Biting

Remember:
1. Children often use biting as a way to get their needs met because they do not have more appropriate communication skills.
2. Biting gets a strong response from others.
3. Biting can be common in children between the ages of 14-24 months, and young preschool children who are not very verbal.
4. As the caregiver you just deal with biting by FIRST taking a few deep breaths and remaining CALM.

Observe the Situation and Try to Solve the Problem by Answering the Following Questions:
- When does the child bite?
- Could the child be hungry?
- Does the child seem frustrated?
- Does the child bite when there is less adult supervision?
- Does the child bite one person in particular?
- How much language is the child using?
- How many times each day is the child biting?

Actions That a Parent Can Take:
- Make sure your child is well rested.
- Offer your child a big meal before drop off at child care.
- Bring an extra snack for your child.
- Spend some time cuddling your child each day before drop off at child care.
- Teach gentle touch.
- Teach words to use when your child is frustrated.
- Respond to biting incidents by telling your child that “biting hurts.”

Actions That a Provider Can Take:
- Observe to identify a time pattern for biting.
- Cut down on the child’s frustration level by adding duplicates of favorite toys.
- Teach simple words: stop, that’s mine, etc.
- Offer activities that are on the child’s developmental level.
- Separate children at risk for biting.
- Stop activities that are too exciting before this child bites.
- Redirect the child to a less stimulating activity.

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