

## BABY'S FIRST CUP



Help your baby learn and grow! Offer a cup when your baby is 6 to 8 months old. Learning to use a cup is an important developmental step for baby.

### TIME FOR A CUP!

Help your baby be ready to wean off the bottle by 12-14 months of age. Using a bottle for longer than recommended can affect baby teeth, cause ear infections, and a poor appetite.

Teach your baby how to use a cup. Help your baby slowly bring the cup to the lips to take small sips of water. Try these tips:

- Offer an open cup at meals and snacks when your child is sitting in a feeding chair.
- Use a small open cup. A cup with 2 handles works well while baby is learning. Assist baby with holding the cup so they can grasp it, too.
- When baby uses a cup, offer praise and tell them you are proud.
- Prepare for leaks and spills. Be patient and allow time for practice. Baby will get better over time.
- Keep bottles out of sight when trying the cup. If baby does not see the bottle, they are less likely to ask for it.
- Be a good role model! Baby learns a lot just watching you drink from a cup.
- Put water in the cup between meals and snacks. Frequent sips of formula, juice, milk, or sweetened beverages will cause tooth decay.



## WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?



### > OPEN TOP CUP

A cup without a lid. This is the best option. Your child will learn how to form their lips around the cup to drink. Drinking from a cup helps develop mouth muscles needed for speech.



### > SPOUTED CUP

A cup with a lid and spout. Liquid should freely flow through the spout. Teach your baby the important skill of drinking from a cup. Avoid sippy cups with no-spill valves. Babies suck from these cups just like a bottle. A valve also makes it difficult to clean the cup.



### > STRAW CUP

A cup with a straw added to it or built in. The straw helps speech development and the ability to chew foods.

Remember, it is up to you to protect your child's teeth! You can help your child grow well and be healthy!

