

FACT SHEET • PRIMARY

Helping Your Child Get On With Their Siblings

Brothers and sisters spend more hours together than almost anyone else, which is exactly why they argue. A sibling is the person a child practises on: sharing, taking turns, standing their ground and making up afterwards. Some friction is how this learning happens. Here are five tips to keep things at a reasonable level.



TIP 1

Resist being the judge

Working out who started it rarely settles anything. Ask what each of them needs and let them have a go at solving it, stepping in only when someone is being hurt.

TIP 2

Give each child something of their own

A space, a possession or a bit of time that does not have to be shared takes a surprising amount of heat out of the day. Children share better when not everything is up for grabs.

TIP 3

Avoid comparing them

Even a kind comparison sets them against each other. Talk to each child about their own progress, not about how it measures up to their brother or sister.

TIP 4

Name what went well

Notice the moments they were kind, waited, or let something go. Children repeat what gets noticed, and squabbles usually get far more attention than the good bits.

TIP 5

Protect time one to one

Ten minutes alone with each child, doing something ordinary, does more for how they treat each other than any rule about sharing.