

Biting Policy

One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and loving learning environment for children. When a biting incident occurs, there are many upset feelings. When it does occur we take it very seriously and try to find the reason why the child bit and try to extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible and assist in developing positive social skills.

Biting is not uncommon. It causes more upset feeling than any other behavior in group settings for young children such as learning centers and day cares. Parents of the child who was bitten, parents of the child biting, and their teachers all want the behavior to end as quickly as possible. As we know, young children up to two years of age learn through mouthing objects and people. Typically this does not continue after the age of three.

Why do children bite? Children will bite for many different reasons. Some of them include:

- experimental biting,
- teething discomfort,
- becoming independent,
- is using muscles in new ways,
- is learning to play with other children,
- is frustrated in expressing his/her needs or wants,
or is threatened by new or changing situations such as a mother returning to work, a new baby ,
or parent's separating.

When a child bites another child, we will,

- Intervene immediately
- Help the child who was bitten
- Talk briefly to the child who bit and remove the child from the situation for a brief period of time. We tell the child in a calm but firm voice, "No biting, biting hurts." Or "I do not like it when you bite people. You hurt him/her. S/he's crying."
- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Notify parents of all children involved. We will not share the names of the children to protect the privacy of all families.

If the biting continues, we will

- Meet with the parent's of the child who is biting
- Assign a person to stay/shadow the child

While using all of these techniques, most children resolve the biting behavior. However, should this continue without improvement, we must take further steps to ensure the safety of the children in our care. Therefore, we may require that the child that is biting find another learning environment that will meet his/her individual needs.