

WHY DO KIDS BITE?

- ⌚ Young children have not fully mastered the skill of communication. They are unable to tell you how they feel and get really frustrated. They lack the verbal skills they need to express themselves.
- ⌚ Biting is a very powerful release of frustration, leadership, or anger. Most children stop biting around the age of 3, when they are better able to acquire their verbal skills.
- ⌚ Biting often results from frustration. Toddler hood is frustrating as toddlers learn new physical and social skills.
- ⌚ They could be teething.
- ⌚ A child may be hungry or tired. They lack good judgment when they are either of these.
- ⌚ They may have seen another child do it and want to try it too.
- ⌚ They know it gets a great reaction, and use it as a way to express leadership.
- ⌚ Maybe an adult has bit or nibbled them during play. A child does not know his own strength and thinks that he/she is playing when they bite. When in fact, they are actually harming them.
- ⌚ They have never been corrected for doing this in the past.

How can I prevent biting from happening in the first place?

- ⌚ Plan activities that allow children to release frustration. Show them how to stomp their feet, push, or kick a pillow. Scream, freak out, breathe or take a time out.
- ⌚ Have age appropriate toys available that stimulate interest and decrease frustration and/or boredom. Have enough toys to share so that each child does not feel the need to hog it.
- ⌚ Provide biting substitutes such as teethers, wet washcloths, etc.

- ⌚ Supervise at all times.

What should I do after a child has been bitten?

- ⌚ The biting child is calmly removed and given "quiet time" alone. Statements such as "You do not bite. It hurts." Or "Biting is not allowed. It hurts people." Are used.
- ⌚ The bitten child is consoled and the bite is quickly cleaned. Ice is placed on the bite to decrease the likelihood of swelling or bruising.
- ⌚ Call parents to notify them that their child was bitten so that they are not shocked when they arrive, and that they will be given a choice to come examine the child.
- ⌚ If the skin has been broken report the incident to your Local Health Department. A hepatitis shot or other related injections may be needed.
- ⌚ Have the child examined by a doctor if it is severe.
- ⌚ The child who has bitten is "shadowed" to help understand what may be causing the child to bite so those further incidents can be prevented.

Things you should not do:

- ⌚ Bite the child back.
- ⌚ Encourage the other child to bite the child back.
- ⌚ Call the child names such as "bad", "naughty"
- ⌚ Spank or threaten the child.