

Feeding and Handling Breast Milk in a Child Care Setting

Parents will provide breast milk:

- Transported in an insulated cooler bag at 5°F to 39°F
- In ready to feed amounts (plastic bottles should be BPH free with screw caps and tight fitting lids)
- Labeled with child's full name, and date and time the milk was expressed
- Expressed breast milk that is in an unsanitary bottle, is curdled, smells rotten, and/or has not been properly stored will be returned to the mother

Caregivers/teachers will store breast milk:

- Immediately upon arrival
- In a refrigerator at 39°F or 4°C (for up to 5 days)
- In a freezer 0°F or -18°C (for up to 3-6 months) or a stand -alone freezer at -4°F or -20°C (for up to 6-12 months)

Caregivers/teachers will prepare bottle with breast milk:

- Wash hands
- Check that bottle has the name of the child you will feed
- Breast milk will be defrosted in refrigerator if frozen or defrosted in a container of running cool tap water, very gently swirling the bottle periodically to evenly distribute the temperature in the milk. Check dates to make sure oldest milk is used first
- If child prefers milk warm, heat briefly in bottle warmer or under warm running water. If a crockpot is used to warm milk, it should be out of reach of children, contain water that does not exceed 120°F, be emptied, cleaned, sanitized and refilled with fresh water daily. (DO NOT USE A MICROWAVE)
- After warming bottle, test temperature of the milk before feeding (not to exceed 98.6°F)
- Mix gently (do not shake)

Caregivers/teachers will feed breast milk according to pre-established feeding plan:

- Wash hands
- Check that bottle has the name of child you will feed
- Bottle feed only one infant at a time
- Always hold infant for feeding (bottle feeding techniques should mimic breastfeeding by alternating sides of caregiver's lap, making eye contact, talking to infant, allowing breaks for burping ,and allowing infant to stop feeding)
- Pay attention to cues the infant is full and do not overfeed
- Bottles should never be propped
- Do not permit child to carry a bottle while standing, walking, or running around
- When developmentally ready (6-12 months), small amounts of breast milk can be offered from a cup.
- Do not use milk from a used bottle or cup for another feeding
- Do not feed and discard milk that has been out at room temperature for more than 1 hour
- Document feeding amounts, wet diapers and bowel movements
- Return refrigerated breast milk containers with significant amount of contents remaining (greater than one ounce) to the mother at the end of the day as long as the child has not fed directly from that container

*Staff should receive training and be knowledgeable of the facility's policy and procedure regarding another mother's milk fed to the wrong child.

Resource: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education 2011. *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs*. 3rd Edition, Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. Also available at <http://nrckids.org>