



Pyramid Pages

News & Tools for Parents & Early Childhood Providers

Social-emotional learning and development is fundamental to children’s success in school and beyond, and its importance is understood now more than ever. The Pyramid Model promotes young children’s healthy social and emotional development; and provides tools, strategies, and resources for caregivers and families.

Topic: BITING

News

Biting is a common behavior for young children, but one that must be addressed immediately. When children lack the skills or words to express themselves, they might engage in a behavior, such as biting, for several reasons:

- Frustration
- Lack of play skills
- Wanting attention
- Teething
- Overwhelming emotions

How to Help Your Child Stop Biting

Brookie Brogie, Aiyann Jiran & Jill Giacomini

It is very common for a child to bite others at some point during their early years. When children do not have the skills or vocabulary to express their feelings, they might engage in a behavior, such as biting, as a way to let you know how they feel. Children might bite for a variety of reasons.

- **Frustration** – she might bite because she wants her toy back or because her sister is sitting too close to her.
- **Lack of play skills** – she might bite because she feels overwhelmed by the proximity of other children or expectation to share toys.
- **Attention** – she might bite because biting

as possible to avoid teaching him that biting has a big effect on the adult. An adult’s big reaction can be reinforcing for the child. Instead, teach your child appropriate ways that he can get attention, such as tapping you on the shoulder, and then reward him when that behavior occurs. For more information on how to teach this skill, refer to the Backpack Connection handbook “How to Teach Your Child to Appropriately Get Your Attention.”

- **If your child is biting because he is teething**, offer crunchy healthy foods such as crackers or pretzels throughout the day. Give him a teething ring or cloth to chew on. Childed teethers can also soothe sore gums.

About this Series

Click to Read:

[Addressing Behavior – How to Help Your Child Stop Biting](#)

Tools

The important thing for you to remember when biting occurs is to stay calm with your actions and words, and first try to figure out the reason WHY the biting happened.

Then, you can teach children a new way to express their feelings or requests during situations when they are likely to bite. The good news is that there are many ways to reduce and to stop a child’s biting.

Responding to Your Child's Bite

Does this Sound Familiar?

Marc is preparing dinner and his two children—Jack (3 years) and Jake (5 1/2 years)—are playing with blocks on the kitchen floor. Suddenly, Marc hears a blood-curdling scream coming from Jack. He quickly turns back to see. Darnness said, “Jack shows his dad his wee and abody says, ‘The bit me.’” Jake has bitten Jack. Marc is frustrated. He doesn’t know what to do. Jake bites again. He bites his hands, other children on the playground, and children in his childcare class. Marc is not sure how to respond. He wonders if he should con-

Click to Read: [Responding to Your Child’s Bite](#)

Resources

- ECCP Behavioral Guidance: [Behavioral Guidance Tip Cards](#)
- Read aloud video: [Teeth Are Not For Biting](#)
- Ideas for using children’s books: [No Biting Book Supplement](#)
- For more information on the CT Pyramid Partnership, email us at CTPyramid@gmail.com.