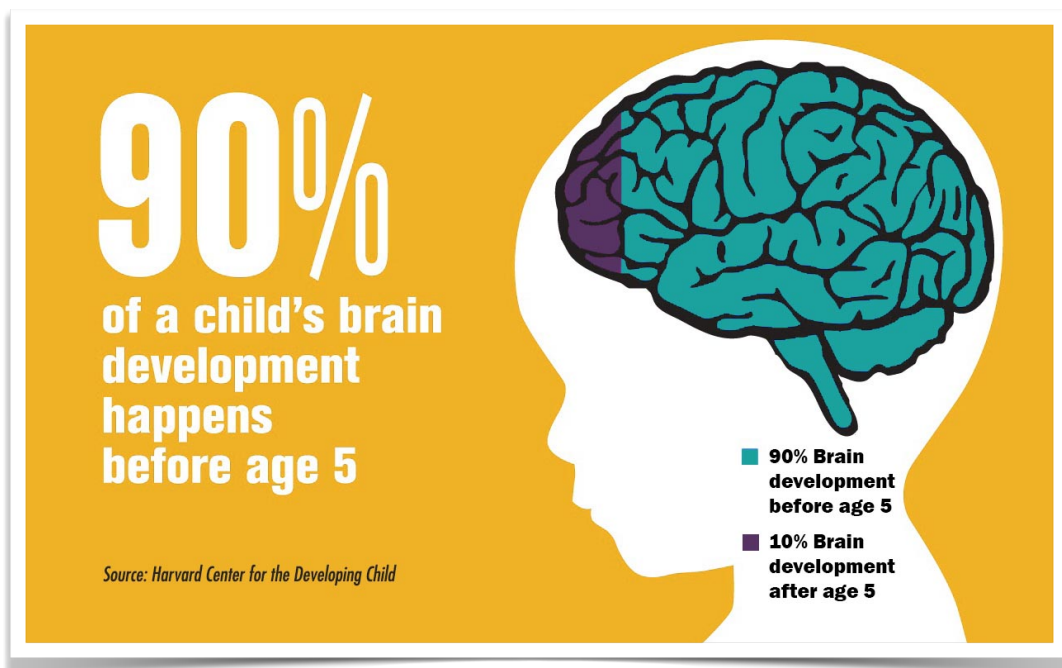


Biting in Early Years

The Brain is the Only Organ not Fully Developed at Birth



Why do children in early years sometimes bite?

Babies bite as part of their learning and exploration, and it is a normal stage of development. They may also discover that biting produces a reaction. As young children learn to communicate and express themselves effectively, they often learn that biting is unacceptable and tend to stop. Biting often starts between the ages of 1 and 3 and is typically temporary. It can, however, go on throughout the initial phase. Children change emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically as they develop.

Communication Frustration

For a child that is frustrated for whatever reason, biting serves as a form of communication. As a practitioner, if we observe a child becoming frustrated and unable to communicate what they want we will try and verbalise this for them.

For example: "Are you upset that David took your car?"

In the event that a child has been bitten, we think it's important to help them reflect on their behaviour. These responses are supported by facts and evidence. Children can find it hard to be compassionate therefore making role modelling so important!

Here are some examples of responses to consider: "oh dear, biting really hurts, David", "Can you see the mark you have made on Alex's skin?", "we do not bite our friends", "You have made Oscar Cry".



What can we do?

Include high-energy, exciting activities along with quiet, calming times

Teething toys

Use a lot of verbal interaction to encourage children's thinking skills and give them attention

Provide age-appropriate resources that allow the child to think about actions and responses

Be aware of times in the day which may create triggers

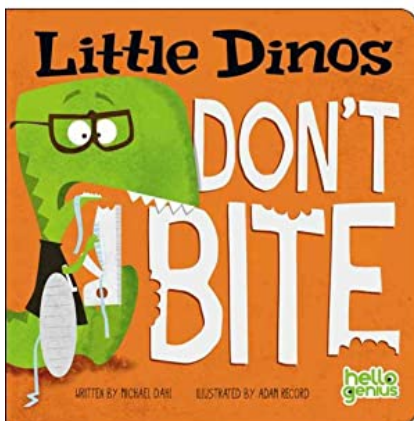
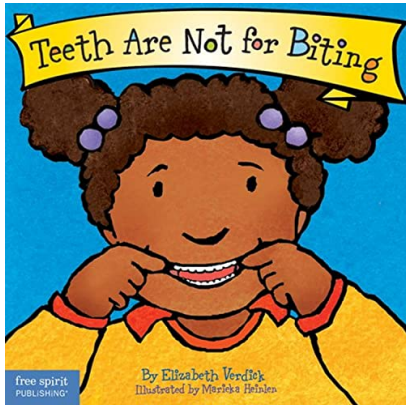
Provide an enriched environment which is safe, secure and nurtures a child's wellbeing

Strong Parent Partnership!

Co-regulate!

Recommended reading:

Biting is a typical behaviour seen in young children, as children mature they gain self-control, and develop problem-solving skills.



WHY KIDS BITE

- Biting is **exciting**
- They're **still learning** to communicate
- They have **poor impulse control** and can't stop themselves
- It's their way of asking for **help** or **attention**
- It starts a powerful **chain reaction**
- It feels **good**, especially when teething
- They're emotionally **overwhelmed** or **overstimulated**
- They need help protecting their **space**

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SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO RESPOND TO BITING

Infants learn the world around them by exploring it with their hands, eyes, and mouths. They sometimes need support on what they should and shouldn't bite.

Stay calm and use clear signals such as a firm "no biting"

Use age-appropriate language to help identify their feelings and how the child who has been bitten feels

Read age appropriate book on biting to help consolidate understanding

