



Aleph Preschool Biting Policy

The safety of the children at Aleph Preschool is our primary concern. Our biting policy addresses the developmental nature of biting, the actions taken to prevent bites, protocols for the aggressor and victim when bites do occur and process followed if biting becomes an ongoing concern.

Biting as part of Child Development

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. Biting is a form of communication and can often signal important cues about the child:

- teething, tired or hungry
- thinks his/her need is not being met
- frustrated or unhappy about not getting his/her way
- wants adult or peer attention
- is experimenting with cause and effect

Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason.

Children biting (other children) is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors to deal with in group child care settings. It can occur without warning, can be difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the families, and the caregivers involved.

Preventative Actions

We partner with Behave Your Best to ensure each teacher is trained to recognize typical antecedent frustrations that can lead to biting and behaviors children can exhibit in the moments before biting. Teachers employ a variety of techniques to monitor and supervise all children, redirect in situations where an antecedent or pre-behavior has been recognized and maintain an environment with clear expectations where children can engage in thoughtful and appropriate choices.

Protocols for When a Bite Occurs

For the biter:

- The biter is immediately removed from the situation with no emotion and no verbal communication.
- The teacher will address the issue once the child's "light switch" has turned back on, reminding the child of appropriate choices and ways to engage with classmates
- The teacher will write an incident report in Tadpoles, sending a copy to the parents/guardians and the child's portfolio.

For the victim:

- The victim is separate from the biter and special attention is given to comfort the child.
- The teacher will administer first aid (washing with soap & water, applying a bandage as needed, and ice). Should the wound require medical attention, parents will be notified immediately.
- The teacher will write an incident report (with picture) in Tadpoles, sending a copy to the parents/guardians and the child's portfolio.
- Teachers and administration will confer to discuss the context of the bite and if any adjustments on the part of the center are necessary.

Process for Multiple Bites

- Specialists will conduct an observation of the classroom in general or the biter specifically (with parent/guardian permission) and provide additional relevant strategies.
- Teachers will meet with administration on a routine basis for advice, support and strategy planning.
- To further prevent biting, staff will "shadow" any child with a tendency to bite and practice appropriate responses with the child in one-on-one settings, small groups and eventually larger groups.
- The Director will call parent/guardian to discuss the situation and ensure preventative actions and skill-development at home mirrors center efforts.

Process for Ongoing Bites

- The Director will call parent/guardian to discuss the situation and provide an update. At the discretion of the Director the child may be sent home for the day/or multiple days.
- If deemed necessary for the safety of all children in the class, an additional teacher may be hired for the classroom (at the cost of the biter's family).
- If deemed necessary for the best interests of the child, or other children, the child will be de-enrolled for the duration of the biting stage. Written warning will be given to the families before that action will be taken.

Biting confidentiality: In compliance with the NAEYC confidentiality guidelines, Aleph Preschool staff will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child.

