

Touching Hearts Touching Minds Handout #7 Other Uses for Bottles (Weaning) Counseling Tool

What is the key message?

- After a year, it's time to wean toddlers from the bottle to the cup.

Who should receive this message?

- Mothers with infants nine months or older.
- Mothers in the process of weaning infants from bottle feeding.
- Mothers of children still using a bottle past the age of one.

How can this message be used?

Open:

- Imagine that you always ate your favorite comfort food with the people you loved most. Would that make that comfort food even more important?
- What is your favorite comfort food? What is it about that food that conveys comfort to you?

Dig:

- What makes the bottle especially comforting to babies? Sample responses:
 - It contains their favorite food, one they have enjoyed from their very beginning.
 - The people they love most on the earth hold them—and the bottle—while they eat.
 - The baby bottle is the ultimate comfort food and container for babies.
- How can the bottle also be a comfort for parents? Sample responses:
 - Offering a bottle allows them to hold on and enjoy their child's baby stage.
 - It provides a quick and easy way to quiet a noisy child.
 - Giving a child the bottle is less messy than offering milk in a cup.
- Why should parents encourage children to give up the bottle when it sometimes represents comfort and love to babies? Sample responses:



- Young children should learn to find comfort and love from items other than food and bottles.
- A child's teeth could be damaged by providing milk in the bottle.

Connect:

- What can happen to a child if the bottle is continued after they turn one?
Sample responses:
 - Excess weight.
 - Delay in developing feeding skills.
 - Baby bottle tooth decay.
- Have you ever heard of baby bottle tooth decay? How do you think parents of children with baby bottle tooth decay feel? (Encourage them to read "Lynn's Story" on the back of the handout. Summarize it for the group, if reading it isn't practical.)
- How will you feel when you successfully wean your child from the bottle?

Act:

- What actions will you take this week to protect your child from baby bottle tooth decay?
- What will you offer to your child as she gives up the comforts of the bottle?
Sample responses:
 - A routine to replace bottle time like a warm bath and a good book.
 - Allow your child to choose a special cup that is hers alone.
 - A soft, cuddly blanket.
 - Water in a fun-shaped glass.
 - Ice cubes in the glass.
 - Cups with pictures of child and mom on the outside.

