

17 Positive Parenting Responses to Siblings Fighting in the moment of conflict



1. Describe the scene without taking sides, then invite problem solving: "I see two kids and only one cookie. How can you solve this problem?"
2. Invite children to share their gripes constructively using a [Bug and a Wish](#).
3. Coach children to say, "Stop Means Stop" when things have gone too far.
4. Invite each child to share feelings, then acknowledge feelings and invite problem solving, "How can you solve this problem?"
5. Coach each to communicate their needs more effectively: To Jun, say, "It looks like you are angry and annoyed that Paul was bothering you while you were trying to read, is that right? What can you say so that he feels better about leaving you alone?" And to Paul: "It looks like you really want to play with Jun, is that right? How can you ask him with words?" Then invite a Do-Over.
6. Invite children to choose something from their [Wheel of Choice](#).
7. Invite children to choose a more acceptable way of expressing anger with [Anger Wheel of Choice](#).
8. Tolerate mild conflict while being a "Missing Skills Detective" – notice what skills children lack and teach skills during a calm time.
9. Show faith then give space: "I have faith that you can find a solution that works for both of you. I'll be over here if you need me."
10. Ask, "Which one of you would like to put this problem on our family meeting agenda?"
11. Invite (don't force) children to take a break or a "[Positive Time Out](#)" until they can both calm down.
12. Remove toy/item in dispute and tell children, "I'll keep (the item) until you can find a solution. Let me know when you have one."
13. Use [Curiosity Questions](#): E.g., What happened? How do you feel? What do you want to do now? How can you help your sister/brother feel better?
14. Distraction/Redirection (for 3 and under): E.g., "Hey! Let's go over here and play with the train set."
15. Supervision (for 3 and under): E.g., Stay nearby so you can intervene before mischief happens.
16. Model what TO do (for 3 and under): E.g., Say, "Gentle hands" and show child what gentle hands look and feel like (over and over again.)
17. Say to children, "[I Need A Hug!](#)" as a way of distracting, connecting, and helping everyone to calm down so they focus on solutions constructively.

