

Biting Policy & Procedures

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that occurs most commonly between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the center is our primary concern. The center's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers are developing their verbal skills as well as their self-control and can be impulsive. Sometimes biting is a way of expression for a known situation (can be anticipated) and sometimes it occurs without warning and for no apparent reason. The center staff encourage children to "use their words" if they become angry, agitated, or frustrated. The staff members also maintain close and constant supervision of the children during activities, routines and throughout the day. The

These steps are taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The child who is bitten is comforted and attended to.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation and provide them with an alternate activity.
- The bite area is assessed by the teacher and an administrator and cleansed with soap and water.
- Complete an Incident Report and the notify parents of both children involved.
- Maintain confidentiality of children involved.
- Continue to observe the bite area for signs of infection.

Note: If a biting trend occurs, situational action plans are developed for improvement. As noted in our Behavior Management policy, we are committed to exhausting all actions and resources available prior to recommending disenrollment of a child who is biting.

BLOOD EXPOSURE

Blood exposure is an event where blood comes into contact with skin, membranes or tissue. Blood from one person is introduced into the bloodstream of another person through contact with the mucous membranes lining body cavities such as, but not limited to, the eyes, nose or mouth. Bites are considered an exposure to either person involved if there is blood in the mouth of the biter or in the wound of the person bitten.

If it is determined that there was a blood exposure at the time of the bite, **further steps are taken by the Center Director**, which include: written documentation and notice issued to the parents of both children.

Biting Protocol

Repeated Biting Incidents

- Immediate parent communication, frequent contacts
- Incident reports to document
- Implement selected behavior strategies:
- Review specific strategies with staff, including saying, “NO BITE” and books for children including, “Teeth are Not for Biting.”
- Offering more frequent snacks.
- Providing teething rings and/or pacifiers
- “Shadowing” which is supervision by direct, close proximity.
- Family interview, information gathering/sharing, conferences, resource sharing.
- Implement biting log to track progress (include attempts stopped).
- “Alert” status and/or additional staffing to minimize future occurrences.