



Handout 4.1

## **DO'S AND DON'TS FOR ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO CHILDREN**

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### **NON-MOBILE AND MOBILE INFANTS**

#### **DO:**

- ☺ Talk in a calm soothing voice
- ☺ Listen to relaxing music
- ☺ Properly position the child
- ☺ Give medicine prior to a feeding unless the health care provider's instructions specifically state to not give before a feeding
- ☺ Allow child to rest between "pulses" of medicine when using an oral syringe
- ☺ Rock an infant before and after giving any medication

#### **DON'T:**

- ⊗ Add medication to a bottle of formula
- ⊗ Put medication in the mouth of a crying child
- ⊗ Yell at the child
- ⊗ Pinch a baby's nose to get him to open his mouth
- ⊗ Shake an uncooperative child

### **TODDLERS**

#### **DO:**

- ☺ Approach the child expecting cooperation
- ☺ Use age appropriate language and gently explain that what you are doing will help him feel better
- ☺ Allow a child to cuddle a toy if it does not interfere with proper positioning
- ☺ Give toddler some control, such as "what color cup do you want to use?"
- ☺ Practice giving medicine to a doll or stuffed animal
- ☺ Allow for time before and after the medication administration to soothe the child
- ☺ Thank the child for cooperation
- ☺ Ask parents what techniques they use successfully

#### **DON'T:**

- ⊗ Ask the child if he wants to take his medicine
- ⊗ Put medication in the mouth of a crying child
- ⊗ Mix medicine in a large amount of food
- ⊗ Get angry with the child and yell
- ⊗ Restrain a child with force



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## PRESCHOOLERS

### DO:

- ☺ Approach the child expecting cooperation
- ☺ Prepare the child
- ☺ Use age appropriate language to explain to the child that what you are doing will help him feel better and gently tell him what you need him to do
- ☺ While taking the medicine have the child think about his favorite place or thing to do
- ☺ Give a choice, such as “what do you want to play after?”
- ☺ Thank the child for cooperation

### DON'T:

- ⊗ Mix medicine in a large amount of food
- ⊗ Refer to the medication as “candy”
- ⊗ Get angry and yell at the child
- ⊗ Restrain a child with force
- ⊗ Threaten to give medication as punishment

## SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

### DO:

- ☺ Approach the child expecting cooperation
- ☺ Prepare the child
- ☺ Help the child to relax by having him imagine a favorite place or take deep breaths
- ☺ Have the child participate in the medication taking process
- ☺ Give as much control as possible
- ☺ Allow child to express feelings about having to take the medication
- ☺ Ask a resistant child, “Why don’t you want to take your medicine?”
- ☺ Thank the child for cooperation

### DON'T:

- ⊗ Crush pills or open capsules without instructions from the health care provider
- ⊗ Threaten to give medication as punishment
- ⊗ Call medication “candy”
- ⊗ Restrain a child with force