



## Love & Logic: Calming Sibling Rivalry: Four Quick Tips

Recently, a desperate dad called us about his two sons who are embroiled in sibling conflicts that never seem to end. Based on the number of calls that we have received over the past year about battles among kids, sibling rivalry seems to have increased in frequency and intensity, possibly due to increased stress because of the pandemic. Like the dad who called us recently, the conflict between kids can trigger stress and conflict between parents on how to resolve the problem, further contributing to family chaos. This week we will give four tips on how to address sibling rivalry.

Is it possible that some degree of sibling rivalry is normal, that it can actually provide opportunities for kids to learn essential life-long relational skills? Absolutely! But only if we have common-sense skills for ensuring that these conflicts don't grow into chronic resentment, feelings of victimization, and perpetual family chaos. Although the subject can be complex, here are four tips that can help keep the family atmosphere healthy.

### **Nurture each of your children's unique strengths and gifts.**

When children are noticed and appreciated for their unique interests and aptitudes, they are less likely to perceive that their parents have "favorite" children. Of course, favoritism is the kiss of death when it comes to sibling relationships.

### **Provide strong and loving leadership.**

Love and Logic is all about helping parents become, and remain, loving and strong authority figures. Much of this is achieved by providing consistent and enforceable limits. When kids feel a lack of such leadership, they experience anxiety and subconsciously wonder, "Well, if our parents aren't running this home, I better." Chaos among siblings ensues as they compete for this leadership position.

### **Stay out of the middle, while guiding them toward a solution.**

Most of us struggle with the temptation to rescue our kids from each other by placing ourselves in the middle of their conflicts. When we succumb to doing so, we send a very unhealthy message. "If you want some attention, all you have to do is start a fight with your brother or sister. Then I'll swoop in to rescue." In my audio, **Sibling Rivalry: [Strategies for Teaching Your Kids How to Get Along](#)**. I describe how parents can avoid making this mistake while guiding their children toward learning how to resolve their own conflicts.

Of course, it is very important to remember that we do rescue when life and limb are in obvious danger.

### **Use the "Energy Drain" technique to keep it their problem rather than yours.**

We've received story after story of how parents have informed their children that bickering and arguing drains their parental energy. When this happens with parents who use Love and Logic, kids are expected to replace this energy by completing extra chores, staying home from an activity so that their parents can restore their energy instead of driving kids around, etc.

Thanks for reading!

If this is a benefit, share with a friend. Our goal is to help as many families as possible.

[Dr. Charles Fay](#)