

# Biting

## Resources

- to improve supervision and control.
- Use a grandparent or volunteer as an extra person to “shadow” a child known to have a propensity to bite.
- Learn to understand and predict what triggers a particular child to bite
- Immediately intervene when a biting behavior trigger is present.
- Avoid acting as a shield against biting triggers. The child must learn how to appropriately handle the emotions that are being experienced, without biting.
- Teach more appropriate ways of responding to emotions; ideally, learning to use words and sign language.
- Use age appropriate Time Out, with follow-up reminders and notes, but only if it is proving to be an effective tool for a particular child.
- Be consistent until the biting either passes or comes under control.

- Verdick, Elizabeth. (2003). *Teeth Are Not for Biting* (Best Behavior Series). Free Spirit Publishing: Minneapolis, MN.
- ISBN-13: 978-1-57542-128-5; ISBN-10: 978-1-57542-128-3.
- Phone: (612) 338-2068
- help4kids@freespirit.com or
- www.freespirit.com

Typically, a child who bites will only do so for a few months. However, in cases where a child is repeatedly causing bruising or open wounds, the health and safety of the group as a whole must be taken into consideration.

### Young Child Ministries

Phone: 805-490-6055

Fax: 805-499-9483

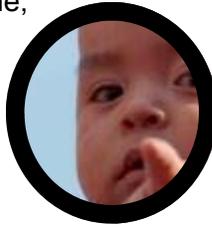
Website: <http://youngchildministries.com>

E-mail: [Christine@puconline.org](mailto:Christine@puconline.org)

A  
Guide  
for  
Early  
Childhood  
Teachers  
and  
Parents  
of  
Young  
Children



Between cooing and the actual expression of words, there are a few months in a child's life when they have learned to get what they want by pointing, babbling, "uhs," "mine," "no," and using other various forms of verbal and non-verbal communication. In addition, the expression of emotional responses will have developed from that of a passive crier, which asks the care-taker/parent to solve all problems, to a more autonomous, self-reliant problem solver.



Toddlers do not yet have the verbal skills with which to express themselves, but neither do they fully rely on the methods of communication which they used as an infant. Aggression against both peers and adults is normal at this age, just as selfishness is, because a toddler is trying to develop his

*I'm tired.*

independence and sense of self. His reactions are often extreme because he is not sure of himself. Stopping aggression requires the care-takers and parents to be prompt, firm and most of all consistent.

One of the most dangerous forms of toddler aggression is biting. Some typical reasons for biting are:

- Curiosity
- Affection
- Ownership
- Textural
- Emotional expression, i.e. anger, frustration, tension, fear
- Over-stimulation or excitement
- Hunger
- Teething
- Tiredness
- Illness
- Attempting to control their environment, i.e. wanting their own way or wanting to enforce personal space boundaries



### Prevention

- Maintain a daily class schedule and routine
- Maintain daily communication with all clientele
- Develop a trusting relationship with each child
- Properly structure the environment for the age group being served
- Consistently handle inappropriate behavior
- Maintain anecdotal records such as Incident Reports and Parent/Teacher Conference Notes to help identify incidents that trigger biting, should they begin to occur
- Actively teach the children both verbal language and sign language.

### Resolution

- Diminish the amount of stimuli within the environment.
- Divide the room into sections

*I'm hungry.*