

♥ ♥ ♥ Sibling Tips ♥ ♥ ♥

When a new baby is born:

- Make sure your older child is with someone he or she really likes while mom is in the hospital.
- When your child comes to the hospital to see you and the baby, have your arms free (baby in the crib or in someone else's arms) so you can give your child a big hug and kiss.
- Have a gift for the older child, since the baby is sure to get many.

All children want one on one time with parents.

- One of the best ways to decrease sibling rivalry is to have special time with each of your children.
- This time does not have to be an all day event, and it doesn't have to cost money.
- You can have special time for 20 minutes a few times a week where you focus your undivided attention on one child. Follow their interests (not TV) and enjoy yourself. This is not time to multi-task.

Tips from Dr. T Berry Brazelton's book *Understanding Sibling Rivalry*:

- Assure the younger child that the older one doesn't mean to reject her, but needs time with friends on his own now.
- Let older children gravitate to friends their own age.
- Don't pressure the older child to nurture a younger one (she is more likely to do so on her own).
- Avoid criticizing.
- Commend an older child who does care for a younger one.
- Leave as much problem solving as possible to the children.
- Make sure there are regular mealtimes and other family rituals that bring siblings together.
- Plan regular family meetings. Lay down rules, chores, expectations, and consequences; these help children feel part of the working family.
- Don't expect their conflicts to go away. Ever.
- Do expect them to stand up for each other, to make sacrifices for each other, and to care deeply about each other.
- Avoid comparisons, and avoid babying the baby, or over-praising the older one.