

Go-To Navigating Sibling Rivalry



Sibling rivalry is natural & normal

- * Brothers and sisters are often the first peer group our children encounter.
- * Siblings are therefore coping with their first 'solo' experience of socialising, conflict & compromise.



Parenting Confidence

- * Constantly nurturing yourself will increase your capacity to cope more positively with sibling rivalry.
- * Children will respond better if you can support them without feeling triggered into frustration yourself.
- * Your calming approach can role-model the mediation and problem-solving skills your children need to learn.



Sibling rivalry is a training space.

- * Children's behaviour at all ages, including teens, is often dominated by the urgent, emotional responses of their maturing brains.
- * Their interpersonal skills of communication including listening, empathy, patience & collaboration are all still developing.



Toddlers/New Babies. When young children unavoidably have to begin sharing parents, they can feel abandoned & intensely insecure. Children often express this sense of distress by behaving in angry, controlling & defiant ways towards siblings, and others. Try to prevent and soothe these feelings with plenty of your precious 1-1 connecting, familiar routines & patience.



Pre & Primary school age children have an inbuilt sense of fairness and can react strongly to real or perceived injustice. Increasing independence & maturing self-awareness can also be difficult for them to manage. Try to recognise their individuality & avoid comparisons. Aim to connect 1-1, model practical ways to relax & cope with big feelings. Teach negotiation.



Older children and Teens Insecurity, anxiety, hormones and feelings of low self-esteem can lead to a 'smoke screen' of difficult, emotional and controlling behaviours. Aim to recognise this 'not feeling good enough' by seeing beyond the behaviour to your child in need. Allow space for privacy and create 'natural' opportunities for conversation, praise and 1-1 connection. Aim to boost confidence by encouraging hobbies/sports & sharing their interests.



We are here to support, listen or advise anytime. Contact us Monday to Thursday 9am to 9pm. Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm

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Positive Parenting

- * Has the situation been engineered simply to get you involved?
Aim to give your attention to the behaviours you want to encourage.
- * Children will often repeat any negative behaviours you respond to.



Getting involved... Before

- * Consistent family kindness & respect.
- * Offering choices & negotiating options.
- * Exploring different points of view.
- * Relaxation & how to calm big emotions.
- * Problem solving skills & solutions.
- * Listening and turn taking skills.



Check Beyond the Behaviour

Could there be something else going on for your child? Sometimes anxious, bullied or overwhelmed children can try to Manage their stressed feelings by projecting them onto others.



Getting involved... During

- * Take time to settle your own feelings.
- * Allow time for siblings to try to work things out for themselves.
- * Try to see this as a teaching opportunity and not 'firefighting'.
- * If necessary, agree fair, time-limited consequences or forfeits.
- * Remain neutral, try not to adjudicate.



RULES

Helpful Practicals

- * Basic family rules e.g no hitting
- * Consistent boundaries & routines
- * Using timers to support fairness
- * Yellow/Red card warnings
- * Agreed consequences
- * Go-to spaces for privacy & calm



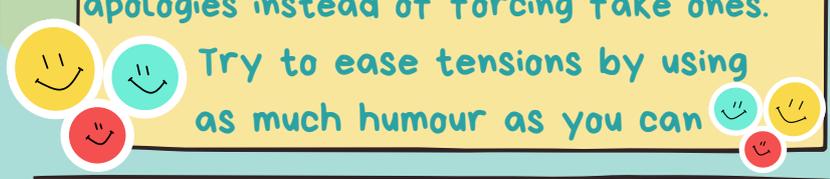
Aim to seek support if...

- * the behaviour is one-sided, planned, persistent or escalating.
- * there is a power imbalance e.g a difference in age or ability.
- * other children are being encouraged to get involved.
- * you have a sense of physical or emotional intimidation.
- * you have a sense of fear or physical/mental harm.



Getting involved... After

- * Focus on 'rupture & repair'. Explore how arguments are inevitable. Best ways to cope in the moment. What helps everyone 'let it go' & positively move on?
- * Allow time for natural, heartfelt apologies instead of forcing fake ones.
- Try to ease tensions by using as much humour as you can



Teach your children positive ways to ask for your attention. Anything from baby sign language to a post it on the fridge!