

## BABY'S FIRST CUP



Offer a cup when your baby is 6 to 8 months old. Learning to use a cup is an important developmental step for baby. Your child is counting on you to help him grow and learn!

### 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 him slowly bring the cup to his lips so he can take small sips of water. Try these tips:

- Offer an open cup at meals and snacks when he is sitting in his feeding chair.
- Use a small open cup. A cup with 2 handles works well while baby is learning. Assist him with holding the cup so he can grasp it, too.
- When he uses a cup, offer praise and tell him you are proud.
- Prepare for leaks and spills. Be patient and allow him to practice! He will get better over time.
- Keep bottles out of sight when trying the cup. If he does not see the bottle, he is less likely to ask for it.
- Be a good role model! Let him watch you drink from a cup. He learns a lot just from watching you.
- 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 his 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!

