

WEANING FROM THE BOTTLE!

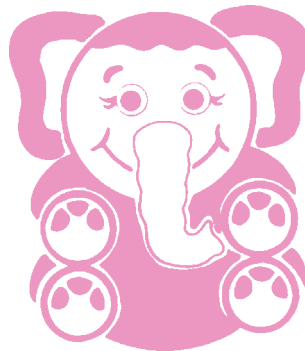
There are many reasons parents do not take the bottle away.

- The child loves it so much.
- The family cannot stand the crying.
- It is easier to give the bottle than the cup.
- Parents do not want their child to grow up.
- Someone makes the parents feel bad about taking the bottle away.

But there are even better reasons why parents should take the bottle away.

Staying on the bottle too long can:

- decay a child's teeth and cause pain. This "Baby Bottle Tooth Decay" can hurt adult teeth before they even come in.
- decrease your child's appetite for other foods.
- cause ear infections.
- cause low iron levels in blood.
- cause overweight.



If your child is over one year old and still on the bottle, here are some things you can do to make weaning work.

- It is important to **keep the bottles out of reach and out of sight**. Make sure your child will not find them.
- Praise your child when he or she uses a cup. Tell your child often what a “big girl” or “big boy” he or she is.
- Start a new bedtime routine. Give a cup of milk or a snack. Wipe or brush your child’s teeth. Read a story. Make it a special, loving time because your child is going through a big change.
- When your child demands your attention or acts up in public, offer toys, blankets or hugs for comfort (not bottles).
- Avoid using no-spill cups. Never use them as pacifiers and don’t allow your child to drink from them all the time, throughout the day or in bed.
- Use other types of cups (not no-spill ones) for milk, juice and water. Offer water instead of juice between meals.
- Tell grandparents, babysitters, family and friends why it is important to wean your child off the bottle. Ask them to offer support and attention to your child, not bottles.

My child will stop using the bottle or no-spill cup by:_____.

Adapted from the Louisiana WIC Program nutrition education materials and may not be revised or reproduced without permission from the Louisiana WIC Program.

