

## Healthy Habits for Protecting Teeth

Milk and water are the best drinks for your child.

Avoid fruit juice, juice drinks and any sweetened or fizzy drinks. (including Cerelac).

If you are using a dummy an orthodontic or flat teat is less likely to cause damage to the teeth. A child's dummy should not be dipped in anything, especially anything sweet and should be removed when a child is talking.

Avoid 'grazing' on sweet snacks (including dried fruit) and sweetened fluids between meals.

You should begin brushing your child's teeth as soon as the first teeth appear. You can use a toothbrush, finger or cloth to do this.

Children can visit a dentist as soon as their first teeth appear and should continue to make regular visits. The NHS choices website will help you find a local dentist.

**Current guidelines encourage use of a cup from 5-6 months of age and discourage bottle use after 1 year of age**



## Myth busters!

**It doesn't matter if milk teeth get damaged: false**

Damaged baby teeth can affect gums and the adult teeth growing below. Also, looking after your teeth at a young age encourages positive habits and behaviours for good oral health into adulthood.

**Poor teeth run in the family: false**

There is no evidence that genetics play any part in tooth decay. However, unhealthy habits do run in families so it is important to promote good dental practices for the whole family.

**Without a bottle, my baby won't drink enough milk: false**

by 1-2 years about 400ml of cow's milk generally fits with a healthy balanced diet. However your child may need less if they are also having yoghurt and cheese.

## Contact Us:

### Health Visiting Team

Find your Health Visitor's details in your child's red book.

Telephone: 020 7683 4753

Email: [huh-tr.hvrapidresponse@nhs.net](mailto:huh-tr.hvrapidresponse@nhs.net)  
[hackneyandcityhealthvisiting.nhs.uk](http://hackneyandcityhealthvisiting.nhs.uk)

### Eat Better Start Better in Hackney

Healthy Eating Programme for Early Years Settings

Telephone: 020 8820 7590

Email: [fis@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:fis@hackney.gov.uk)

### Oral Health Team

Email: [kentchft.dentaloutreachlondon@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.dentaloutreachlondon@nhs.net)

### Best start with HENRY in City & Hackney

Supporting healthy nutrition, oral health, active lifestyles, breastfeeding and parenting for 0-5s and families

Telephone or text: 07519 109876

Email: [hcsupport@henry.org.uk](mailto:hcsupport@henry.org.uk)



# Pick Up the Cup



**A guide to help your child move on to drinking from a cup**



## Hello...

Moving onto a cup is one of the many exciting milestones your child will experience. Use of a cup can help prevent dental decay and can also encourage independence and positive eating and drinking behaviours.

Some parents may worry that their child won't get enough milk from a cup, or feel that their child is too young to use a cup. We hope that the information in this leaflet will help to reassure you and provide you with information and support for making your move to a cup a positive one.

## Did you know...

1 in 4 five year olds in England have tooth decay and using a bottle beyond one year can contribute to tooth decay. Tooth decay can cause pain, sleepless nights and can affect school attendance. Tooth decay is the most common reason for hospital admissions among the under-fives.

## Tooth Decay is largely preventable

### Actions for happy teeth

- Introduce a cup from 5-6 months.
- Aim to stop the bottle at 1 year.
- Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as teeth appear.
- Use a toothpaste with a minimum fluoride content of 1350ppm.
- Water and milk are the best drinks - never put juice or sugary drinks in a bottle.



## What are the benefits?

Introducing a cup from 5-6 months and stopping the bottle at 1 year has many benefits for your child...

- Promotes self-help skills, healthy eating and drinking habits.
- Reduces the risk of dental decay.
- Can reduce the risk of gaining weight too fast.

## What type of cup?

Cups come in so many shapes, sizes, styles and colours so how can you be sure you choose the best one for your child?

It's simple, you just need a 'free flow' cup. The spout should not require any sucking for liquid to flow out and the cup should drip if turned upside down. Ideally it should also have 2 handles and a lid so that you can transition to an open cup when your child is confident enough.

You can always use a cup with a flip down spout when you are out and about.

**A lidded free flow cup with handles is a great place to start when moving on to a cup**



## What about Breastfed Babies?

Mothers are encouraged to breastfeed for as long as possible. The national recommendations are exclusive breastfeeding for six months and then alongside solids for two years and beyond.

A lot of breastfed babies will never need to use a bottle. If you choose to give expressed breast-milk or water, it can be given from a cup from 5-6 months.

If breastfeeding in the evening, try to brush your baby's teeth before sleeping. For breastfeeding advice and support please contact your Health Visitor or call the National Breastfeeding Helpline on 0300 100 0212.

## Fluoride is important for Healthy Happy Teeth

- You don't need to use a special toothpaste for children.
- The toothpaste must contain at least 1350ppm - see side of toothpaste packaging.
- Hackney tap water does not have any added fluoride. Bottled water may be different.
- For children under 3 a smear of an approved fluoride toothpaste can be used.
- For children over 3 a pea sized amount of toothpaste can be used.



## Top Tips for successful cup use

- **Sit Upright to Drink** - ensure your child is sitting correctly to reduce the risk of choking and spills.
- **Support Your Child** - assist your child until they are confident to drink independently. Never leave a baby alone while drinking.
- **Free Flow Lidded Cups** - are great, however, remove the lid as soon as your child has mastered how to drink.
- **Play Time** - give your child an empty cup to play with to minimise any fear or unfamiliarity.
- **Care for Your Cup** - the majority of cups are made from plastic. Ensure your cup is made from BPA free materials and change it if it becomes scratched.
- **Avoid Non-Drip Cups** - these cups can be helpful when you are on the go but they don't improve your child's drinking skills.
- **Things Can Get Messy** - when introducing a cup, choose a time when you and baby are relaxed and not tired. Start with a small amount of liquid and hold the cup up to their mouths, showing them how to do it. Try and stay calm if liquid is spilled.
- **Last Night Feed** - milk can be given and then teeth should be brushed.
- **Overnight Problems** - If your child wakes in the night, avoid using a bottle for comfort and instead try to soothe your baby with a cuddle.

**By 18 months to 2 years most children can drink from an open cup**

