Sibling Fighting

Many parents and carers report that one of the most stressful issues that they have to deal with is fighting between brothers and sisters. Here are some useful tips to follow in an effort to reduce sibling rivalry.

SET GROUND RULES EARLY

Although you may feel that your child is too young to understand your rules it is important to start early so that your child learns from an early age what your expectations are. Be clear.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children learn from others. Act as a positive role model for your child. If you yell, scream or become physically violent towards others then your child will learn to believe that this is an appropriate way to deal with conflict.

AVOID COMPARING YOUR CHILDREN

Comparing your children can increase tension within their relationship and may cause further conflict.

DO NOT ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO FIGHT BACK

This is dangerous and can lead to injury. As a parent/carer it is your responsibility to act in a way which prevents your child from coming to harm.

TALK TO YOUR CHILD TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THEIR FEELINGS

Everyone feels frustrated, angry or upset from time to time. This is normal. Help your child to find alternative ways to express these feelings in a safe way by talking to them when they are calm. Explain why it is important to remain calm. Explore ways that can help them to calm down when they are feeling upset such as counting to ten, taking deep breaths, using a feelings diary or scribble pad, or walking away from a situation before it reaches escalation point. Listen to both children individually to acknowledge their feelings and encourage them to understand what led to the fight so that it can be prevented in the future.

USE POSITIVE REWARDS TO ENCOURAGE GOOD BEHAVIOUR

When you see your child respecting others, using their skills to avoid conflict, getting on with other people then praise them to encourage more of this acceptable behaviour.

STAY CALM!!