



Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children is our primary concern. The center's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The staff at Bridgeway Academy will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

- * The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- * Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- * The bitten child will be comforted.
- * Staff will remove the biter from the situation.
- * The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap/water and ice applied.
- * The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident.
Appropriate forms will be filled out (Incident Report). Note: If a bite requires medical treatment, a copy of the incident report must be mailed to the Department of Human Services.
- * Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- * The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.

If biting continues:

- * Classroom staff will meet with the director on a routine basis for advise, support and strategy planning.
- * Chart every occurrence, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviors and staff present.
- * Be mindful of children who indicate a tendency to bite: Head off biting situations before they occur.
- * Teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.
- * Be mindful of children who have a tendency to be bitten: Head off biting situations.
- * Teach responses to potential biting situations: "No" or "Don't hurt me!"
- * Work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
- * Hold a conference with the parents of the biting child to develop a plan of action.
- * Schedule follow-up meetings or telephone conversations as needed.
- * Consider early transition of a child "stuck" in a biting behavior pattern for a change of environment, if developmentally appropriate.
- * If an occurrence happens more than 1 time in one day the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the biting child. The child may return the following class day.
- * If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, the center, and the other children, the child may be suspended or withdrawn from school for the duration of the biting stage. Verbal and Written warning will be given to the parents.

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| 1st | Biting Offense | Report given to Parents |
| 2nd | Biting Offense | Conference held with Parents |
| 3rd | Biting Offense | Conference held with Parents and Short-Term Suspension from School (Regular Tuition will remain in place.) |
| 4th | Biting Offense | Conference held with Parents and Long-Term Suspension from School (Regular Tuition will remain in place.) |
| 5th | Biting Offense | Withdrawal from School (Student may enroll the following school year.) |