



Building Strong Families

What about Siblings?

In families brothers and sisters have some great times together. Other times they may argue and fight. This happens in families and is normal. A parent's job is to teach their children ways to resolve conflicts in a positive way.

Some tips and facts for parents:

- Your goal as a parent is to be fair. Be aware that it is not always possible for things to be equal. Don't compare one of your kids to the other. Don't take sides.
- Make sure each one of your children feels wanted, loved, and important. Children who are unsure of a parent's love tend to become jealous easily.
- Try to have one-on-one time with each of your children every day. You can schedule bedtimes at different times to allow that to happen. You can also take a different child along each time you run errands or go to the store.
- Children in the same family can have different temperaments, abilities, likes, and dislikes. One of your children may be more like you than the other. Just make sure you are fair to each one of your children.
- Children share a family connection even when they differ and disagree. Sharing a parent's love may be difficult for a young child to understand, but she can learn from your example.
- Children of different ages need different rules and guidelines.
- Rules should be fair and consistent with a clear consequence if a rule is broken.



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- Home is a safe place for children to learn to solve problems. Your family's love and security remain even when there is a conflict. Encourage your children to cooperate. Notice when it happens and tell your child you are pleased.
- When your children are tired or hungry it is best to separate them and not expect them to solve a conflict at that time.
- Siblings benefit from time away from each other once in a while. If one child has a friend over to play, try to plan something for your other child to do then.
- Children benefit from having something special they do not have to share. Then they may be more willing to share other things.
- Remember, young children do not know how to share. Teach your child how to take turns and this will lead to his being able to share.

Problem Solving Basics

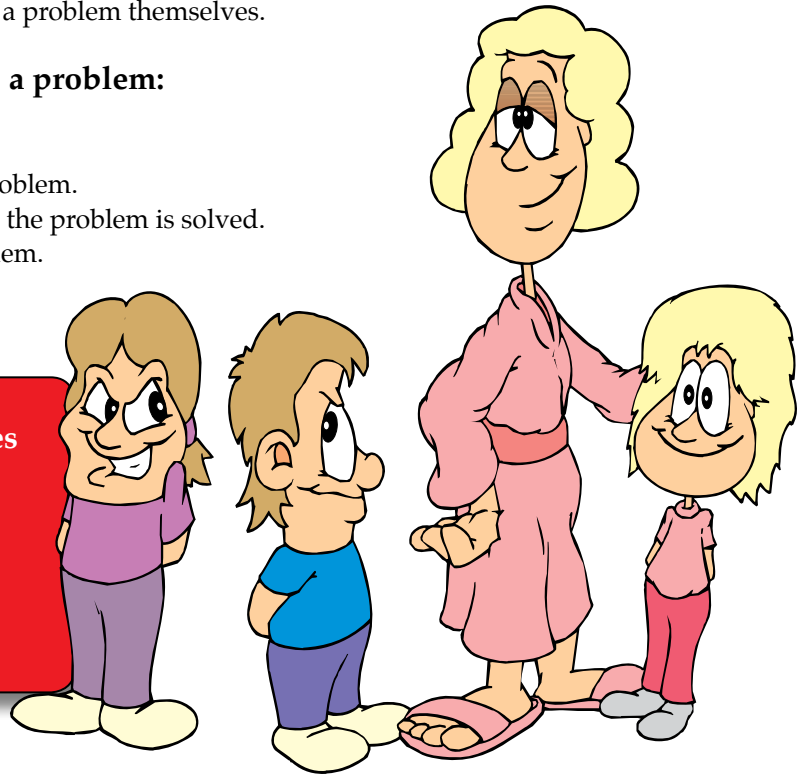
All children have arguments at times. You do not need to decide who is right and who is wrong when your children have a problem. Be aware of what is going on. Know when to supervise a situation and when to step in. Teach your children how to talk about things and how to solve a problem themselves.

Here is how to teach your child to solve a problem:

- Have each child tell you what the problem is.
- Ask each one for ideas on how to solve the problem.
- Both children must agree on a solution before the problem is solved.
- Have them use their ideas to solve their problem.
- Afterwards, ask them how they feel about how it worked out.

Some Examples of Good Family Rules

- We help each other in our family
- Ask someone if you need help
- Our family talks about problems
- No hitting or hurting in our family



Find Trustworthy Information on the Web

Tufts University has set up a Web site for parents, professionals who work with children, and has some safe sites for children to use. It is called The Child and Family Web Guide and can be found at <http://www.cfw.tufts.edu/>. It is a collection of Web sites that have been checked for accuracy by graduate students and faculty in child development. Information can be found by topics and age groups. The topics include parenting, child development, education/learning, health/mental health, and resources/recreation. There are also sites where you can ask-an-expert. You might want to check out this Web site for all kinds of information.

More from Better Kid Care

The Better Kid Care Web Site at www.betterkidcare.psu.edu has more information for parents. Look for other *Family Time-Work Time* issues, *Parents Count*, child care and activity tip sheets, snack ideas, choosing child care tips, school readiness information, and the monthly Better Kid Care E-Newsletter. To sign up for the E-Newsletter, send a request to BetterKidCareNews-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu.

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