

TINY BITS (BETTER INFORMED TOGETHER) FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP
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Raising Siblings Who Get Along and Stick Together

Raising siblings can be difficult at times. Arguing, competition for attention, and other conflicts can be frustrating for parents to cope with. On the other hand, when siblings get along, it can lead to loving and supportive relationships that last a lifetime. Growing up with siblings can help children learn and develop skills relating to problem solving and negotiation. They can also have a head start in learning about and understanding the feelings of others. In this month's edition of Tiny BITS, we discuss what you can do to raise siblings who get along and have a sense of camaraderie.

Avoid favorites-While this may seem obvious, it is a very important concept to remember. Avoid comparing siblings, and always avoid criticizing one sibling in front of another.

Use tools if needed- Teaching siblings how to take turns and share can help combat arguments. Visual schedules and timers may be helpful in teaching this in younger children.

Build strong relationships-Make sure you are building strong relationships with all of your children so that each of them feels valued and special. One on one time with each child should be part of your daily routine.

Help children learn to resolve their differences-Conflicts between siblings give children the opportunity to practice resolving differences. Allow your children to try and work through conflicts, and step in when you see they need help. Sharing and taking turns is often the source of conflict between siblings. Parents can model these skills when playing all together. Strategies include: offer options of different toys, reflect feelings acknowledging how both children feel, and guide children to come up with solutions.

Create opportunities for siblings to have fun together

- Water play, blocks, and art are all activities that children of different ages and personalities can enjoy together.
- Although supervision of young children is always necessary, if your children are having fun together, you do not need to join them all the time. Leave them alone and let them play. Take the time to relax and watch them.
- Give them a mission to complete as a team. "Can you two push the laundry basket over to the washing machine? Let me see how strong you are together."
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Cheer each other on- Encourage siblings to support one another. If one sibling is riding their bike without training wheels for the first time, a high five from their sibling to cheer them on can go a long way.

Encourage connection-Praise positive interactions between siblings and promote shared experiences. A family movie night, shared daily walk, or any activity that everyone enjoys will promote positive feelings between siblings.

Excerpted from: <https://childmind.org/article/how-to-help-siblings-get-along/>

Excerpted from: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/raising-siblings-who-stick-together/>

