Bottle Propping...

...not good for baby!

What is bottle propping?
- It’s when you put a pillow or something else under your baby’s bottle instead of holding the baby and the bottle to feed him/her.

Why is this not a good idea?
- Your baby needs to learn good eating habits.
- When you hold your baby during feeding, he/she feels safe and loved.

Ear infections
- If your baby lies flat while drinking a bottle, he/she could get a lot of ear infections.
- This is because your baby has little openings from the back of her throat to her ears called a Eustachian tube (pronounced you-stay-shun tube) or ear tube.
- When the bottle is propped, the milk gets into your baby’s ears through the ear tube and causes ear infections.
- Lots of ear infections can cause hearing loss.
- Hearing loss can make it hard for your baby to learn to talk or just learn.

Choking/aspiration
- It is easier for your baby to choke if you prop the bottle.
  1) The baby is not being watched.
  2) When you prop the bottle, milk keeps coming out until it’s empty.
  3) If your baby falls asleep before finishing the bottle, he/she might breathe in the milk instead of swallowing it.
  4) When your baby is lying flat, the milk could go down the wrong tube causing him/her to choke. This is because the opening for the air tube (trachea –tray-key-a) is close to the opening for the food tube (esophagus –ee-sof-a-gus).

What can I do?
- During feeding, hold your baby with his/her head higher than his/her body (a semi-upright position).
- Do not prop baby bottles.
- Use feeding time to get to know your baby. Babies respond to touch, eye contact, and talking.
- Talking to your baby will also help him/her learn to talk.
- Don’t give your baby food or drinks at bedtime. If your baby needs a bottle to sleep at bedtime, fill it with water.
- Use a pacifier at bedtime instead of a bottle.

Helpful websites:
- http://www.gsme.org/mj_bottle_feeding.asp