**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 to 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 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.