

Problem solving essay sibling rivalry

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



Problem Solving Essay — Sibling Rivalry “ Am I my brother’s keeper? ” — Genesis 4: 9 Anybody who has a brother or even a sister understands just what that question really means. While most families are lucky enough to have siblings who get along, some even being the best of friends, it’s very common for brothers and sisters to fight. The love/hate pendulum often swings back and forth between siblings who will get along one minute and then detest another the next so it is up to the parents to know how to balance this constant motion and know when to step in. Sibling rivalry often starts even before the second child is born, and continues as the children grow and compete for everything from toys to attention. As children reach different stages of development, their evolving needs can significantly affect how they relate to one another (KidsHealth). It can be frustrating and upsetting to watch — and hear — your kids fight one another day in and day out. Learning why they fight, when to get involved, and how to help them get along are steps that will promote peace in your household. There are many different factors that cause siblings to fight. Siblings don't choose the family they are born into, don't choose each other, they may be of different sex, are probably of different age and temperament, and worst of all, they have to share the one person or the two people they most want for themselves, their parents (Child Development Institute, LLC). Evolving needs are a great factor in sibling squabbles, for example, toddlers are naturally protective of their toys and are learning to assert their will, which they will do at every turn. So when a baby brother/sister picks up the toddlers toy, the older sibling may react aggressively (KidsHealth). Elementary school aged children have a strong concept of fairness and equality and might not understand why

siblings of other ages are treated differently (KidsHealth). Teenagers, who are developing their own sense of individuality and independence, might resent taking care of younger siblings and responsibilities (KidsHealth). Each child has their own unique temperament and nature selects it at random. Some are abrasive, strong-willed, easily angered and irritable and others are naturally sweet-tempered, mild-mannered, docile and obedient (William Antonio Boyle, PhD). Each child's individual temperament including their mood, disposition and adaptability along with their unique personalities all play a huge part in how well they will get along with their siblings. If you have two children in the same household, close in age, but one child is quiet and laid back and the other easily rattled you might have more squabbles than you bargained for. The way that parents resolve problems and disagreements sets a strong example for children (KidsHealth). Working through conflicts in a respectful, productive way without aggression will increase the likelihood that your children will mimick your behavior when dealing with one another. On the other hand, if they are seeing two parents shouting, slamming doors and other aggressive behaviors they are likely to mimick that behavior as well. What to do when the fighting starts? Whenever possible, DON'T GET INVOLVED! While it may be common for brothers and sisters to fight, it's certainly not pleasant for anyone in the house (KidsHealth). Parents should only step in if there is a risk of physical harm. Children need to learn to work their problems out on their own. A parent who intervenes risks making it appear to one child that the other is being "protected" and then resentment sets in, then follows the "saved" child feeling like they can get away with more and now you have more problems

than when you started. If you're concerned by the language being used or name-calling then it's appropriate to "coach" the children through what they are feeling using more appropriate words, this is different than intervening or stepping in and separating (KidsHealth). It is important to let children know when they argue with siblings that the feelings they experience are normal, but that how they react and act in regards to those feelings are what's important. Don't dismiss or suppress your children's resentment or angry feelings. Contrary to what many people think, anger is not something we should try to avoid at all costs. It's an entirely normal part of being human, and it's certainly normal for siblings to get furious with one another. Children need adults in their lives to assure them that, moms and dads get angry too, but have learned control. This is the time to sit down, acknowledge the anger "I know you hate David right now but you cannot hit him with a stick" and talk it through with them (Child Development Institute, LLC). Simple ground rules can be set to help kids get along and prevent frequent fighting amongst siblings. Things such as no cursing, no name-calling, no yelling, no door slamming can all be made into house rules, teaching each child to be responsible for their own actions and be given a consequence if broken. Each child should have their own space and time to do their own thing by themselves, "me" time without a sibling tagging along or sharing 50/50. Make sure each child gets some one on one time with each parent doing something that they like to do. If you have children that frequently fight over the same things, make a schedule or create a family fun game so that everyone gets a turn when they can learn to work together. Let your children know that they are EACH important to you in their own special way and that

love doesn't come with limits. Sibling rivalry is an age-old problem that will affect every generation that has two or more children in one family. During these hectic years as children cope with disputes, they are also learning very important lifelong skills such as how to value another person's perspective, how to compromise and negotiate, and how to control aggressive impulses. The most important thing to remember about sibling rivalry is that in small healthy doses I believe it is perfectly normal and completely beneficial to the development of the child. In more severe cases that cause disruption to the family or mental or emotional problems to either the child or other children in the house than professional help should be sought. Works Cited Boyle PhD, William Antonio. " Sibling Rivalry. " Angelfire. June 2007. Web. 04 Apr. 2011. " Handling Sibling Rivalry. " Child Development Institute. 2010. Web. 03. May. 2011. " Sibling Rivalry. " KidsHealth. Nemours. December 2009. Web. 04 Apr. 2011.