

# A SIMPLE TOOL TO INCREASE COMPLIANCE IN ANTIBIOTICS TREATMENT OF CHILDREN

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## Objective


To develop, implement and evaluate a simple tool to support the parent's task of giving antibiotics to children.

## Methods

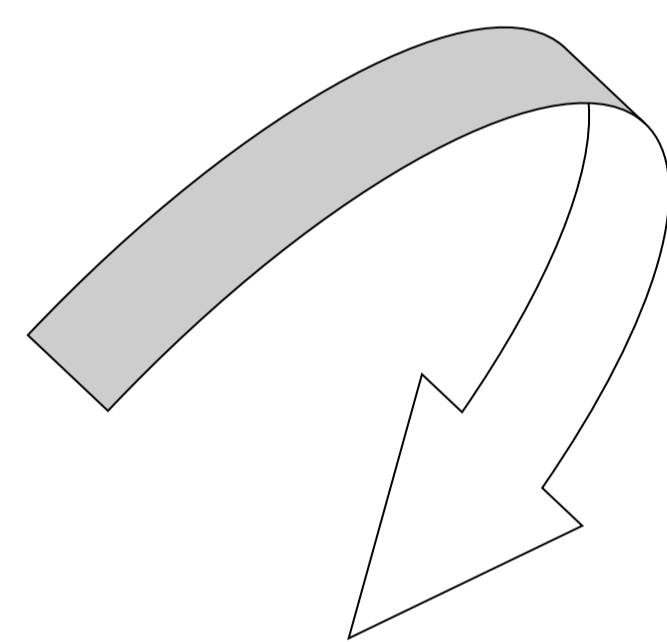
The tool consisted of a simple handout. This handout was initially developed by 2 pharmacists and 3 pharmaconomists and pilot tested at both participating pharmacies. Following this, the final handout was created. The front of the handout contained a check-box for each dispensing of the antibiotic to be filled out with stickers that accompanied the handout. The backside contained practical advice for the parents.


The handout was offered to all parents of children 0-10 years who were buying antibiotics, at two pharmacies in Denmark in the period of March – May 2013. A follow-up questionnaire via e-mail was sent 10 days after the customer had been at the pharmacy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

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**ALWAYS REMEMBER:** 

Always give the medicine as stated on the label

**Shake well before use**  
Otherwise the medicine lumps together at the bottom

**Keep the medicine in the refrigerator**  
To avoid reduced longevity and effect

**Rinse the child's mouth after each dose**  
To avoid fungus

**Finish the course of treatment**  
This reduces the risk of relapse

**Tips for antibiotic mixture:**

**Think about your appearance.** If you are unsure of the task and exude that the medication is a problem and tastes terrible, this makes it more difficult for your child. Your child reads your body language to figure out how to deal with the situation.

**Use the supplied syringe.** Pull the medicine into the syringe and inject the medicine directly into your child's mouth at the back onto the cheek.

**Use the medication directly from the refrigerator.** Be sure to give the medicine, shortly after taking the bottle out of the fridge. The colder it is, the less penetrating the taste will be.

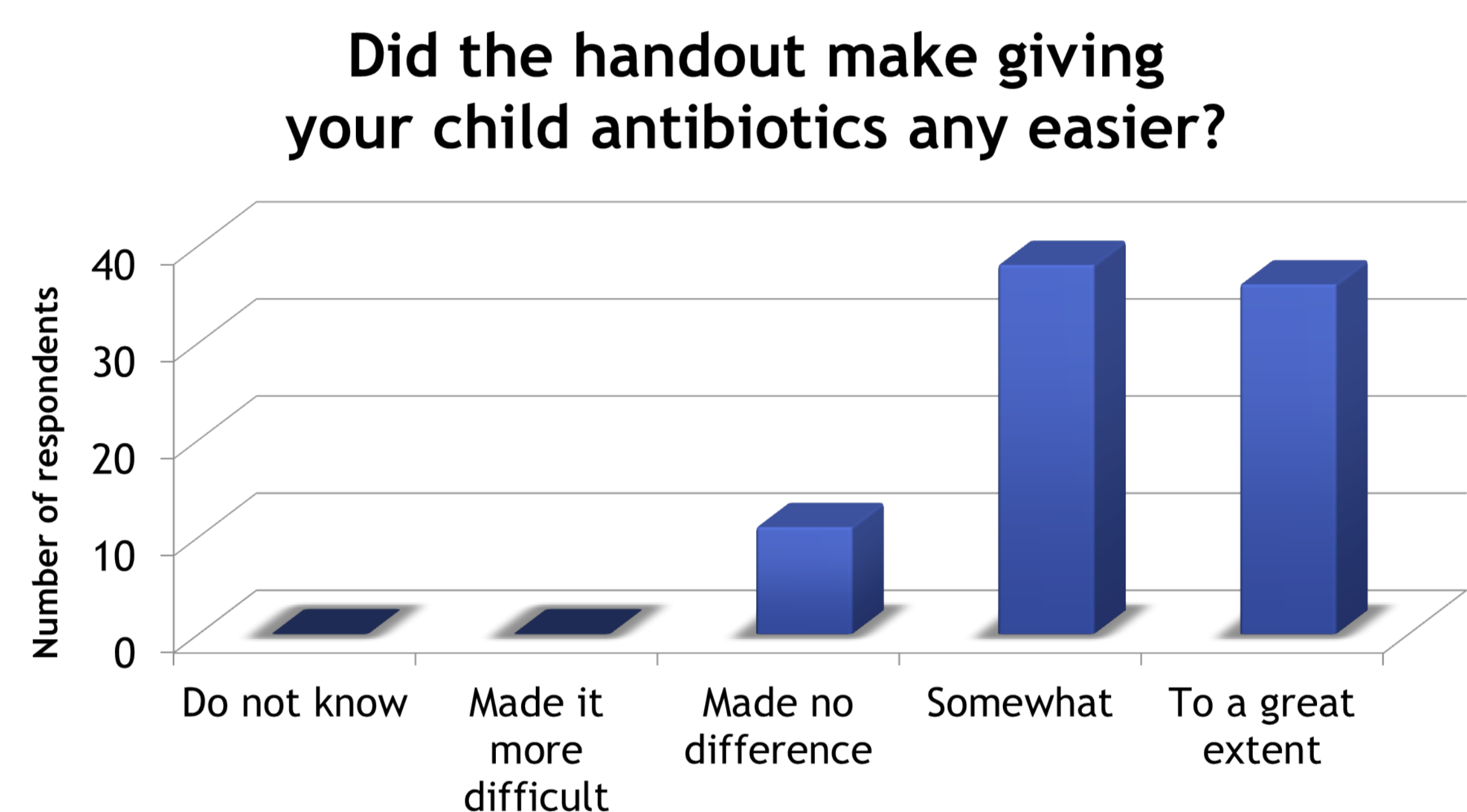
**Never heat up the medicine.** Heating destroys the effects of the medicine. This also applies if you mix it with e.g. hot food.

**Do not mix up in excessive quantities.** Avoid mixing up the medicine in large quantities of cold food or liquid than you are not sure your child will consume, otherwise you risk that your child does not get all the medicine.

## Results

180 parents were offered the handout, which 93% accepted. 98 persons responded to the follow-up e-mail, of which 85 (87%) reported using the handout as part of the treatment.

The majority of the participating children were aged 0-4 years. When asked if the handout made it easier to administer the antibiotics, the responses were overwhelmingly positive (see below).



Of the 85 who reported use of the handout 81 (95%) would use it again.

The free-text comments provided were almost all uniformly positive. Some excerpts can be seen below: “..works super well..”, “..good idea, thanks for the help..”, “..focus is on the form, not the bad tasting medicine..”, “..my son loved it, and it made it easier..”, “..almost a sport to take the medicine and get a smiley to put on the form..”.

The pharmacy staff also described the use of the handout as a positive experience.

## Conclusion

The handout was found to be a useful tool to increase compliance in antibiotics treatment by both patients and pharmacy staff.

