

At 12 **months**, many babies can drink everything from a cup. A breastfed baby may wish to continue nursing. Bottle-fed babies should be starting to wean.

Ideas to help your baby learn

- Use a small plastic cup with a top. A simple lid with small holes works best. Spill-proof lids are hard to drink from. A cup with or without handles is OK.
- Put a little water, breastmilk or formula in the cup. Don't fill it all the way.
- Hold the cup so baby can sip from it. Show baby how to set it down after drinking.
- Tell baby what a good job he or she is doing!
- Expect lots of spills.



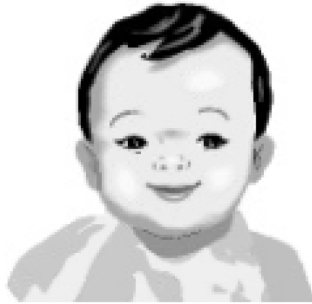
Why give a cup now?

- You teach your baby to use a cup now because baby is **ready** now.
- A bottle-fed baby that learns to use a cup will **wean faster and easier**.
- Weaning means you **don't have to wash bottles** any more!
- Babies weaned from bottles at 1 year **have healthier teeth**.

Remember - cups replace bottles!

Cups are important for breastfed babies, too.

- It doesn't mean you stop breastfeeding. Using a cup teaches your baby to drink other liquids.
- You can even give baby expressed breastmilk in a cup
- Baby can drink from a cup when you're not with him or her. You won't need to use bottles if you're away for a while.
- Continue to nurse when baby wants to. Try offering cups between nursing.



Keep your baby's teeth healthy!

Cups are better for your older baby's teeth than bottles, but you still have to use them right.

- Offer water, breastmilk or formula in the cup. Your baby shouldn't have sodas, fruit drinks, Kool-Aid, or other sweet drinks.
- Don't put baby to bed with a cup (or a bottle).
- Give baby a drink in a cup at meals and snacks.
- Have your child sit and finish a drink. Sipping all day from a cup, a juice box, or a bottle can hurt teeth.

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