

# Sterilising Bottles and Teats Policy

A baby's immune system has not yet fully developed, which leaves them susceptible to infection and illness. Cleanliness is vital when preparing bottles.

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety	
2..1	Each child's health is promoted
2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Each child is protected

## PURPOSE

During their first year of life, babies are at their most vulnerable to viruses, bacteria and parasitic infections, which can lead to anything from a mild attack of thrush to the more serious condition of gastroenteritis. This is an illness similar to food poisoning, which can cause vomiting, diarrhoea and subsequent dehydration.

We aim to minimise risk of infection to babies by ensuring bottles, teats and dummies are sterilised before each use.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, and management of the Service.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, including infants. To minimise the spread of viruses, bacteria and parasites which can be gathered on children's bottles, we require all bottles used at the service to be sterilised for the first year of the children's life.

### Service responsibilities

- Prior to sterilising, it is important to ensure babies' bottles have been cleaned thoroughly. This is best achieved with warm soapy water and a bottle brush or by placing them in a dishwasher. Be sure to clean all bottle components, including teats and lids, ensuring all traces of milk has been removed.
- We believe that it is best practice to wash bottles after each feed.
- Once bottles have been cleaned, they are to be sterilized

### Family's responsibilities

- To minimise the risk of infection and cross-contamination we require families to provide our service with sterilised bottles, teats and dummies for the day.

### Sterilising bottles, teats and dummies

#### Steam sterilising

- Electric steam sterilising is based on hospital methods and is quick and efficient, taking eight to twelve minutes, plus cooling time. You must be careful that you only put in equipment that is safe to boil (some parts of breast pumps may not be boilable, for example). Bottles, teats and so on must be placed upside down to make sure they are fully sterilised.
- You can also buy steamers for microwaves but do take care that nothing metal is placed inside them. They take around five to eight minutes to work, plus cooling time. Be careful when removing the lid of steam sterilisers, as the inside can become very hot.

### Boiling

- Most bottle-feeding equipment needs to be boiled for at least 10 minutes. The pan you use must be used exclusively for that purpose and be warned that teats get sticky and unusable more quickly than with other methods.

### Microwavable bottles

- It takes 90 seconds to sterilise a single bottle. Bottles must not be sealed during microwaving. Pressure could build up inside them during the heating process.

### Cold water sterilizing n(to be carried out at home)

- This uses a non-toxic solution, which also comes in a tablet form. The solution is highly effective against bacteria. It is safe to use and can be applied to the skin or even swallowed with no harmful effects. Educators need to check that there are no air bubbles left in the bottles to ensure complete sterilisation.
- The equipment should be sterile after half an hour and can safely be left in the solution for up to 24 hours. The solution needs to be changed daily.
- Educators will wash their hands before removing the sterilised items. You may wish to rinse off the fluid with cool, boiled water, but this is not necessary.
- Avoid leaving sterilised empty bottles out on work surfaces for long, as they will quickly lose their sterility. Ideally, sterilisers have built-in storage facilities and bottles can be removed when required.
- If using a microwave for sterilising, ensure that it is in a purpose designed container and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- If using an electric sterilising unit, use according to manufacturer's instructions.
- If using a cold-water steriliser, use and dilute according to manufacturer's instructions. Store securely out of access of children when not in use.
- Regular inspections of all sterilising equipment will be carried out to ensure a safe and hygienic environment.

### Source

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015.
- Raising Children  
Raisingchildren.net.au
- Sterilising bottles, teats and dummies  
Department of Health Queensland
- <http://www.babycenter.in/baby>
- [https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/\\_files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n56\\_infant\\_feeding\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n56_infant_feeding_guidelines.pdf)
- <http://www.foodsafety.asn.au>

### Review

Policy Reviewed	Modifications	Next Review Date
May 2018	Updated policy with new format, updated information	May 2019