

Yankalilla Community Children's Centre

BITING POLICY and Procedure

The Centre recognises that children, for a variety of reasons and from time to time, attempt to bite other children. Due to the speed and randomness with which biting incidents occur, it is not always possible to prevent biting incidents from happening.

Whilst biting is never the "right" thing for children to do, we know that young children bite for a variety of reasons.

- Infants - experimental, sensory pleasure, teething
- Toddlers - frustration, fatigue, attention seeking, confined spaces
- Older children - aggression, deliberate, lack of communication ability

At Yankalilla Community Children's centre, educators will use a range of effective strategies to manage biting incidents and also to support children and families during this challenging phase of development.

Educators will manage biting behaviour by:

- Knowing each child well
- Identifying the triggers that may be causing the child to bite
- Providing an environment to minimise the triggers
- Thorough supervision of children, especially at the times of the day or situations when biting is more likely to occur
- Using a calm and patient approach to a biting incident
- Not giving a big reaction when a child has bitten
- Consistent reactions to biting by saying in a firm tone, "Jimmy" Stop! Biting hurts, it makes "Wendy" sad".

Procedure when bite has occurred:

Bitten Child

Check immediately for broken skin

If the skin is not broken

- clean the wound with soap and water, apply a cold compress and comfort the child.

If the skin is broken

- clean the wound with soap and water
- Cover broken skin with a band aid or dressing, apply a cold compress and comfort the child
- Contact the parents of the child who was bitten and inform them of the incident.
- Record the incident in diary and complete an accident report for the child who was bitten.
- Advise parents to observe the wound over the next few days; and if redness or swelling develops, the child's parents should consult a health professional

Child who has bitten

- Respond promptly and firmly to the child who has bitten (saying "Jimmy" Stop! Biting hurts, it makes "Wendy" sad)
- Support child who has bitten to re-enter the play situation positively with appropriate guidance and scaffolding from the educator.

Follow-up

- Record the incident in diary for biter and complete an accident report for the child who was bitten.
- Inform parents of both children involved personally and privately the same day.
- Ask parents to sign the accident report for the bitten child or note in room diary for the biter.
- Educators will be extra vigilant of their supervision of the child who has bitten.
- Educators will observe the biter to try to identify and then minimize any factors in the child's early childhood environment that may be contributing to the child's biting behaviour.

Ongoing Biting: (3 bites or more)

As soon as possible after the third bite, the team leader /preschool teacher of the child who has bitten, will contact the child's parent and make a time to meet with them and the child's primary carer to develop a behaviour support plan for the child. Once this meeting time has been set, the parent will no longer be required to sign the biting record which will still be kept in the diary. A date to review the plan will be set at the meeting.

In all interactions with all parents, the name of the child who has bitten will be kept confidential. This is to avoid labelling and to give educators the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. We encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations about biting incidents directly to their child's primary carer.

Current resources on biting are available in the front office for educators and parents.

Source:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Early Years Learning Framework

Parent Easy Guide #31 - Children Biting - Parenting SA revised 06/2015

Biting in childcare (2008) <http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/biting.pdf>

Paediatrics Child Health (2008). A bite in the playroom: Managing human bites in day care settings.

Adopted: April 2005

Last reviewed: August 2017

To be reviewed: March 2019