

# 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

### 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

### 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

### 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

### 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

# How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk

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## Chapter 1: HELP YOUR CHILD DEAL WITH THEIR FEELINGS

1. Listen with full attention
2. Acknowledge with a word
3. Give the feeling a name
4. Give a child his wishes in fantasy

## Chapter 2: ENGAGING COOPERATION

1. Describe, eg, "The milk is on the table"
2. Give information. eg, "Milk goes bad when it is out of the fridge"
3. Say it with a word, eg, "Shoes."
4. Talk about your feelings. "I don't like having my hair pulled. It hurts. We could have a cuddle instead?"
5. Write a note. e.g., Put a post-it note on the oven saying "Hot!" when it is on. You can point to the sign and say, "It says hot."

## Chapter 3: ALTERNATIVES TO PUNISHMENT

1. Point out a way to be helpful
2. Express your feelings strongly
3. State your expectations
4. Show the child how to make amends
5. Give the child a choice
6. Take action
7. Allow the child to experience the consequences of the misbehaviour
8. Problem-solve

## Chapter 4: ENCOURAGING AUTONOMY

1. Let children make choices
2. Show respect for a child's struggle
3. Don't ask too many questions
4. Don't rush to answer questions
5. Encourage children to use sources outside the home
6. Don't take away hope

## Chapter 5: PRAISE AND SELF-ESTEEM

1. Describe what you see. e.g. "I see a clean floor, a smooth bed, and books neatly lined up on the shelf."
2. Describe what you feel. e.g. "It's a pleasure to walk into this room!"
3. Sum up the child's praiseworthy behaviour with a word. e.g. "You sorted out your pencils, crayons and pens, and put them in separate boxes. That's what I call *organisation!*"

## Chapter 6: FREEING CHILDREN FROM PLAYING ROLES

1. Look for opportunities to show them a new picture of him/herself
2. Put children in situations where they can see themselves differently
3. Let children overhear you say something positive about them
4. Model the behaviour you'd like to see
5. Be a storehouse for your child's special moments
6. State your feelings and/or your expectations.