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| **Biting Policy** |
| Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Leaps & Bounds Preschool to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites.* The biting child is stopped and told, “Stop biting. Biting hurts” in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
* The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child’s needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
* Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child’s behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:1. The teacher will examine the contest in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions be asked:
* Was the space too crowded?
* Were there too few toys?
* Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
* Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
1. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
2. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways.
3. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
4. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
5. The teacher, parent and Administrative Staff will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
6. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child’s permanent enrollment file in the office. |