

Breast Milk and Formula Milk Policy

Our policy is based on the following sources:

- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
- Early Childhood Australia Inc.
- National Health and Medical Research Council – *Staying Healthy in Child Care*, 5th Edition
- Australian Breastfeeding Association.
- Education and care services: National Regulations 2015 – Regulation 77, 78, 168
- National Quality Standards: Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety

If parents would like more information they may be referred to a health worker or the free Australian Breastfeeding helpline on 1800 686 268.

- Breast milk contains the mother's antibodies, which help prevent illness in infants. We encourage and support mothers of infants up to 12 months old to provide expressed breast milk or to visit the service to feed their babies.
- We promote exclusive breastfeeding until babies are about 6 months old with continued breastfeeding to one year and beyond
- On enrolment, a breastfeeding/formula feeding plan will be discussed to cover babies feeding routine,(times and amounts) and storage of milk.

Preparing formula

All formula will be prepared at the centre as required. Staff will follow the safe handling of food procedures.

Measured amount of boiling water will be added to the child's bottle and once cooled the correct amount of measured formula will be added to the bottle before feeding. Instructions and measurements on the tin of formula will be followed.

Storing bottles

Breast milk needs to be kept refrigerated or frozen. Fridge temperature is kept at below 5 degrees Celsius. Temperatures are taken twice daily and documented. Expressed breast milk must be labelled with child's name and date. Any leftover formula or breastmilk will be discarded. It will not be reheated for later use.

Breast milk can be stored in several ways. It can be:

- Refrigerated for 3-5 days at 4 degrees Celsius or lower (4 degrees is the typical temperature of a standard fridge); always store breast milk at the back of the fridge, not at the door
- Stored without refrigeration (if needed) for 6 – 8 hours if the room temperature is less than 26 degrees
- 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 own door, then only store the breast milk for 2 weeks
- Frozen in a deep freeze (-18 degrees or lower) for 6-12 months

When thawing breast milk, always use the oldest milk first. Frozen breast milk can be thawed:

- In the refrigerator and used within 24 hours
- By standing the frozen breast milk in a container of hot water (not boiling) and used straight away

Heating Bottles

Bottles will only be heated once. Bottles will not be reheated once they have cooled as this allows germs to grow.

Bottles will not be warmed in the microwave. Microwave ovens distribute heat unevenly. Water in milk can turn to steam that collects at the top of the bottle, and there is a danger that the infant could be scalded. Many parents use a microwave to warm bottles at home. In the home environment, usually only one or two people are preparing bottles, using the same type of bottle and the same microwave every time, so the risk of overheating the milk and scalding the infant is lower.

To heat bottles:

- Stand the bottle in a container of hot water (not boiling) for no more than 15 minutes
- Before feeding, 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 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.

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 labelled, multiple small quantities to prevent wastage
- Be encouraged to communicate regularly with educators about children's bottle and feeding requirements

Educators will ensure:

- Parents are aware that the service is a 'breastfeeding friendly' service
- Families are provided with breastfeeding information during enrolment and orientation (discussion)
- A welcoming environment is provided for mothers to comfortably breastfeed or express breast milk
- 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 service, as this is their legal right

A Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will:

- Ensure the educators implement the procedures for preparing, heating and storing bottles of breast milk
- Adhere to the procedure for the safe storage and heating of formula/breastmilk
- Provide mothers with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their children or express milk
- 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
- Maintain current printed or electronic lactation resources available to families and employees