

Touching Hearts Touching Minds Handout #20 Magic Cup (Weaning) Counseling Tool

What is the key message?

- Creative thinking may help ease the transition between bottle and cup.

Who should receive this message?

- Mothers with infants nine months and 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:

- Tell me about a time you've come up with a creative solution to a parenting challenge?
- What are the important milestones for children as they move from infancy to toddlerhood?
- What do you think when you see a preschooler with a bottle? What have you heard others say?

Idea for a group:

- Suppose you flipped through your television channels and discovered a new show titled "Makeover Magic for Moms." Here's how the show works: Mothers present challenges that are frustrating and upsetting and other mothers provide realistic solutions. Would you like to play "Makeover Magic for Moms" now?
- Here's the challenge: "My 19-month-old daughter still wants a bottle before nap and bedtime. She cries inconsolably if I don't give it to her. I try to ignore her, hoping she will fall asleep, but I usually end up taking her on my lap and consoling her with cuddles and a bottle. I need makeover magic to solve this problem."
- What "Makeover Magic" ideas do you have for this mother? Sample responses:
 - Go to the store and let the child pick out a special cup – the cup they will use instead of the bottle.
 - Allow the child to throw the bottle in the garbage herself. Remind her that the bottle is gone if she asks for it again.
 - Develop other bedtime routines like a warm bath and cuddling with a book. Children like routine.



- Tell a story or sing to divert the child's attention whenever she asks for the bottle.
- Stop the bottle "cold turkey." The child may cry for a few days but eventually forget about it. Giving her the bottle in response to crying only prolongs her dependence.
- Offer only water in the bottle and milk in a cup. Children often want the milk more than water and learn to prefer cups to bottles.
- Offer a special blanket or play music as the child drifts off to sleep.
- Tell the child that the "bottle fairy" took the bottle and brought her a "big girl" cup.
- Celebrate "end of bottle" day. Count down to the big day, explaining that on "end of bottle" day all bottles will disappear and be replaced by new "big girl" cups. Allow the child to select some of the cups in advance of the big day.
- Mix 50% water with 50% milk, gradually increasing the amount of water in the bottle until the child loses interest.

- Here's another challenge requiring "Makeover Magic for Moms:"

"I'm the very happy mother of a 22-month-old son. He's my last child. I've enjoyed all four of my children but cherish my final moments as a mother of a baby. I know people say my son should be weaned by now, but I'm enjoying my cuddle time with him and know that he feels secure and loved when enjoying his bottle with me. I don't put him to bed with a bottle and I wipe his teeth after feeding him. Why should I frustrate him and deny myself this wonderful part of mothering so early?"

- What "makeover magic" ideas do you have for this mother? Sample responses:
 - Cuddle up with a book, tell stories or sing songs with your toddler for some special together time.
 - Talk about your dreams for him as he grows older.
 - Tell him you love him throughout the day so that he feels secure and cherished in many different situations.

Dig:

- When do you think it is important for a child to switch from a bottle to a cup?
- Why do you think it's important for toddlers to use a cup instead of a bottle?
- How is this transition going for you?
- What are some of the challenges you've had with introducing a cup? How have you dealt with them so far?

Connect:



- What emotional benefits does the bottle represent to some toddlers?
- How can the emotional needs of the *child* be met in other ways?
- What emotional benefits does the bottle represent to some mothers?
- How can the emotional needs of the *mother* be met in other ways?
- How will you feel after you successfully transition your child from the bottle to the cup?
 - Secure: knowing that you are doing what's right to protect your child's smile.
 - Confident: knowing that your child's trust is being honored.
 - Intelligent: knowing that you are taking action to preventing damage to your child's teeth.

Act:

- What action will you take this week to help your child use a cup instead of a bottle?

