

When Siblings Won't Stop Fighting !



It is no surprise that the relationship between two siblings is undeniably strong, however, when living under the same roof, it is inevitable that conflicts may arise. In fact, as they spend most of their free time together, they tend to compete for both resources and attention. This leads to parents having difficulties controlling conflicts.

Here are some strategies that can help parents maintain calm at home.

Praise the positive

It is highly recommended to lay a positive environment which has been proven to reduce negative behavior; praising cooperative behaviors between siblings in fact reduces conflicts. For example, if you catch your children sharing the same toy, or watching TV together, some things can be said, such as: " I love how you both are sharing your toys and playing together."

Plan ahead

As expected, siblings will still fight regardless of all the positive reinforcement you give. Approaching the eldest sibling and guiding them on how to react to conflict and avoiding any sort of escalation is recommended. For example, it is very common that the eldest sibling often complains of the youngest; encourage the former to come talk to you when something is bothering them instead of allowing the issue to escalate. You can also let them know that in situations when they feel

angry or frustrated towards their younger brother or sister, going to a different room will avoid any potential escalation between them. However, it is crucial to make it clear that encouraging them to come to talk to you is with the aim to resolve a conflict rather than complaining.

In the situation when there's a constant reason for fights, make a plan to help reduce the tension; for example, if they usually fight over the TV, make an agreement with them that each sibling will have their TV time which will be monitored through a timer.

While applying these strategies, consistency is crucial, as well as praising them when not resisting new house rules.

Always give back a confiscated object

It is very natural for parents to remove the sources of fights between siblings (e.g. TV remote control, toys, video games.). This approach is highly effective as long as the object is given back shortly after creating a plan which will allow them to take turns. By not returning the confiscated object, they won't be encouraged to work collaboratively.

Special needs

Approximately 10% of children require emotional or educational needs that may demand extra attention and adjustment which often leads to feelings of jealousy from the other sibling(s). Discussing openly about the challenges that their sibling is facing is important, as well as listening to their concerns and validating their feelings towards the situation. This will allow them to be more understanding regarding certain behaviors and reduce conflicts.



References

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