

Siblings without Rivalry

A QUICK GUIDE FOR BUSY PARENTS

NOT TILL THE BAD FEELINGS COME OUT

BROTHERS AND SISTERS NEED TO HAVE THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER ACKNOWLEDGED

1. With words that identify the feeling
2. With wishes
3. With symbolic or creative activity
4. Show how to discharge angry feelings acceptably

THE PERILS OF COMPARISON

RESIST THE URGE TO COMPARE

1. Describe what you see
2. Describe what you feel
3. Describe what needs to be done
4. Describe what you see
5. Describe what you feel

EQUAL IS LESS

CHILDREN DON'T NEED TO BE TREATED EQUALLY. THEY NEED TO BE TREATED UNIQUELY.

1. Instead of giving equal amounts, give according to individual need
2. Instead of showing equal love, show the child he or she is loved uniquely
3. Instead of giving equal time, give time according to need

SIBLINGS IN ROLES

LET NO ONE LOCK A CHILD INTO A ROLE

1. Not his parents
2. Not the child himself
3. Not his brothers or sisters
4. Children with problems do not need to be viewed as problem children - accept their frustration; appreciate what they have accomplished, however imperfect; and help in focusing on solutions

WHEN THE KIDS FIGHT

HOW TO HANDLE THE FIGHTING

1. Normal bickering - ignore it
2. Situation heating up - adult intervention might be helpful, eg, reflect each child's point of view
3. Situation possibly dangerous - remind them of the rule and offer them an alternative
4. Situation definitely dangerous - adult intervention required, eg, describe what you see + separate

PROBLEM SOLVING

HELP CHILDREN RESOLVE A DIFFICULT CONFLICT

1. Call a meeting
2. Explain the ground rules
3. Write down each child's feelings and concerns
4. Allow each child time for rebuttal
5. Invite everyone to suggest solutions; write down all ideas without evaluating
6. Decide upon solutions you can all live with
7. Follow-up later