



NEWSFLASH  
ON SIBLING  
RIVALRY



THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

TOT'S LINE

**Ways To Introduce a New Baby To The Family**

- ❖ Let the older sibling help decorate the baby's room.
  - ❖ As people bring gifts for the new baby, consider giving the older child a small inexpensive gift.
  - ❖ Spend time with the older child when the baby is awake. This shows the child, you can have fun when the baby is also there.
  - ❖ Make a photo album of the older child, possibly of the parents doing the same things for the older child as they are now doing for the baby
- ❖ When bringing your new child home from the hospital, ask another family member to bring the baby in the home. This will allow parents to lavish attention on the older sibling.
  - ❖ Emphasize the advantages of being older by allowing the older sibling to take on more grown up tasks
  - ❖ Allow the older child to help care for the new baby. Give lots of positive reinforcement for being a good helper.
  - ❖ Give each child one on one attention

## **Ways To Get Your Children To Get Along**

- 1. Set ground rules for acceptable behavior.**
- 2. Treat children individually, not equally.** Attempting to give equally to all the children, encourages comparisons by the children that often feel cheated. Instead of telling children you love them equally, privately point out their special qualities.
- 3. Make sure your children have their own space and time to do their own thing.**
- 4. Let children express their feelings about each other.** Often parents try to talk their child out of their feelings. For example, “You shouldn’t be mad at your sister.” Instead, acknowledge their anger or frustration.
- 5. Don’t typecast or play favorites.** Let each child be who they are. Do not label them.
- 6. Don’t compare your children.** Comparing siblings intensifies jealousy and envy. Comment on the behavior that displeases you. Avoid praising one child at another child’s expense.
- 7. Teach your kids to cooperate with each other rather than compete with each other.**
- 8. Don’t take sides.** Resist the urge to figure out who started the fight. The blamed child will want to get back at the other child. Instead of taking sides, comment on what you can observe.
- 9. Pay attention to what time of the day the conflicts occur.** A change in routine or scheduled activity could be the solution.
- 10. Teach the children positive ways to get attention from each other. Show them how to approach another child and ask them to play.**
- 11. Plan family activities that are fun for everyone.** It’s easier to work something out with someone when they have good experiences together.
- 12. The degree to which you interfere in your children’s arguments, depends on their ages.** The younger they are the more likely you’ll probably find yourself soothing and separating. Little children need help in learning to take turns and make compromises.
- 13. When your children are older, fighting is minor and not dangerous, let children work it out for themselves.** The more you stay out of minor fights, the sooner your children will learn to settle their differences themselves.
- 14. Step in when children cannot work it out or when fighting is dangerous.** Separate your children until they calm down. Try to set up a “win win” situation so each child gains something. For example, when your children want the same toy, suggest a game that they can play together.
- 15. Give yourself time.** It takes time and persistence for your children to learn new ways of getting along. Don’t give up. It may seem like it gets worse before it gets better.

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