

# HOW TO DIFFUSE ARGUMENTS BEFORE THEY TURN VIOLENT

## BEFORE:

### MAKE SURE EACH CHILD'S BASIC NEEDS ARE MET

It may sound obvious, but making sure your kids are fed, rested, and relatively calm will make a huge difference in them playing nicely together or huge blow-ups.



### PROVIDE MOMENTS OF REST AND RETREAT FROM SIBLINGS

Sometimes the best way to break up an argument is to give your child a physical break from their siblings somewhere calm and quiet.

### CREATE INTENTIONAL ONE-ON-ONE CONNECTION TIME BETWEEN SIBLINGS

Practicing connection time between your kids when things are peaceful will help them reset when they feel arguments coming on.

### CREATE CALM DOWN SPACES FOR EACH CHILD

Special spaces set up ahead of time in your home will give your kids safe, private calm-down areas to retreat to whenever they are upset and need a reset.

### HAVE CHILDREN MAKE A PLAN TOGETHER

You can help your kids create a plan ahead of time that is simple enough for them to remember in the moment, and gives them both a say in what they're doing together.

### GIVE CHILDREN SCRIPTS THEY CAN USE IN THE MOMENT

Practicing what to say ahead of time will give your kids confidence to solve their own problems when faced with a sibling argument.

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## DURING:

### INCREASE PARENT CONNECTION OUT OF THE MOMENT

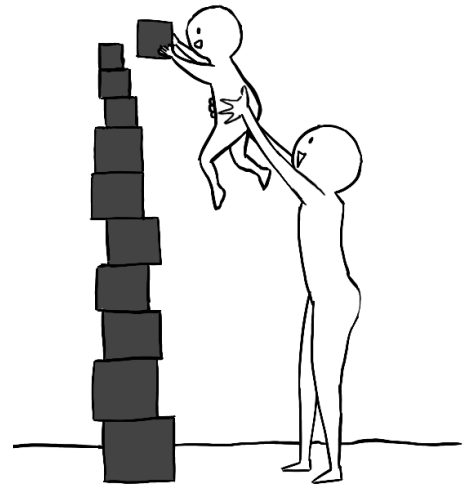
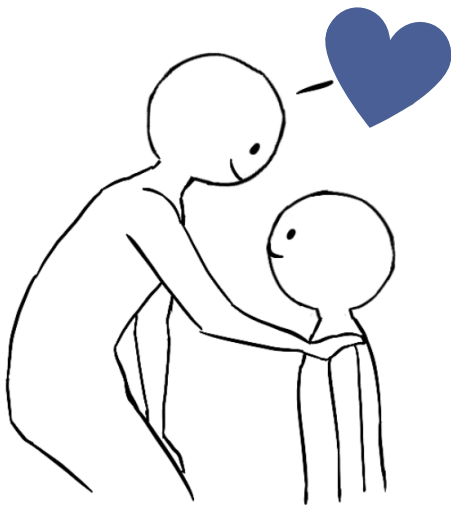
Give your kids your full attention during connection moments, and make sure that your positive interactions with your kids outweigh the negative ones.

### INCLUDE MOVEMENT TO BREAK UP ARGUMENTS

Movement breaks can be just the thing your child needs to provide the sensory input they need to calm them down in the moment.

### LIMIT HOW LONG CHILDREN PLAY TOGETHER

Paying attention to how long your kids can happily play together before a fight breaks out will give you guidelines when planning the day.



# HOW TO DIFFUSE ARGUMENTS BEFORE THEY TURN VIOLENT

## AFTER:

### WORK THROUGH MISTAKES WITH YOUR CHILDREN

By getting down on their level and working through mistakes with them, you are able to create a safe place for kids to be open and honest and truly learn from their mistakes.



# HOW TO GET KIDS TO PLAY NICELY

## TALK WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THE BIG FEELINGS

Discuss big emotions with your kids that might come up when they play with their siblings. These include positive as well as negative feelings, and will help them be more aware of their feelings.



## EACH SIBLING IS UNIQUE

Help kids recognize the uniqueness in each personality. This helps them learn that they might like to play differently, and they may have to compromise or take turns.

## HAVE FAMILY HUDDLES

Create plans together in family huddles. This gives all members an equal voice and a safe space to discuss anything that might come up or any decisions that can be made as a family.



## TALK OUT HOW YOU HANDLED A CONFLICT

After problems or arguments, meet as a family to reflect on what worked and what didn't. Your kids can mend their relationship and learn what to do next time.

## IDEAS FOR PLAY

Teach kids to make a list of play ideas that each of them likes to do together and separately so they always have something to refer to.



## ARM SIBLINGS WITH PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Teach each child problem solving skills ahead of time so they know how to work through struggles. This will help them build a stronger bond.

## PLAN FOR MISTAKES AND "OOPS"

Mistakes will happen, so helping your kids be prepared for them and knowing they lead to better future choices and growth can help them seem less threatening.



## SHOW THEM HOW TO PLAY

Play with your kids and Model "How" to play together - spending time playing with your kid and showing them how they can do that on their own, too will help pave the way for them to play independently when you really need them to.



## STAY CLOSE TO YOUR PLAYING KIDS AT FIRST

Staying close to your kids while they are still learning to play together will give them a way to slowly get used to playing on their own without you.



## RETHINK YOUR IDEAS OF PLAY

Show your kids that 'play' doesn't always have to be a traditional board game. Play can take lots of different forms.



# HOW TO TALK SO SIBLINGS WILL LISTEN

## INSTEAD OF...

STOP! DON'T

GO AWAY!

DON'T TOUCH  
MY STUFF!

GIVE ME THAT!

I WON,  
HA HA HA!

## TRY SAYING...

I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN YOU...  
WHEN YOU DO "X" IT MAKES ME  
FEEL...

CAN YOU PLEASE NOT ...?

WHEN CAN WE MAKE A PLAN TO  
PLAY?

WILL YOU GIVE ME SPACE?

I WILL PLAY WITH YOU LATER.

I AM WORRIED ABOUT...

I AM AFRAID YOU WILL...

WILL YOU SHOW ME HOW TO...

I WAS USING THAT, YOU CAN  
USE IT WHEN...

GOOD GAME. CAN WE PLAY  
AGAIN?

THAT WAS FUN.

I LIKE THAT GAME.

# HOW TO TALK SO SIBLINGS WILL LISTEN

## INSTEAD OF...

YOU'RE MEAN,  
YOU'RE STUPID!

IT'S NOT FAIR!

THEY ALWAYS  
/ NEVER...!

YOU'RE NOT THE  
BOSS OF ME!

MOMMMM!!!!

## TRY SAYING...

I DON'T LIKE WHAT YOU DID.  
IT UPSET ME WHEN...  
IT HURTS MY FEELINGS WHEN...  
I'M UPSET BECAUSE...

I FEEL LIKE (SIBLING) GETS  
MORE/LESS...  
CAN I HAVE MORE/LESS (ITEM)  
LIKE (SIBLING)?

WHEN WILL IT BE MY TURN?  
I'D LIKE TO DO THIS WHEN YOU  
ARE DONE.  
THIS MAKES ME FEEL...

I WANT TO HELP MAKE A DECISION.  
LET'S TAKE TURNS MAKING THE RULES.  
I THINK WE SHOULD BOTH HAVE A SAY.

LET'S FIGURE THIS OUT BY OURSELVES.  
WHAT WOULD MOM SAY IF WE ASKED  
HER?  
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIX THIS, LET'S  
GET MOM TO HELP.