

Sibling Rivalry

- ✓ Guide your child to solve the problem for themselves.
 - "I bet that hurts."
 - "What do you think you are going to do?"
 - "Would you like to know what some other kids try?" (see "What to do about teasing" for ideas)
 - "Will that give them any power or attention?"
 - "I hope that works out for you."
- ✓ Change environmental factors that you have control over:
 - Location of homework (on opposite sides of table with barrier up, or even in different rooms), seats in TV room away from each other
 - Schedule morning bathroom access, TV access, choice of seats based on winner of the week (ex. for chore completion), TV remote access based on point system or time of day
- ✓ Make dates with each child, even if it's for 10 minutes per day. Let the child guide the activity. Give them your undivided attention, listen, no advice giving without asking permission first.
- ✓ Meeting the needs of the individual (use various forms of discipline, as well as, rewards). Same rules, different support.
- ✓ Beware of tattling: Are they telling because they need help or because they want the power of getting the other in trouble? Discipline in private.
- ✓ Set up safe "fighting": pillow fights with clear rules. It can be hard to share your space and toys and family and friends with the same people!
- ✓ Use "I notice that..." sentences which internalize compliments instead of focusing on pleasing you, the adult. This can contribute to increasing self-worth and decreasing the survival instinct of competition. (see Energizing Positives handout)
- ✓ Give choices whenever you can to increase sense of personal power.

Odd or even	Which chair will you sit in	Which color pencil	Cards or dice
Sit or stand on floor space	This (motor skill) or another	Write or type	Before or after
Partner read or by yourself	Colored paper or white	Write or dictate	Cursive or print
Hand shake or high five	On white board or paper	Which one first	Coins or Cubes
Do it yourself or with help	Write story or draw picture	Crayons or Markers	Front or back first
By yourself or at the table	Fiction or non-fiction	Read to me or sibling	Start at top or bottom
At your table or on the floor	Now or during TV time	Spelling #1 or #2	Read at desk or on cushion
Colored pencil or twistable	Quiet at the table or in room	Addition or Subtraction first	
Feet touching the floor or in the air			

- ✓ Give each child a sense of belonging through contributions to the family.

Organize art supplies	Set up snack	Garbage assistant	White board cleaner
Mail pick up	Pencil Sharpener	Paper towel replacer	Recycling
Table cleaner	Pet Feeder	Take out lunches in morning	Daily Schedule announcer
Toy manager/clean-up of the shared space		Phone Answerer Pet Food monitor – put on grocery list	
Computer/Electronics shut down		Note taker at family meetings	
Presenter of dinner menu			

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Come in for a consult appointment and we'll create a plan to reduce conflict in your family.

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