



4-H School-Age Child Care
University of California Cooperative Extension

PARENT STYLES II

Tips for Busy Parents

SIBLING RIVALRY

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Anytime two or more children are together, there is the potential for fighting.

Your children will test their behavior and words on your family. This is a natural way they learn to deal with people. Your children's normal bickering should be ignored.

There are, however, times when you need to intervene:

- ★ When physical safety is threatened.
- ★ When your children cannot resolve their differences alone.

Rivalry and fighting among siblings can become habits which are often difficult to break. Here are some helpful tips:

- ★ **Avoid comparing one child with another.** Competition can increase rivalry. Try treating each child uniquely.
- ★ **Let your children decide whether they want to share.** Children don't always want to "share" everything. They like to feel ownership.

- ★ **Try to spend individual time with each child.** Give each child time according to need.
- ★ **Praise your children for who they are as well as what they do.**
- ★ **Help your children accept their frustrations.** Help them solve their problems.
- ★ **Praise your children for any improved behavior.** Coping with their frustrations is a lifelong process.

Remember that your language affects how your children communicate. Use appropriate language and a caring attitude when you talk.



Resource: University of Nebraska, Lincoln, *"Enriching Family Relationships"*. Fabert & Nazlish, *Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together So You Can Live Too*, Avon Books, 1988.

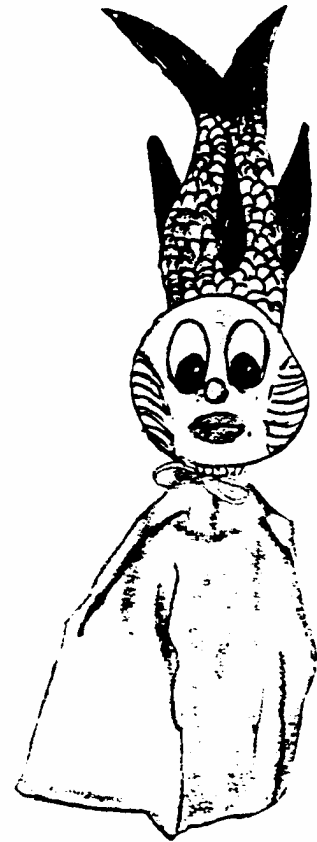
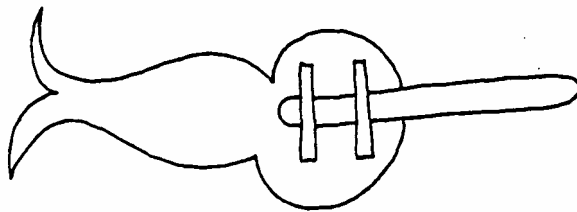
PUPPET MAKING

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ☆ Scissors
- ☆ Color crayons/ marking pens/ chalk or paint
- ☆ Popsicle sticks
- ☆ Glue stick or glue
- ☆ Yarn or string

Optional Items:

Paper holes from a hole puncher
Construction paper or colored paper



WHAT TO DO:

- ★ Make stick puppets by coloring and cutting out a figure. You can add yarn for hair, hole punches for eyes and glue onto the puppet.
- ★ When your children argue, help them create a puppet show re-enacting the disagreement.
- ★ After they complete their "*shows*", talk about how they resolved their differences. Ask questions like:
 - ☆ How did each individual feel about what the other said? About what the other did?
 - ☆ Did the children like the outcome?
 - ☆ What other possibilities could there be for outcomes?
 - ☆ When future arguments occur, remind the children what they learned from their "*puppet show*" about getting along.