

Human and Animal Bite Protocol for Sandwich Public School Nursing Department

Biting is very common among young children but usually does not lead to serious infectious disease issues. If the skin is broken, bacteria introduced into the wound can cause a tissue infection that needs to be treated by a health professional. Blood-borne diseases could be a concern if the biter breaks the skin and blood is drawn into the biter's mouth or if the biter has bleeding gums or mouth sores, which transfers germs to the bitten person. Hepatitis B virus, HIV, and hepatitis C virus are examples of blood-borne diseases causing germs. However, the risk of transmission of these viruses is very low in early childhood education (ECE) and school settings. For HIV, there have not been any episodes of transmission in an ECE or school setting (American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP], 2023, p. 75).

Human Bites in School

- All human bites occurring in the school setting will be reported to the school nurse and the school nurse shall evaluate and assess the wound.
- In the event of *intact skin* at the site, the area will be washed with soap and water, a cool compress applied, and a phone call will be made home to notify a parent or guardian.
- In the event that the *bite pierces the skin*:
 - **Superficial bites:**
 - Wash with warm soap and water
 - Apply a cool compress
 - Assess the status of the Tetanus vaccination
 - Call home to notify a parent or guardian and refer to Primary Care Provider for follow-up and Tetanus vaccination if

indicated (*antibiotic treatment may be recommended by the care provider but is not available in school without a physician's order and a medication supply provided by the parent/guardian*)

- The student may remain in school if the bleeding is under control, the parent approves and the child feels able to complete the school day.

○ **Deep bites**

- Flooding with tap water or sterile water, observe for foreign objects or debris embedded in the wound
- Cleanse the surrounding area with soap and water
- Apply a cool compress

- Assess the status of Tetanus vaccination 0

- Call home to notify a parent or guardian and refer to Primary Care Provider for follow-up and Tetanus vaccination if

indicated (*antibiotic treatment may be recommended by the care providers but is not available in school without a physician's order and a medication supply provided by the parent/guardian*)

- The student may remain in school if the bleeding is under control, the parent approves and the child feels able to complete the school day.

○ **Regarding the individual who “bit”**

- If the bite results in bleeding, and the “biter” is exposed to the blood of the bite recipient, the school nurse will contact a parent or guardian to notify them of a possible body fluid exposure and advise follow-up with a licensed medical provider.

Animal Bites in School

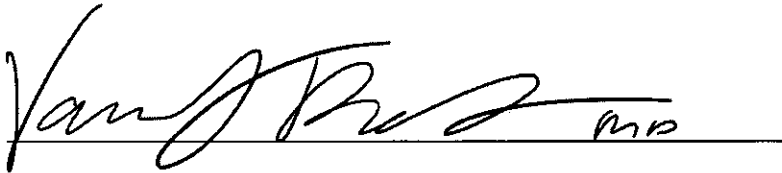
All animals in a student's environment shall be healthy and suitable animals for the school environment. Animals in school shall be fully immunized, and on a flea-, tick-, and worm-control program (when appropriate). All contact between animals and children should be supervised by a teacher or other adult staff member. "The most common complication of an animal bite is infection. Antibiotics are generally recommended to prevent infection in people with high-risk wounds, such as deep puncture wounds, wounds involving a bone or joint, and for people with other health problems, such as a weakened immune system or diabetes, which could increase the risk of serious infection" (Baddour & Harper, 2022).

An animal bite that breaks or punctures the skin needs immediate wound care to reduce the risk of infection. The wound should be washed out with water and then promptly evaluated by a health professional (AAP, 2023, p. 75). After being bitten by an animal or human, it is important to quickly and thoroughly clean the wound with soap and a large amount of water; this can help to prevent infection. If there is bleeding, a clean towel or gauze should be pressed to the wound to slow or stop the bleeding. It is best to be evaluated and treated as soon as possible after being bitten to reduce the chance of developing an infection.

If a student is bitten by an animal in school:

- All animal bites will be reported to the school nurse for assessment and treatment.
- Assuming the animal is a service animal permitted into the school by the administration, medical records for the animal will be provided to the family of the student for purposes of care planning with the primary care provider.
- Flood the wound with tap water or sterile water, and observe for foreign objects or debris embedded in the wound.

- Cleanse the surrounding area with soap and water
- Apply a cool compress
- Assess the status of Tetanus vaccination
- Call home to notify a parent or guardian and refer to Primary Care Provider for follow-up
- The student should be dismissed from school and taken to a licensed medical provider for follow-up and treatment
- In the unlikely event that a child is bitten by a *wild animal or unknown animal* on school grounds, the school nurse will provide first aid, control bleeding and contact the parent or guardian to arrange for urgent medical attention.
- School staff will then notify the local animal control and health department.



School Physician

11/21/2023

Date



SPS Nursing Department Head

11/27/2023

Date

References

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2023). *Managing infectious diseases in child care and schools* (6th ed.).
- Baddour, L. M., & Harper, M. (2022). Patient education: Animal and human bites (beyond the basics) (M. S. Hirsch, K. K. Hall, & J. F. Wiley, Eds.). *UpToDate*. Retrieved November 8, 2023, from <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/animal-and-human-bites-beyond-the-basics>
- Pham, T.-T., De Marco, G., Bouvet, C., Zanella, M.-C., & Kaiser, L. (2023). Human bites. *Revue medicale suisse*, *15*(646), 780–785.

