
Subject: Biting

Source:

Policy

Biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when toddlers are in group care. It is always upsetting when children are bitten and we realize how upsetting it is for parents.

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common among toddlers.

Toddlers bite for a variety of reasons, most not related to behavior problems, therefore, the focus is **not** on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the reason for the biting. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get immediate attention or the attention of his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control.

Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The children will be encouraged to “use their words” if they become angry or frustrated.

Procedure

The safety of the children at Early Head Start is our primary concern. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at Early Head Start:

1. The biting will be interrupted with a firm “We don’t bite people!”
2. The biter will be removed from the situation.
3. The bitten child will be comforted.
4. The wound of the bitten child shall be cleansed with soap and water and ice applied if the child is willing.
5. The teacher will fill out an Incident/Illness Report then have the parent of the bitten child sign off on it.
6. An observation of concern will be filled out on the child that bit and their parent will sign off on it.
7. The names of the children involved will be kept confidential. This is to avoid labeling of the children which makes it more difficult to work quickly and positively toward stopping the biting.
8. Materials will be given to parents of both children involved in the incident to educate them on why biting occurs among toddlers.
9. We will educate the teachers as well.
10. If the biting persists staff will come up with an action plan to stop the child from biting. After the action plan is written and implemented and the biting still persist, then the family will be presented with a different program option.

Early Head Start cannot guarantee that biting will never happen within our program, however, we will deal appropriately with biting so that it will end as quickly as possible.

We will support your children whether they bite or are bitten. We want the best for all the children in our program.

If you would like more information on biting or have any questions or concerns, please let us know.