

# Have Parenting Questions?

During the toddler years it is likely your child may bite or be bitten by another child. There are many reasons to why a child may bite.

## GET ANSWERS.

**Sanford Parenting Services**  
**(605) 328-7155**

**SANFORD CHILDREN'S**  
5019 S Western Ave.,  
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Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
**(605) 328-7155**

**SANFORD**  
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## Parenting services

Sanford Children's Parenting Services offers a variety of services and resources to get answers to your everyday parenting questions.

### CAR SEAT EDUCATION AND INSPECTIONS

Is your child riding safe in the car? Get individual car seat education and inspections to keep kids riding safe in the car. Located at CHILD Services, 1115 W. 41st St., Sioux Falls.

### FAMILY AND FRIENDS CPR

You hope you never have to use it; but knowing CPR is one of the most important things you can learn for your family. This class is not designed for participants who must obtain a credential for CPR course attendance.

### SANFORD CHILDREN'S SAFETY CENTER

Keep your home safe. Stop by our Safety Center; a convenient one stop shop for safety items and education. Located at CHILD Services, 1115 W. 41st St., Sioux Falls.

### PARENTING COACHING

Whining, not listening, biting—sound familiar to you? Individual sessions to help you deal with everyday parenting challenges. Parenting Coaching is conveniently available by phone or office visit.

### PARENTING ESOURCE

A parenting email club to receive eClasses, eNews and eNotices such as safety recalls to help you balance life and raise your family. Go to [sanfordhealth.org](http://sanfordhealth.org), keyword: Parenting eSource to sign up.

### EVERYDAY PARENTING CLASSES

Get answers to common parenting questions.

[sanfordhealth.org](http://sanfordhealth.org)  
keyword: parenting

## WHEN YOUR CHILD BITES

Common reasons your child may bite



**SANFORD**  
& *Parenting*  
YOUR PARTNER THROUGHOUT PARENTHOOD

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## Biting happens ...

It is common for children ages 15-26 months old to bite. Children who are still learning to talk may bite to express anger and frustration as they don't have words to say what they are feeling.

### PREVENT BITING

When you know what may be causing a child to bite, you can help prevent biting from happening. There are various reasons why a child bites.

Below is a list of some common reasons children bite along with a tip on how to prevent biting from occurring.

**REASON:** Young children lack language skills and often struggle to tell others what they want. This leads to frustration.

### PREVENTION TIPS:

- Validate a child's feelings and say something like, "I know you really want to play with that toy but Sarah is using it. Let's find another toy to play with. You can play with it when Sarah is done playing with it."
- Help a frustrated child point to what he wants, "Show me what you want."

**REASON:** Children may bite due to being overwhelmed or stressed. This could be due to too much noise, too many people or too much activity.

### PREVENTION TIPS:

- Provide a quiet space to play.
- Be extra vigilant and hold an overwhelmed child to relieve the child's stress. You can slowly, gently rub her back to help relieve her stress as well.
- Take some deep breaths together.

**REASON:** Sometimes children bite to simply get a reaction from another person.

### PREVENTION TIP:

- Give attention to children for acceptable behaviors such as sharing, taking turns and listening to others.

**REASON:** It is common for children to bite when they are overtired.

### PREVENTION TIPS:

- Help children get enough rest.
- Avoid taking young children places when they are tired.

**REASON:** Teething can cause children to bite.

### PREVENTION TIP:

- Provide a cool washcloth or teething ring for the child to chew on.

### WHAT TO DO

If a child bites someone, you should address the action immediately. Let the child know that biting is not okay. A statement like, "I know you are mad, but biting is not okay" acknowledges the child's feelings while communicating that biting is not acceptable. In addition, talk with the child to find out why he is frustrated. Help him learn other acceptable ways to express his frustration; such as using words to tell people he is frustrated.

### WHAT NOT TO DO

Biting a child back, which some might suggest, is not a useful or appropriate response to a child's biting. There is no research to show that biting a child back reduces biting. A child learns how to act by watching what you say and do. When you bite, your action sends the message that it's okay to bite people when you are upset.

For more information contact Sanford Parenting Services at (605) 328-7155 or email [mutchwomenscenter@sanfordhealth.org](mailto:mutchwomenscenter@sanfordhealth.org)

