



My Child is a Biter

For Experimental Biting:

- Don't let your child see that you think biting is funny or a game
- If she bites you, firmly say, 'No! Biting hurts' and remove her quickly from whatever part of your body she's biting
- If she's teething, give her plenty of safe things to chew on

Biting from Frustration:

- If you know you have a biter, make sure that you are always supervising his interaction with other children.
- If your child does take a bit out of another child, firmly remove him and say 'Biting hurts. We don't bite'. Make a bit of a fuss over the victim - so the victim gets your attention, not your child - and restrict his play by keeping him next to you for a short while.
- Don't put your child into situations that you know will be difficult for him. When your child socialises with other children, keep it short and sweet.
- Biting from frustration tends to lessen as your child matures and is able to articulate his feelings. However, some children persist in biting long after they're able to talk about how they feel. If this is the case, you will need to help him learn other ways to manage his feelings.

Biting From Feeling Powerless:

- Ensure that older siblings leave enough space for your youngest child to get what he needs, and that decisions about sharing and turn-taking are equitable.
- Make sure that he is equally included in play with older children.
- If he can't play with older siblings without resorting to biting, withdraw him from the game - older children shouldn't have to tolerate his biting as a consequence of including him in their game.

Biting From Stress:

- Do a little detective work and try to figure out what's causing the stress
- If you can't remove the cause of the stress, you may have to closely supervise him to avoid the trigger.
- Help him develop other ways of dealing with his emotions. If biting really does give him the release he needs, try to find something more acceptable to bite - a teddy bear, a blanket.
- Always respond calmly but firmly to biting - and give all your attention to the victim rather than the perpetrator.