

10 Ways to Curb Sibling Rivalry

1. **All are Created Equal.** Jealousy is a prime factor in sibling arguments. That monster can create upheaval in your home. Your kids are vying for your attention and affection. Let them know you have more than enough love to give and always be fair and balanced in the time and attention you give each of them.

2. **Build Teamwork.** Try to plan regular activities that require your children to work as a team. This will promote cooperation, trust and bonding. There are several websites with game ideas such as .

3. **Set a Privilege Timetable.** “You are giving her a cell phone? She is only 10. I had to wait until I was 13!” Siblings remember every detail of what was given to whom and when. Set a timetable for these landmarks and stick to it. If the timetable must be broken, make sure you give a clear and reasonable explanation as to why.

4. **Step Aside.** Sometimes you just need to butt out. A parent can't resolve every issue. Sometimes when siblings are fighting, you just need to walk away. In fact, tell them to take their argument outside. They need to learn to resolve their own conflicts. Just make sure nobody takes a golf club to the head.

5. **A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words.** Parents should think outside the box. One parent suggested snapping a quick photo when your children are taunting or arguing with each other. They will see how silly or ugly the scene was and it usually ends in laughter and apologies. Creative parenting!

6. **Family Roles.** “Dad, how come you let him get away with that, but not me?” The answer to that question is usually

“because you are the oldest and know better.” Every person in the family has a role. Point these out on a regular basis.

7. Understanding. It is important to understand the talents and flaws of your kids. One son might be a great athlete and the other might have a gift for music. Never apply a “one size fits all” technique with them. Just because your oldest son loves playing football, does not mean your other son will. Discover the unique traits of each of your children and nurture them.

8. Special Circumstances. If you have a special-needs child, they will require a great deal of your attention. This can be difficult for your other children. One thing that can help is allowing them to be involved in the caretaking process. This also applies when children are sick or have injuries. Offset the extra attention by including the whole family in the treatment.

9. Safe Zone. Sometimes kids need time and space to be alone. For instance, your older daughter is in her room talking on the phone with her friends. Her younger sister keeps intruding on her. This will surely cause conflict. Create a safe zone for each child and make sure it's respected.

10. One-on-One Time. Make a point to spend time alone with each of your kids on a regular basis. Read a book to your youngest daughter. Shoot hoops with your son. Go for a bike ride with your teenage daughter. Your attention will mean the world to them.

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