

The Top 10 Ways to Keep Your Kids From Fighting

Fighting among siblings is as natural as the changing of the seasons. All parents will have to deal with it. There are some simple things we can do to limit fighting and make it tolerable:

1. Ignore Their Fighting

Fighting is often a way for kids to get you to notice them. If you ignore their fighting (unless weapons are involved) there will be less incentive for them to do it.

2. Treat Your Kids the Same When it Comes to Fighting

If you get into who started things, you may be training your kids to be victims and bullies. Put them in the same boat and don't take sides.

3. Give your kids positive reinforcement when they are cooperating.

Let them know that they're doing a wonderful job when they get along. This one's easy to forget but vitally important. Give them attention when they're behaving the way you want.

4. Limit your own fighting and arguing. Your kids will learn how to be peaceful from you. Don't expect them to do it well if you don't show them how.

5. Create an environment of cooperation.

Do projects together as a family that involve cooperation. Talk about how important it is for the family to cooperate. Avoid games or activities that promote fighting in your kids.

6. Train your kids in peacemaking when they're away from conflict.

Talk to your kids about fighting at a time when they're relaxed and open. Ask them about what other options they might have taken rather than to hit their sister. Help them to brainstorm better solutions.

7. Avoid punishing your kids in general.

Punishing kids usually just creates angry kids who are more likely to fight. While some punishment may

be inevitable, do your best to give choices and alternatives. Punishment may bring short term solutions but will also bring long term problems.

8. Control how you react to their fighting.

When you must intervene, make sure you stay calm. If you're angry and shaming, you actually make it more likely that fighting will occur again.

9. Limit the number of fighting opportunities you give your kids.

Think about what has the potential to start fights. Don't buy a red ball and a blue ball, this may result in a fight by your kids. Buy two red balls--no fight. Don't have them close to each other when they're tired and hungry if you can help it.

10. Love your kids for all they're worth

Every day tell them you love them and more importantly, show them. Kids who feel loved are the least likely to fight. This won't eliminate it, but the alternative isn't pretty at all.

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