

TODDLERS AND BITING



Why do I bite others?

To express strong emotions

- *That's my toy!*
- *Stop it!*
- *You're too close to me!*
- *I'm so excited!*

I am just learning words, so when I get mad or scared I will show my feelings, not say them.

❖ To soothe myself

- *I am tired*
- *I have too much energy*
- *There are too many lights and sounds*

Sometimes I don't feel good and need to calm myself down. I haven't learned how to do this for myself, but you can help me.

❖ I am curious.

- *I saw another child bite and am curious see how it feels.*

Explain that biting is not ok. Tell me that it hurts.

❖ To get your attention

- *I need your help!*

Sometimes I need a grownup to help me, but I can't get your attention.

What will help me stop biting?

❖ Tell me "No" calmly but firmly right away.

- *If you wait to correct me I won't remember what I did wrong.*

❖ Don't bite me back!

- *That will confuse me. If biting is not ok, I can learn that best from your example.*

❖ Help me learn to use words when I'm upset or excited.

- *I don't know the words yet, but will learn by hearing you say them for me.*

❖ Calmly tell me that biting is not ok, and that it hurts other people.

- *I don't realize I am hurting when I bite.*

❖ Soothe me when I look upset or angry.

- *I don't know how to calm down when I'm upset.*

❖ Take me to a quieter room and talk in a reassuring way.

- *I don't realize that noise and lights are making me too excited.*

❖ Give me attention when I am good too!

- *I love your attention, but if I only get it when I do things I shouldn't I won't learn what you do want me to do.*

❖ Tell me what else I can do to express my feelings.

- *If I only hear what I am doing wrong I don't know what I can do that is ok.*

What if I keep biting?

❖ Be sure I have a regular routine.

- *Doing the same things at the same time every day helps me to feel safe and secure. Changes in my routine can make me feel upset and cranky.*