

Coping with Sibling Rivalry

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I. Introduction.

A. Parent burnout is a real thing.

B. Stages of burnout.

1. Physiological.

2. Social.

3. Intellectual.

4. Psycho-emotional.

5. Introspective.

II. Response to burnout.

A. Make a time and energy audit.

1. A child's relationship with God comes first.

2. All other activities are listed until energy has been exhausted.

B. If we do not do an energy audit, little things will be frustrating.

C. Establish a workable system of justice. There must be reasonable boundaries in a family as there is in a society.

D. Sometimes the end target of sibling rivalry is the parent.

1. Kids use sibling rivalry to get children involved.

2. Control circumstances, and lay down limits.

III. Myths.

A. Siblings should not naturally love each other.

B. Everybody else's children behave really well.

C. Children stop fighting if they are treated equally. The most important thing is to treat them fair.

D. Brothers and sisters will be reasonable if enough time is spent being reasonable.

E. Fighting between siblings is the same as it was.

F. Never use spanking. Spanking that is used as a form of loving discipline can help.

Applications Questions:

1. Make an energy audit. What are the first three things on your list?

2. Write down a rough system of justice that you can communicate to your children clearly. What are the first five expectations you have of your children?

3. Why would siblings fight to get attention?
