



Four Tips for Soothing Sibling Rivalry

Why is sibling rivalry such a perplexing issue for so many parents? Simply because we can't *make* our kids love each other. That's completely out of our control.

Listed below are just a few of the many things we **can** control:

Whether we do extra things for kids who are battling with each other.

It's perfectly reasonable for a parent to say, "This is such a bummer. I'm tired-out from listening to you arguing with each other. I don't have the energy to drive you to your friends' houses."

Whether we allow certain items to remain in our homes. A friend of ours said to her kids, "This is so sad. Every time you guys play with that game you get in a fight. I gave it away so it wouldn't be a problem anymore."

Whether we allow their fighting to interrupt our responsibilities and time. Have you ever noticed how kids tend to argue and bicker with each other when you are trying to do something that requires your complete attention such as trying to talk on the phone? If you feel secure that your kids won't harm each other, it's probably best to say, "This is really draining my energy. You guys need to work this out or go your separate ways."

Whether we give them "bonding opportunities." When your kids start to battle with each other, experiment with saying, "Sounds like you guys need some bonding time." Then assign them some chores to give them an opportunity to feel the love.