

Biting

Biting is a common problem in young children. Children bite for many different reasons, including pain from teething, to get a reaction, and from stress and frustration.

Prevention

- Provide teething toys if pain seems to be causing the biting.
- Review the child's daily routine to keep him/her from getting overly hungry or tired.
- Teach the child words to use to express anger and frustration.
Example: "You're angry because Sarah took the toy away from you."
- Model appropriate words to resolve a situation.
Example: "May I have the toy back?"
- Don't expect young children to share toys. You may need to provide another toy or supervise them in taking turns.
- Provide activities that offer sensory experiences, such as sand and play dough.

When a Child Bites

- Speak firmly and seriously. "No biting! Biting hurts. When you bit him, it made him cry."
- Attend to the child who was bitten. Allowing the biter to help you comfort the victim can help her understand that biting hurts people and can also teach nurturing behavior.
- Separate the biter from the activity until he is calm.
- Talk to the biter about different ways to handle the situation, such as using words or asking a teacher or parent for help.
- Do NOT bite the child to teach her that biting is wrong!
- Give the child time to grow and mature. Most children will outgrow this behavior as they learn other ways to handle frustrating situations.