

BITING INFORMATION

AN UPSETTING BEHAVIOR FOR PARENTS, CHILDREN AND STAFF IS TO HEAR THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN BITTEN OR THAT A CHILD HAS BITTEN ANOTHER CHILD. HOWEVER, BITING IS NORMAL BEHAVIOR FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.

IN OUR PROGRAM, WE EXPERIENCE SOME INCIDENTS OF CHILDREN BITING. FIRST OFF, WE WANT TO REASSURE THAT WE ARE DOING ALL THAT'S POSSIBLE TO HANDLE THE SITUATIONS. WE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE BIT OF INFORMATION AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT WE DO WHEN BITING OCCURS.

WHY DO CHILDREN BITE?

1. BITING IS A COMPLETELY NORMAL PART OF INFANT AND TODDLERHOOD AND IT'S A STAGE LOTS OF CHILDREN GO THROUGH.
2. CHILDREN MAY BITE IN ORDER TO COPE WITH A CHALLENGE OR TO FULFILL A NEED. FOR EXAMPLE, A CHILD MAY BE BITING TO EXPRESS A STRONG FEELING (SUCH AS FRUSTRATION), COMMUNICATE A NEED FOR PERSONAL SPACE (MAYBE ANOTHER CHILD IS STANDING TOO CLOSE), TO SATISFY A NEED FOR ORAL STIMULATION SUCH AS TEETHING, OR SOMETIMES JUST OUT OF CURIOSITY ("WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I DO THIS").
3. CHILDREN OFTEN BITE IN ONE SITUATION AND NOT ANOTHER. ONE CHILD MAY BITE AT HOME AND NEVER BITE AT THE CENTRE OR VICE VERSE. CHILDREN MAY REPEAT BEHAVIORS THAT "WORK" FOR THEM IN THOSE PLACES AND WITH THOSE PEOPLE.

WHAT ARE WE DOING TO MINIMIZE BITES?

1. WE ARE AWARE OF THE ROOM ARRANGEMENT, THIS ALLOWS FOR A WIDER VIEW OF THE CHILDREN AND ELIMINATES "HIDDEN" AREAS AND AREAS THAT TEND TO GET "CROWDED".
2. WE SPEND MORE TIME WITH THE CHILD(REN) THAT ARE BITING AND TRY TO BE WITHIN ARM'S REACH OF THE CHILD(REN) AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. WE CALL THIS "SHADOWING THE CHILD".
3. WE OFFER TEETHING RINGS REGULARLY AND ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN THAT NEED ORAL STIMULATION TO USE THEM.

4. WE DEMONSTRATE GENTLE TOUCHES WITH EACH CHILD AND ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO USE THEIR WORDS AND/OR SIGN LANGUAGE TO EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS.
5. WE OBSERVE CLOSELY TO DISCOVER WHY THE CHILD(REN) ARE BITING AND WHAT ARE HIS/HER TRIGGERS.

WHAT ARE WE DOING WHEN A BITE HAPPENS?

1. WE RESPOND TO THE INCIDENT IMMEDIATELY AND ADDRESS BOTH THE CHILDREN INVOLVED.
2. WE ATTEND TO THE CHILD THAT WAS BITTEN AND WASH THE AREA WITH SOAPY WATER AND APPLY ICE.
3. WE TELL THE CHILD THAT BIT “BITING HURTS!” WE SHOW THE CHILD THE SPOT AND EXPLAIN THAT THE OTHER CHILD IS SAD BECAUSE THEY GOT BIT.
4. WE REDIRECT THE CHILD THAT BIT TO ANOTHER AREA.
5. WE WILL WRITE UP AN INCIDENT REPORT FOR BOTH CHILDREN AND HAVE THE PARENTS SIGN IT, KEEPING THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILDREN CONFIDENTIAL.
6. WE WILL GIVE POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS.
7. COLLABORATION WITH THE FAMILIES.
8. WE WILL DOCUMENT THE INCIDENTS AND TRY TO SEE IF A PATTERN IS OCCURRING.
9. IF THE BITING CONTINUES TO OCCUR WE WILL FOLLOW OUR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES IN OUR PARENT POLICY.