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(54) **HARNES APARATUS FOR ENABLING A CHILD TO SUPPORT A BOTTLE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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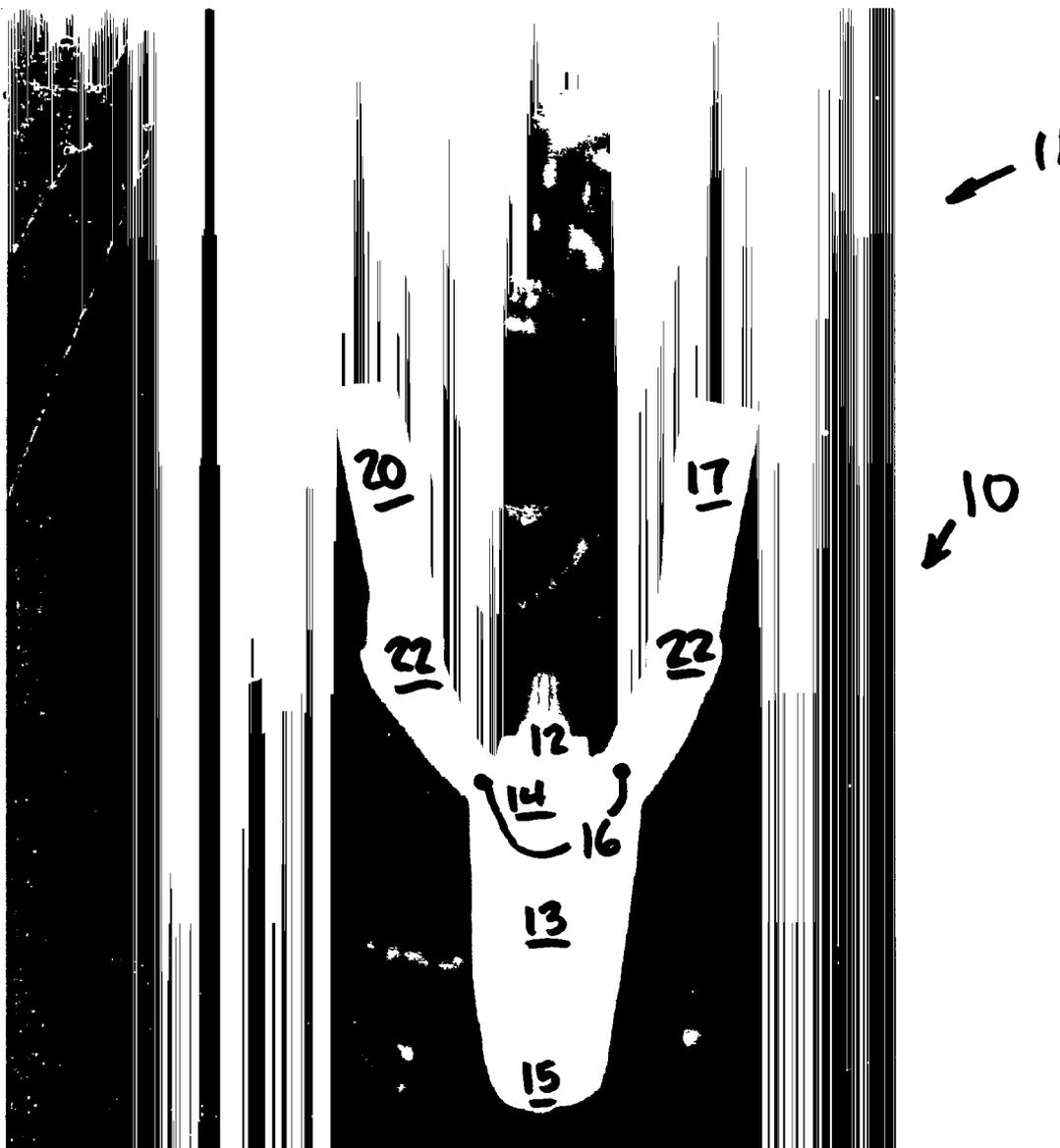
A baby bottle harness or support device provides a pair of straps that fasten to the child's shoulder area, each strap forming a loop around the child's shoulder and armpit for each arm. Bands extend downwardly from the loops that support a sleeve that contains a baby bottle or the like. The loops and bands are sized and shaped so that the bottle and sleeve can drop to a position that is no lower than the child's outstretched arms when lowered to the child's sides. The bands provide enough slack for enabling the child to lift the bottle and sleeve to the child's mouth area but not over his or her head without placing undue tension on the straps or the bands.

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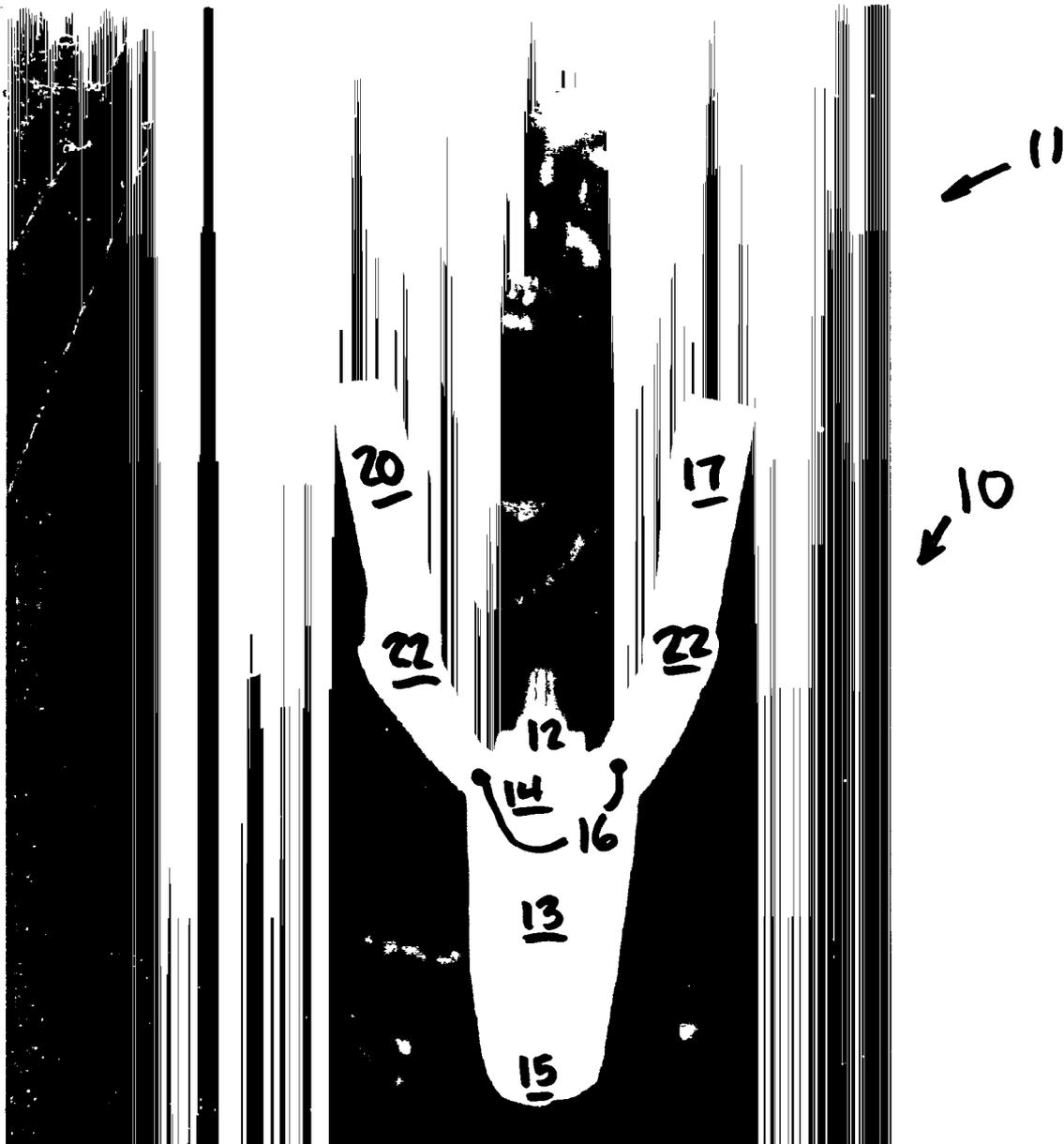


Figure 1

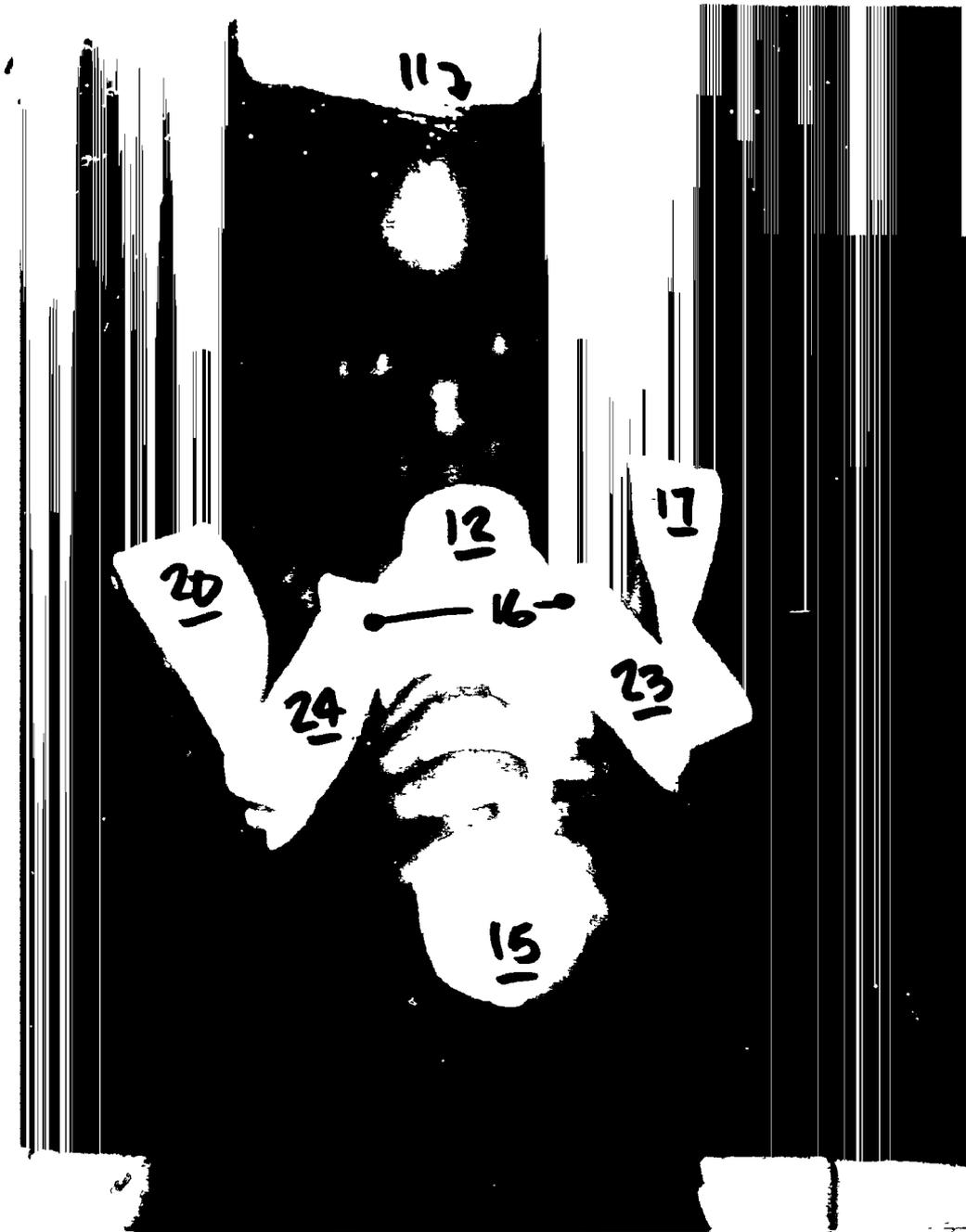


Figure 2

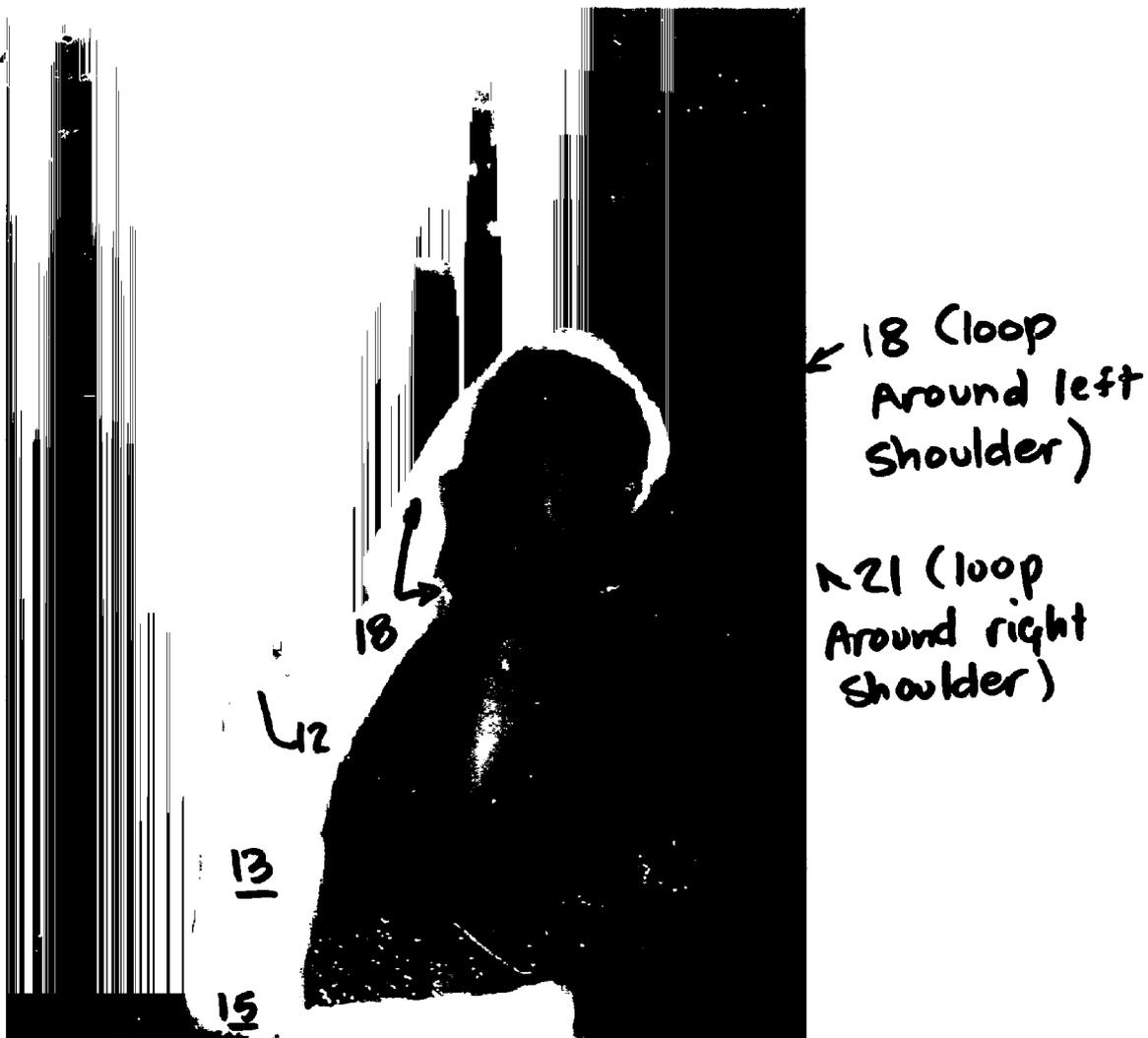


Figure 3

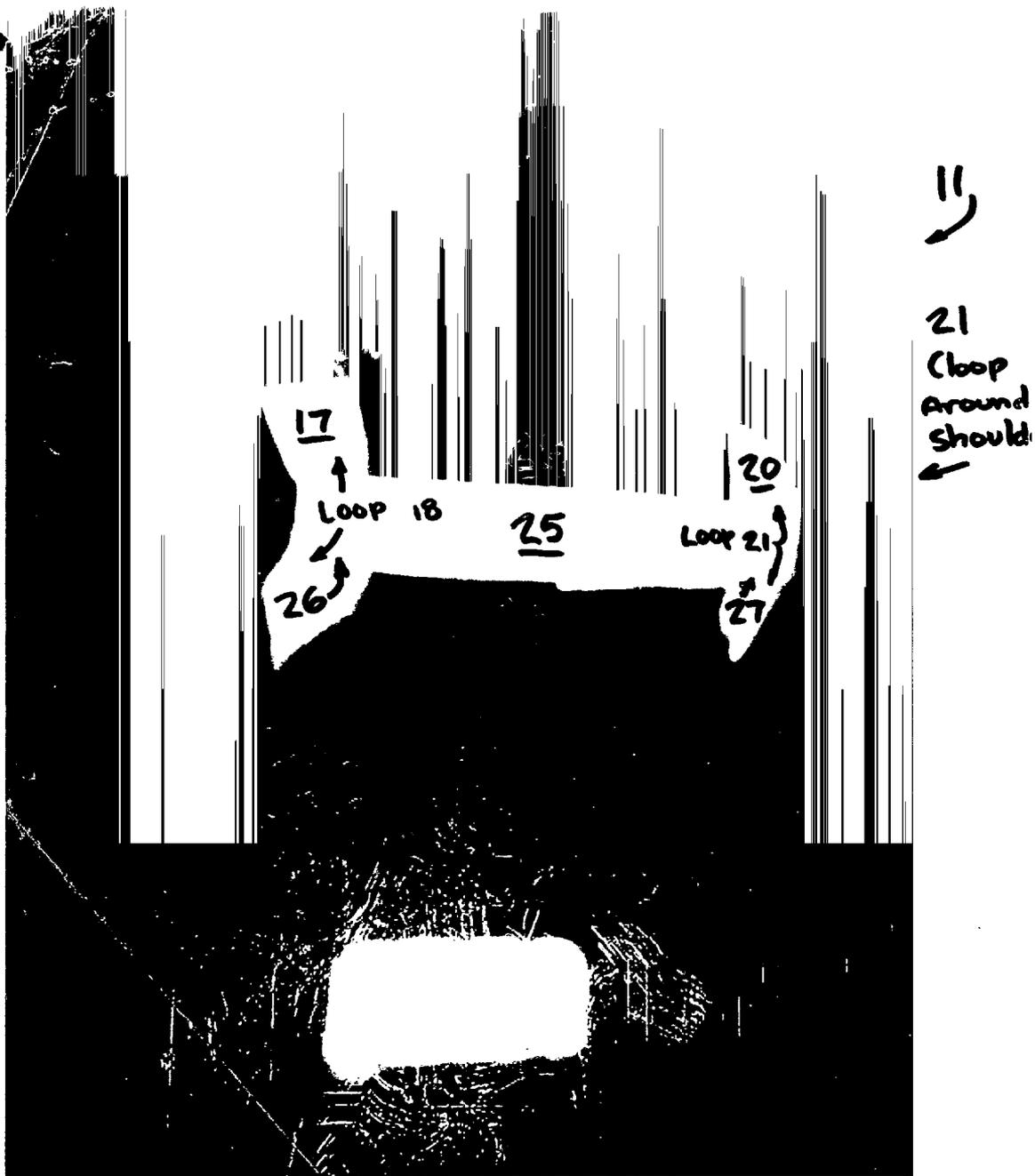


Figure 4

HARNESS APPARATUS FOR ENABLING A CHILD TO SUPPORT A BOTTLE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not applicable

REFERENCE TO A "MICROFICHE APPENDIX"

[0003] Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] 1. Field of the Invention

[0005] The present invention relates to harnesses that can be worn by a child, wherein the harness enables the child to support the bottle in front enabling the child to drink from the bottle and to carry it conveniently in front of the child, and wherein no straps constrict the child's neck area.

[0006] 2. General Background of the Invention

[0007] Infants and toddlers often drink liquids from a baby bottle that has a shaped bottle section with a rubber or plastic nipple fitted to an open end portion of the bottle. When children are very small, they easily drop the bottle requiring a parent to retrieve it repeatedly.

[0008] The present invention solves these problems and shortcomings by providing an improved harness apparatus that supports a child's bottle at a position in front of the child and wherein it is easily accessible yet secure.

[0009] Several patents have issued that relate to baby bottle support devices. The Barville U.S. Pat. No. 4,096,977 discloses a device for anchoring bottles or the like, and method.

[0010] In the Stump design Pat. 411,658 there is disclosed a baby bottle backpack in the various views of the design patent. In one view, an elongated flexible conduit communicates between the backpack and a nipple that is held by a child's mouth.

[0011] A baby bottle security garment is the subject of U.S. Pat. No. 4,564,957 issued to Scharf. In the Scharf patent, the baby bottle security garment includes a combination of a garment for covering at least part of the chest area of an infant, a sleeve piece for removably receiving and securing therein a baby bottle and a strap member for securing the sleeve piece to the garment. Because of the way of securing the sleeve piece to the garment, the sleeve piece hangs from the garment and is normally positioned proximate the chest area of an infant wearing the garment when the chest area of the infant is in an upright position.

[0012] A bib device that has a pocket for holding a baby bottle is disclosed in the Kimball Pat. 298,985.

[0013] A baby bib and bottle holder is disclosed in the Goeckeritz et al. U.S. Pat. No. 5,765,225.

[0014] The Trumbauer U.S. Pat. No. 5,820,084 discloses a baby bottle supporting bib.

[0015] The Maillard U.S. Pat. No. 4,473,907 discloses a combined insulated enclosure and bib for support of a nursing bottle.

[0016] A baby bottle and sip cup bib support is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,055,667 issued to Jimenez.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0017] Each of the above discussed prior art patents fails to disclose or suggest the invention sought to be patented.

[0018] The present invention provides an improved harness apparatus for supporting a baby bottle or like container in front of a small child, wherein two spaced apart straps are provided. Each strap encircles the user's shoulders, forming a loop that goes over the shoulder and under the armpit of the user for each side of the body. Each strap provides an adjustable connection that occupies a position below and in front of the child's armpit during use.

[0019] Each of the loops formed respectively by the left and right straps supports bands that extend downwardly from the adjustable connection of the loop to a sleeve that can be insulated or noninsulated.

[0020] The sleeve can be cylindrically shaped, preferably having a closed lower end portion for holding a baby bottle. The upper end portion of the sleeve is open and exposes the nipple part of the baby bottle.

[0021] The left and right bands are of a length that enables the child to easily grasp the sleeve and the contained bottle and pull it up to his or her lips for drinking. When the bottle and its sleeve are lowered (or inadvertently dropped), the bands are of a length that supports the sleeve end bottle at the lower end of the child's torso, near his or her hands when the hands are lowered to his or her sides. In that fashion, the bottle is easily grasped by the child when the child is ready to drink from the bottle. Thus, the combination of straps and loops enable a vertical travel for the bottle and sleeve about equal to one half of the child's height. This vertical travel for the bottle begins at a lower most level that is level with the child's hands when his or her arms are lowered to his or her sides and when the child is standing erect (see **FIG. 1**). The vertical travel reaches its maximum elevation when the bottle is level with the child's mouth and when the child is standing erect (see **FIG. 3**).

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] For a further understanding of the nature, objects, and advantages of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, read in conjunction with the following drawings, wherein like reference numerals denote like elements and wherein:

[0023] **FIG. 1** is a front view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

[0024] **FIG. 2** is another front view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention showing the child drinking from the bottle contained in the sleeve portion of the apparatus of the present invention;

[0025] **FIG. 3** is a side view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention; and

[0026] **FIG. 4** is a rear view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0027] The present invention provides an improved baby bottle support device 10 that can be worn by a small child or infant 11. The support device or harness 10 of the present invention enables a child 11 to support a bottle 12 at the front of the child's torso. Support device 10 holds a baby bottle 12 in a sleeve 13 that can be insulated or noninsulated.

[0028] The sleeve provides an upper open end 14 for receiving the bottle 12, 13 and a closed lower end 15 that prevents the bottle from falling through the bottom of the sleeve 13. Part of the bottle 12 (such as the nipple) can extend above open upper end 14 as shown in the drawings.

[0029] Left 17 and right 20 straps are provided. Each of the straps 17, 18 includes respective left and right bands 23, 24 as shown in FIG. 2. These bands 23, 24 are attached using velcro or stitching at attachments 16 to the upper end portion 14 of sleeve 13.

[0030] Each of the left and right straps 17, 20 forms a loop 18, 21 respectively that encircles a child's shoulder and armpit area as shown in FIG. 3. Each loop 18 terminates at an adjustable connection 22 that can be, for example, hook and loop Velcro, snaps, adjustable buckle, buttons and bottonholes or the like. Loops 18 and 21 can include a left loop 18 and a right loop 21.

[0031] In the rear view of FIG. 4, a transverse strap 25 extends across the upper back 28 of the child 11, forming attachments at 26, 27 with straps 17, 20 as shown and that is adjustable, using Velcro, grips, snaps, buttons or the like.

[0032] A feature of the present invention is that the loops 18, 21 bands 23, 24, sleeve 13 and strap 25 do not in any way pose a health hazard to the child 11 because they are spaced well away from the child's neck area. The loops 18, 21 and bands 25, 26 are sized so that the child is unable to pull the sleeve 13 high enough to pull the bottle over his or her head wherein it could entangle the child's neck. Rather, the bottle 12 and sleeve 13 can only be elevated to the child's mouth area.

Parts List

[0033] The following is a list of suitable parts and materials for the various elements of the preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0034] Parts No. Description

- [0035] 10 baby bottle support device
- [0036] 11 child
- [0037] 12 bottle

- [0038] 13 sleeve (insulated or not)
- [0039] 14 open upper end
- [0040] 15 closed lower end
- [0041] 16 attachment
- [0042] 17 left strap
- [0043] 18 loop
- [0044] 19 adjustable connection
- [0045] 20 right strap
- [0046] 21 loop
- [0047] 22 adjustable connection
- [0048] 23 left band
- [0049] 24 right band
- [0050] 25 rear strap
- [0051] 26 attachment
- [0052] 27 attachment
- [0053] 28 upper back

[0054] The foregoing embodiments are presented by way of example only; the scope of the present invention is to be limited only by the following claims.

1. A baby bottle harness apparatus, comprising;
 - a) a sleeve for holding a bottle, the sleeve having an upper and a lower end portion and a hollow interior for containing the bottle;
 - b) a pair of bands that attach to the sleeve;
 - c) left and right straps, each in the form of a loop that encircles the child's shoulder area, each loop extending over the child's shoulder and under his or her armpit, the loops being each attached respectively to the upper end portion of one of the bands.
 - d) a rear, transversely extending strap that extends across the child's upper back area forming a connection between each of the loops;
 - e) and wherein the sleeve and bottle in combination are suspended with sufficient distance provided by the bands that the bottle and sleeve occupy a position close to the child's hands when the child's hands are extended downwardly along his or her sides and wherein the bottle and sleeve can be lifted to the child's mouth area but not above the child's head without applying undue tension to the bands or to the loops.

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