

## Giving Medication to Children



You know the personalities of the children in your program. Use this knowledge when you give medication to help keep the process safe.

### **General Principles of Medication Administration**

When giving medication:

- Always act confidently and let the child know you expect cooperation.
- After giving the medication, thank the child.
- Remember, what works for one child may not always work with another, so be flexible.
- Talk to parents about how they get their child to take medication and try to follow the same routine when possible.



Sometimes you cannot safely get a child to take medication.

- **Never yell at, threaten or restrain a child in any way in order to get her to cooperate.** Never force a crying child to take medication.
- If you cannot give the medication safely to the child, call the child's parent.
- Remember to write down why you didn't give the medication in the child's log.

Here are some tips for safely giving medication to the children in your program:

#### **Infants**

- ☺ Talk in a calm, soothing voice.
- ☺ Listen to relaxing music.
- ☺ Rock the baby before and after giving any medication.
- ☺ Give medicine prior to a feeding, unless the health care provider's instructions specifically state to not give before a feeding.
- ☺ Don't add to formula or breast milk.

#### **Toddlers**

- ☺ Use age-appropriate language.
- ☺ Never call medicine "candy" or "candy-flavored" (e.g., pink amoxicillin "bubble gum" flavored medicine)
- ☺ Let the child cuddle a toy.
- ☺ Give the toddler some control, such as, "What color cup do you want to use?"
- ☺ Practice giving medicine to a doll or stuffed animal.
- ☺ Plan for time before and after giving the medication to soothe the child.

**Preschoolers**

- ☺ Prepare the child to take the medication.
- ☺ Have the child think about a favorite place or thing to do while taking the medication.
- ☺ Give a choice, such as, “What do you want to play with after?”

**School Age Children**

- ☺ Prepare the child to take the medication.
- ☺ Help the child relax by having her imagine a favorite place or take deep breaths.
- ☺ Have the child take an active role in the medication-taking process.
- ☺ Give as much control as possible.
- ☺ Allow the child to express feelings about having to take the medication.