

## **Talking to Parents About Behavioral Challenges**

Open, respectful communication with parents is essential when addressing behavioral issues such as biting. Begin these conversations from a place of partnership rather than blame. Parents want to feel confident that their child is safe and understood—and that their child is not being unfairly labeled or judged.

When approaching a parent, choose a time when you can speak privately and calmly. Start with something positive about the child's day or their strengths. Then, describe the behavior factually and without emotion: "Today, your child bit another child during free play. No one was seriously hurt, and we supported both children." Avoid using judgmental language, and instead focus on what you observed and how you responded.

Explain the steps taken to care for the child who was bitten and the guidance provided to the child who bit. Emphasize that biting is developmentally common, and share your plan to monitor and support the child going forward. Invite the parent to share any insight or strategies that work well at home.

Reassure the parent that your goal is to help their child learn and grow in a safe, nurturing environment. Let them know you are working collaboratively to understand the root of the behavior and to teach appropriate ways to express feelings. Maintaining this open line of communication builds trust, encourages consistency between home and school, and reinforces that behavioral challenges are part of healthy development—not a reflection of failure.

Ultimately, these conversations are opportunities to strengthen the caregiver-parent relationship, create shared strategies, and foster a supportive network around the child.