

... "bite size"  
news from  
your  
Region 10  
Behavior  
Specialist

# OH, Behave!

Volume 11, Issue 2

Fall 2017

## A Bit About Biting...



### Behavior Tip of the Month:

Stifle reactions of shock, surprise, or large emotion. Adults can help children the most by staying in control themselves.

### In every exciting issue:

- Ask The Behavior Specialist
- Behavior Tip of the Month
- Calming Choice Card
- Social/Emotional Book Nook



A few weeks ago I did a telephone workshop on the subject of biting for the North Carolina Early Education Coalition (NCEEC) and it made me realize there is a huge need for biting support and resources. In looking back, it was 2014 when the last "OH, Behave!" issue dealt with the subject of biting behaviors. Therefore, this issue will bring some additional information to readers about biting (if you weren't a subscriber in 2014 and would like that issue emailed to you, please let me know. If you recall that particular issue, look at this as a part two).

Here are some tips to **prevent** biting incidents in the early childhood classroom:

- Create lots of "personal space," with at least an arms-length distance among children. Use visuals to illustrate such as hula hoops.
- Both **model** and **give** plenty of positive attention for appropriate, gentle

- interactions among children. (Use puppets, stuffed animals, etc.)
- Every time, respectfully explain that biting hurts others and that mouths are for eating, kissing, etc., but not for biting people.
- Offer calming activities throughout the day.
- Break the large group into smaller groups as often as possible. (Small groups are always more manageable!)
- Offer plenty of sensory experiences (sand/water play, painting, play dough)
- Make the entire day exciting—especially routines!
- Keep waiting at a minimum!
- Be mindful of the maximum attention span for toddlers (5 to 10 minutes)
- Minimize congestion in the classroom and reduce disorder.
- Teach all children how to use his or her words to express their emotions.
- Prepare children in advance for upcoming transitions and changes in the schedule.
- Increase children's sense of security and stability.
- Rearrange play partners if necessary.
- Engage children more effectively in activities (developmentally appropriate activities and those of high interest).
- Spread children and activities throughout the classroom.
- Duplicate popular toys.
- Chart occurrences across the day and over time to put biting behavior into perspective and to uncover patterns or potential solutions.
- Maintain a predictable schedule of routines as closely as possible which will reduce stress and help children feel comfortable.
- Guide all children in appropriate ways to manage frustration and anger. This should be done when children are in a calm state and not in the heat of the moment.



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# Ask The Behavior Specialist!

**Question:** Our center does not currently have a written policy as to how we will handle a biting incident. Do you think we need to develop one and, if so, what should we be sure to include?

**Answer:** Yes, I would advise all early care and education programs to establish a biting policy. A "biting policy" is a written policy that clearly states how a biting situation will be handled. The policy ensures that biting will be dealt with appropriately and consistently by staff.

The policy should contain the following:

- An introduction stating the

program's perspective on biting.

- How staff will respond to biting.
- How parents are informed about biting.
- How biting is documented.
- The role of confidentiality.
- What first aid will be applied to bites.

Be sure to include things your program will **not** do such as...

- Bite the child back.
- Encourage the other child to bite the child back.
- Call the child names such as "bad", "naughty".
- Tell other parents who did the biting.

## Resources To Share With Families

Families need support understanding biting behavior too. Here are two awesome resources you can share to help parents know why children may bite and what they can do at home to help change this unwanted behavior:

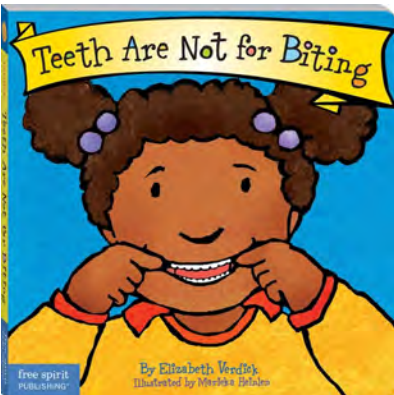
Click [here](#) to access a one page article entitled "How To Help Your Child Stop Biting" on the [www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)

Another wonderful resource can be accessed [here](#). The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (**CSEFEL**) offers a very engaging article entitled, "Responding To Your Child's Bite".

Remember when working with parents on any delicate behavioral issue, communication is key!



## Social/Emotional Book Nook



This is one of a series of books by Elizabeth Verdick that should be in the library of every toddler classroom and in the homes of parents of young children everywhere! Little mouths feel sore when new teeth come in; sometimes kids bite when they're hungry, tired, cranky, frustrated, angry, bored, distressed, or seeking attention. The author suggests positive things children can do instead of biting: chew a chewy toy, drink a cold drink, get a hug, tell a grown-up. This book also includes helpful tips for parents and caregivers.

Do you have a question you would like to see answered in our monthly column? Feel free to fax your question to 336-761-5107. You can remain anonymous if you prefer, but please put your question to the attention of "Ask The Behavior Specialist".



In each issue you will find a new card to help you build your very own "Calming Choices" Card Set for your classroom.

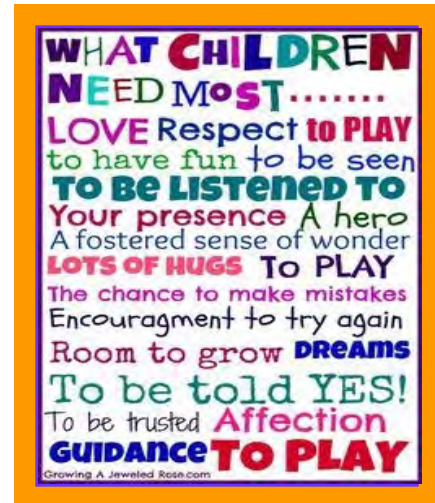


When I am upset, I can...

THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT LOVE ME



For durability and repetitive use, print on cardstock paper and laminate.



Questions or Comments?

Let's Connect!

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