



MITI Kids Childcare and Learning Center

The Biting Policy

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Overview of Biting

Biting is an age appropriate developmental stage related concern that is not uncommon among toddlers and two year olds. MITI Kids provide undivided attention to children, but preventing biting 100% of the time is virtually impossible. Please be confident in knowing that biting goes away with time.

Purpose of The Biting Policy

This policy is written to enhance children's safety by summarizing why children bite, actions taken if a child is bitten, describe behaviors to prevent biting incidents, and to outline what should not be done if biting incident occurs.

Reasons Children Bite

1. Children learn by exploration and toddlers are "oral beings;" thus, they will place everything into their mouths, which may include another child's finger.
2. Children bite to relieve the pressure resulting from new teeth breaking through the gums.
3. Toddlers' do not have cognitive (thinking) ability to discriminate between animate (live) and inanimate (not live) objects. This means that the child may not be able to distinguish between a teething ring and another child's plump arm.
4. Biting is a basic response to frustration, hunger, or being tired because toddlers and two year olds do not have the vocabulary to articulate these feelings/emotions and due to limited social skills.
5. Toddlers and two year olds bite in order to move children who are in close proximity, too rough, or too intimidating.
6. Children bite to get attention whether negative attention versus no attention at all.
7. Children bite to protect personal space because they need a certain amount of space around them and do not want intrusion.

Preventative Steps

1. A major preventive step is to keep group sizes as low as possible.
2. Appropriate toys available in which children may bite such as teething rings and rattles.
3. Teach children alternative methods to express their emotions/feelings.
4. Attach teether to child's clothing, in a safe manner.
5. Remind child to bite teether when frustrated and not another child.



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Do's and Don'ts If Biting Occurs:

1. *Do* focus attention on the bitten child and remain calm and not overreact. Be prepared to quickly intervene to stop the biting with a firm statement such as, "No...we do not bite people!"
2. *Do* assess the bitten area, clean with antiseptic and apply bandage, even if the bite does not break the skin.
3. *Do* apply ice pack to bitten area for 15 minutes then reassess area; repeat as needed for comfort.
4. *Do* assess bitten area of the child for signs of infection (warmth, reddened area, pain) and report to healthcare provider.
5. *Do* allow biter to gently stroke the child who was bitten to promote appropriate social behavior.
6. *Do* consult with healthcare provider if the bitten area has broken the skin or is in a prominent place such as the cheek.
7. *Do* educate the child that biting causes pain and sadness for the other child.
8. *Do* teach children how to love each other and interact with one another in a positive fashion.
9. *Do* give the child appropriate activities (sensory activities) to help cope with the biting.
10. *Do* monitor the "biter" in an effort to redirect him/her as needed.

Don'ts

1. Don't physically hurt a child or punish them for biting.
2. Don't place anything in child's mouth to prevent biting.
3. Don't withdraw food, love, or keep child in isolation.

Please note: If the biter's behavior poses a severe threat to the children the biter may be suspended or discharged.