



MTSS Tip Sheet

Biting

A act calm

D de-escalate

A acknowledge feelings

P problem-solve

T think reflectively

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PURPOSE

This tip sheet will help you help your scholars who are biting. Below are tips that may be helpful, both in the moment and for future planning.

This list is not all encompassing, discuss with OT (and whole team), and see additional references for other suggestions.

TIPS

In the moment:

- Stay calm and model calm behavior
- Avoid blaming or verbally reprimanding scholar
- In the event a child “latches on” and does not readily release a bite, provide sustained counter pressure of your body part being bitten in the direction of the child’s mouth.
 - Most times this technique will cause the jaw and mouth to relax and release the bite
- Encourage scholar to take responsibility for their behavior by apologizing (verbally or by gesture)
 - within reason and considering child’s ability

Future planning:

- Try to determine if biting is due to physical or medical need, or may be a form of communication
- As a precaution, for extreme cases, until behavior is extinguished wear safety protection
 - Thick, long sleeved shirts
- Encourage activities that provide oral input throughout
 - chewing toys / chewable jewelry
 - blowing toys and games
 - drinking through straws
- Use students “regulation plan” to identify meaningful alternatives

Information from (Ghobrial, 2016) and (Harrington, 2022)*

OT / PT WEBSITE

<https://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/occupational-physical-therapy>

* detailed references available on department website