

A FINE PARENT  
presents



## *How to Effectively Deal with* **SIBLING RIVALRY**

Based on the book "*Peaceful Parent, Happy Siblings*"  
by Dr. Laura Markham

### THE NEW BABY

#### AS SEEN BY PARENTS

A gift for the older child  
A friend for life  
A way to multiply love



#### AS SEEN BY SIBLINGS

I'm being replaced  
I have competition  
My parents will divide  
their love

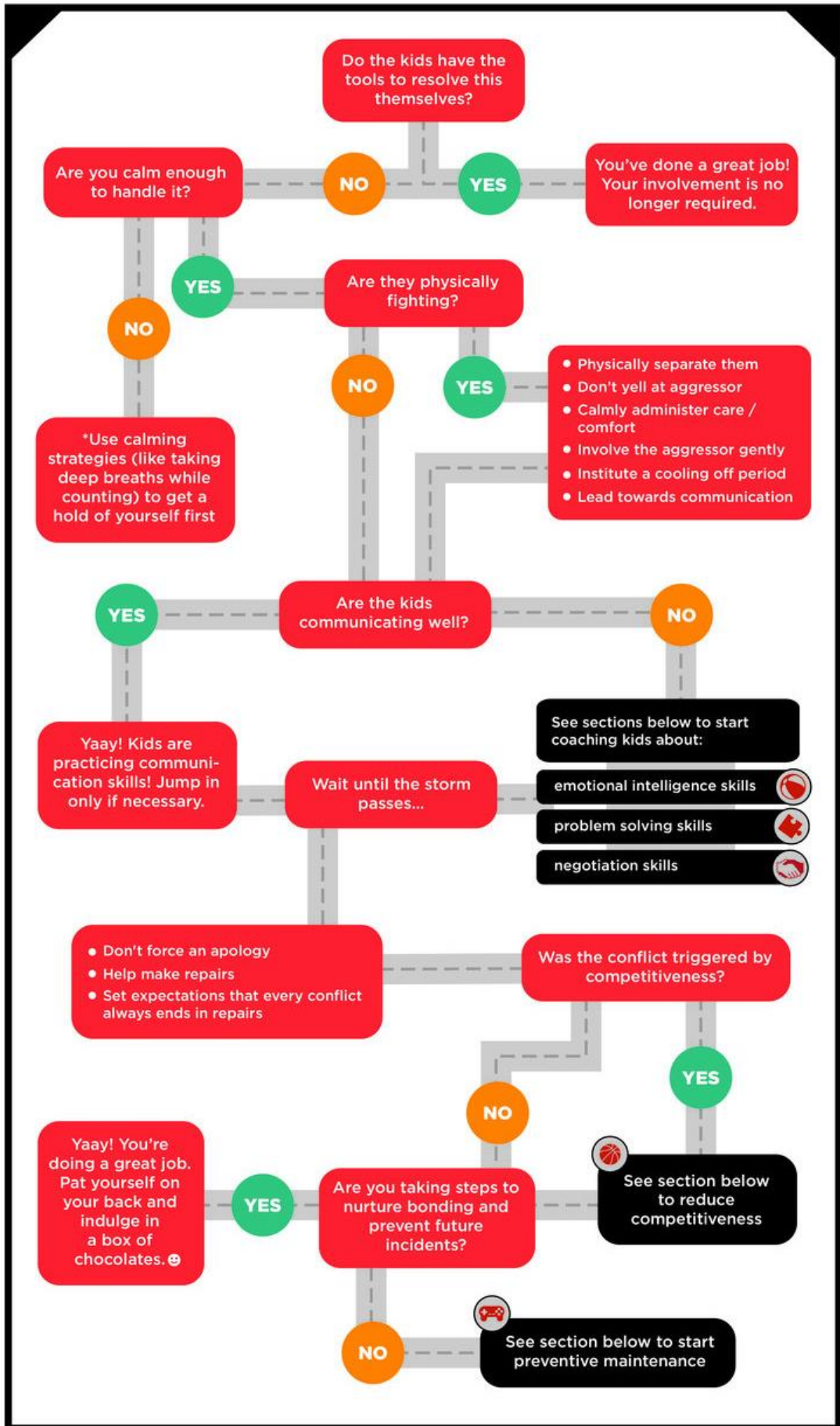


**Sibling rivalry is not just normal, but expected.**

Start your children's relationship on the right foot and provide the right tools so they can appreciate each other and become friends for life.

# WHAT CAN PARENTS DO WHEN SIBLING RIVALRY ERUPTS?

Based on the book: "Peaceful Parent, Happy Siblings", by Dr. Laura Markham  
 For more details, please visit: [fineparent.com/sibling-rivalry](http://fineparent.com/sibling-rivalry)





## TEACHING KIDS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS

**Goal:** Help kids understand their emotions so they can regulate their behavior. E.g., when big brother grabs the ball, little brother will neither cry nor hit, but will say *"I'm still playing with that. Can I have it back, please?"*

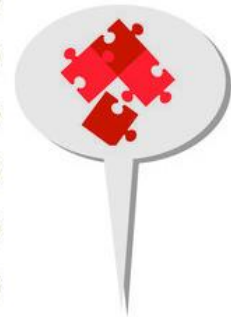
- ☑ Empathize with kids emotions.
- ☑ Teach / model blame-free communication.
- ☑ Teach each child to:
  - ▶ identify and state their needs
  - ▶ listen and respond to their siblings' needs
  - ▶ set firm limits



## 11 STEPS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING SUCCESS

**Goal:** Help kids solve problems that aren't sorted through simple communication. (At first, you will help them through these steps. Over time, they will do it themselves.)

- 1** Stay calm
- 2** Remember: the "problem" is the situation, not the other party
- 3** If the conflict is over an object, nobody gets it until resolution
- 4** If a family rule already exists for this situation, the rule prevails
- 5** Each party comes up with potential solutions
- 6** Write down every solution. No solution is too silly
- 7** Go through solutions to eliminate those not agreed by all
- 8** Add new solutions and compromises as they come up
- 9** Repeat until converged on a win-win solution
- 10** On agreement, ensure its fair implementation
- 11** Add it to the family rule book if applicable.







# TEACHING KIDS NEGOTIATION SKILLS

**Goal: Proactively teach kids skills necessary to navigate the inevitable conflicts of daily life.**

- Trading:** "I'll give you this for that"
- Sweetening the deal:** "I really want that, so I'll trade you this, this and this"
- Taking turns:** "I can't give you this now, but you can have your turn after 5 minutes"
- Taking turns and sweetening the deal:** "If you let me take a turn first, your turn can be 5 minutes longer"
- Dividing the treat:** "If you divide, I pick."
- Teamwork:** "Let's clean up together, so we can go to the park sooner"
- Making agreements or rules:** "If you promise not to disturb my phone calls, I promise not to bother you while watching TV"
- Writing agreements:** "Let's put that down on paper and sign on it"



# TIPS TO EASE SIBLING COMPETITION

**Goal:** Reduce insecurity and competitiveness among siblings.



Acknowledge and empathize with any feelings of unfairness, without actually agreeing



Don't get hooked into comparison and competition



Buy material possessions based on need. Give love unconditionally



Don't assign roles based on gender or age



Avoid labels



Appreciate/praise each child individually



Make losing palatable



Find games that require teamwork, instead of competition



Discourage gloating



When possible, allow kids to "defeat" you instead of siblings

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# TOOLS TO NURTURE BONDING AND PREVENT FUTURE SIBLING RIVALRY

**Goal:** Strengthen the family bond to nip sibling rivalry before it erupts.



Honor individuality.  
Celebrate differences



Fill each child's bucket (often)  
with love and attention



Talk about how lucky you  
are to have each other



Acknowledge/praise when  
you notice kids helping  
each other



Work in teams for chores



Embrace rituals and traditions  
that foster bonding



Notice and promote activities  
where kids play together



Avoid interrupting happy play



Encourage oxytocin-induc-  
ing activities (e.g., laughing,  
singing, dancing, rough-  
housing etc.)



Unite kids in a team and pit  
them against yourself



Put your kids in charge of  
projects together



Interrupt unkindness



Help kids establish limits and  
safety rules for play fights



Ensure each gets some per-  
sonal space



Commit to a no-blame  
household and win-win  
solutions