

MentorMe® Daycare

9810 Green Apple Turn
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
240-244-5511 office



Children bite for many different reasons. Biting is quite common among young children. It happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances. Even though this may be true, this does not make biting acceptable. The first step in learning to control biting is to determine why it is happening.

Exploration: Infants and toddlers learn by touching, smelling, hearing and tasting. If you give an infant a toy, one of the first places it goes is in the mouth. Tasting or "mouthing" things is something that all children do. Children this age do not always understand the difference between biting on a toy and biting on a person.

Teething: Children begin teething around the ages of 4 to 7 months. Swelling gums can be tender and can cause a great deal of discomfort. Infants sometimes find relief from the discomfort by chewing on something. Sometimes the object they chew on is a real person! Children this age do not truly understand the difference between chewing on a person or a toy.

Cause and Effect: Around the age of 12 months, infants become interested in finding out what happens when they do something. When they bang a spoon on the table, they discover that it makes a loud sound. When they drop a toy from crib, they discover that it falls. They may also discover that when they bite someone, they get a loud scream.

Attention: Older toddlers may sometimes bite to get attention. When children are in situations where they are not receiving enough positive attention and daily interaction, they often find a way to make others sit up and take notice. For a toddler, being ignored is not fun. Biting is a quick way to become the center of attention, even if it is negative attention.

Imitation: Older toddlers love to imitate others. Watching others and trying to do what they do is a great way to learn things. Sometimes children see others bite and decide to try it for themselves. When an adult bites a child back in punishment, it generally doesn't stop the child from biting, it just teaches the child that biting is okay.

Independence: Toddlers are trying so hard to be independent. "Mine" and "Me do it!" are favorite words. Learning to do things independently, making choices, and needing control over a situation are part of growing up. Biting is a powerful way to control others. If you want a toy or want a playmate to leave you alone or move out of your way, it is a quick way to get what you want.

Frustration: Young children experience a lot of frustration. Growing up is a real struggle. Drinking from a cup is great, yet nursing or sucking from a bottle is also wonderful. Sometimes it would be nice to remain a baby. Toddlers don't have good control over their bodies yet. A gentle pat sometimes turns into a push.

Toddlers cannot walk well: They have trouble asking for things or requesting help. They haven't learned yet how to play with others. At times, when they can't find words to express their feelings, they resort to hitting, pushing or biting.

Stress: A child's world can be stressful, too. A lack of daily routine, interesting things to do, or adult interaction are all stressful situations for children. Children also experience stressful events like death, divorce, or a move to a new house. Biting is one way to express feelings and relieve tension.