

Listed below are a variety of additional resources available to you.

Bright Start Responsive Parenting

This project is funded by the State of South Dakota Office of Child Care Services. This six-week series of classes is designed for parents that have children ages birth to three years. Classes cover a variety of topics including: discipline, temperament, and stress. Classes are FREE and child care may be available.

Infant/Child CPR

This program is designed to give parents, child care providers, and other adults information and skills on CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation). These classes are ongoing throughout the year.

Insight for Children

These classes are designed to give information about how children develop and why they do the things they do. Topics include sibling issues, temperament, and childhood behaviors. Classes vary in length and are FREE.

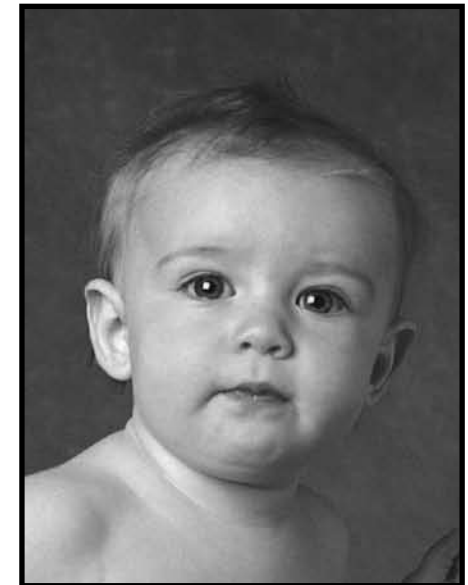
Temperament Project

This project is funded by the Sioux Empire United Way Success By Six Program. Services provided are FREE. Learning about temperament can help with discipline issues, behavior concerns, and social development. Individual temperament consultations are available, as well as temperament screenings.

Mutch Woman's Health Library

Various materials of interest to women are available for check-out at the Women's Resource Center. Books, videos, and pamphlets cover a variety of topics including but not limited to: parenting, stress, and health information.

When A Child Bites...



Sanford Children's C.H.I.L.D. Services
is located at:
1115 W. 41st Street, Sioux Falls, SD
(605) 333-0698



1305 W. 18th Street • PO Box 5039
Sioux Falls, SD 57117-5039
sanfordchildrens.org

When A Child Bites...

"He bit me!" or "She bit me!" is a cry one may hear in a home where a toddler lives. In reality, biting other people may begin when an infant first discovers the effect of his or her new teeth; but it is more commonly practiced by the toddler and sometimes the young preschooler struggling with self control. One of the most common periods for biting to occur is between the age of 18-26 months.

Why Does A Child Bite?

Biting can stem from a variety of issues going on in your child's life. It may be caused by boredom, an over stimulating environment, a desire to have something, anxiety, being tired, a need for attention, teething or anger.

Biting can happen by accident. Remember that toddlers love "cause and effect" toys - the toddler can cause something to happen by pushing a button, pulling a string, etc. The child may be encouraged to continue his or her biting because of the effect it causes.

Toddlers are also at an age that loves to imitate. If one toddler sees another bite, chances are he or she may try it too. Remember that a child who bites is not necessarily a "bad" child or a "bully."

It is important to find out why the child is biting and to figure out alternatives that may decrease the child's need to bite. If a child always bites when playing with a certain playmate, limit his interaction with the child or supervise them closely until the biting pattern stops.

Another common time for biting may be when your child is with a group of children. This may cause too much stimulation, so he or she bites out of frustration. A simple solution would be to limit the biter's group size during play. Being tired or hungry can cause a child to bite due to the inability to have self-control under these conditions. A simple solution may be a nap or a snack.

How To Handle Biting

Do not "bite" him or her back. Actually a toddler doesn't necessarily understand how another person feels when bitten. The toddler may stop biting if he or she is bitten, but it is likely due to the fact that the toddler doesn't want to feel the pain inflicted by the biting adult. A child may perceive that being bigger means you have the right to inflict pain in an aggressive manner.

When a child bites, he or she has acted in an inappropriate manner. The child should be calmly removed from the situation and given a quiet space nearby to relax. This allows an overstimulated child the chance to calm down and it also sends the message that their behavior is unacceptable. Most kids don't want to be left out so they will begin to associate with this "cause and effect" approach.

While disciplining a toddler for biting, it is important to remain calm, self-controlled and non-reactive to their behaviors. Screaming, yelling, showing shock or frustration can potentially encourage a toddler to bite just to get a reaction from the adult.

When removing the child, the adult should do it quietly, with a gentle firmness and a simple statement like, "We don't bite. You play here by yourself." Keep in mind that just as suddenly as the biting started, it may stop. Biting is part of some children's normal development in learning self control over frustration. As adults, it's our responsibility to provide a model of self-control and guidance, not a role model of power and non-acceptance.



**For more information, call
Sanford Children's C.H.I.L.D. Services
(605) 333-0698**