

## Causes of biting could be:

- the child discovering his or her surroundings with his or her mouth, change in oral motor skills and teething
- consideration of a counterpart i.e., of other children does not come easy for children in this age
- children in this age do not know other ways of self-defence and of expressing feelings and needs yet
- the feeling of helplessness and the lack of vocabulary
- when the personal sphere is encroached upon (for example a toy being taken away)
- the feeling of being denied, ignored or excluded (People always strive to be part of a community)
- the release of emotional tension (joy, frustration, anger, an overflow of input)
- abilities developing differently (for example high motor skills, but low vocabulary)

### Tip:

It is better not to play biting games with your child – children in this age cannot determine when biting is okay and when not.

Do you have more question about this issue?  
Do not hesitate to contact us, we'd gladly advice and help where we can!

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For the love of life



# When children bite.

Information regarding developmental phenomenon



**JOHANNITER**

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## Dear parents, dear guardians,

when children bite or get bitten, we are all naturally moved to maximum alert. We are frightened and worried. Unfortunately, children under the age of three are prone to repeat this behaviour.

The main aim and our common task would be to find, in cooperation of the child, different, age-appropriate means of expression.

It is very important to maintain a stable and upright Relationship with the child and not to belittle i.e., degrade, reject or insult the child



- calm the situation i.e., deescalate.
- return toys to the child they were taken from (if needed).
- describe the feelings of the children involved, for example: "Look, he/she is crying. It hurts a lot. His/her skin is very red." and/or "You wanted to play with the toy, right? The other child didn't want to give it to you, is that right? Is that why you're upset?"
- do not use the word "bite", it might invoke repetition.
- if needed and possible, provide the child or children with the possibility of retreat, finding a safe space or provide a teething ring if needed.
- determine the cause and regulate the situation: What caused the biting? Biting (and fighting in general) is often preceded by more complicated events

## What could be an appropriate reaction?

Children require adult support in dealing with their feelings, right up to pre-school age. For this reason, it is important that you

- firstly, devote your attention to the child that got bitten, comforting him or her and taking care of the wound.

### **NB!**

**With regards to an open wound, do not hesitate to get advice from a paediatrician.**