



# SMART PARENTING *for* CHILD

Dr. Godbole's Chiranjeev Child Development Center

## Handling Sibling Rivalry

The term sibling refers to children who are related and living in the same family. Sibling rivalry has existed as long as families. Think back to the dreadful time Cinderella had with her stepsisters! Siblings don't choose the family they are born into, don't choose each other. They may be of different sex, are probably of different age and temperament, and worst of all, they have to share their parents they most want for themselves.

### Action plan to restore peace and harmony:

- Prepare your elder child before a new baby is born.
- Don't make comparisons. Each child should be given his own goals.
- It's normal for siblings to get furious with one another. This is the time to sit down, acknowledge the anger and talk it through.
- If elder one goes towards the baby, mother jumps in, saying: 'No! Don't!' This intensifies jealousy. If



you are overprotective, your toddler hears the message that the baby is more important. Instead, put the baby where you can clearly see him, and allow elder one to approach little baby without meddling in.

- Parents think that saying 'you are my big child' is a praise. But he/she doesn't want to be big. Instead praise in other ways like: 'you are being really helpful'.

- The elder one wants one-to-one special time with his mummy. Make elder one feel important by saying: 'Mummy needs your help.'
- Develop a system for taking turns. Plan the games which can be played together.
- Give children the independence to resolve their own conflicts. Parents have to judge when to step in, w.r.t. inequality in terms of age, sex & strength.
- Let the elder child choose what you do in special 'me and Mummy' time.

**Take a step back, Press pause, and force yourself to be quiet.**