



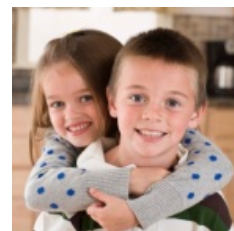
Types of Sibling Relationships

Almost 80% of children grow up with at least one brother or sister. Brothers and sisters teach each other how to get along with others. Even if they do not always get along with each other, siblings play very positive roles in each other's lives.

Read on to learn more about how siblings get along the way they do.

What is a sibling?

In today's world there are many types of families (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/types-of-families/pages/Different-Types-of-Families-A-Portrait-Gallery.aspx>). Besides the traditional mother-and-father family, children are being raised by grandparents, other relatives, foster parents (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/types-of-families/pages/Foster-Parenting.aspx>), single parents (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/types-of-families/pages/Single-Parent-Families.aspx>), or same-sex parents (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/types-of-families/pages/Gay-and-Lesbian-Parents.aspx>). As a result, brothers and sisters come in many forms.



- **Traditional siblings** are brothers and sisters with the same mother and father.
- **Half siblings** share either the same mother or the same father.
- **Stepsiblings** (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/types-of-families/pages/Stepsiblings.aspx>) are brothers and sisters who are not related biologically, but whose parents are married to each other. No matter what type of siblings they are, their relationships with each other are important.

Why siblings get along the way they do

Many things affect relationships between brothers and sisters. Some of these are:

Personality

Parents often wonder how children from the same parents growing up in the same home can be so different. In fact, siblings are sometimes more different than alike. Even if siblings are alike in some ways, it is important for parents to recognize the unique personality of each of their children.

Age

Children of different ages behave differently. For example, younger children may fight in more physical ways. As they get older, their fighting may be more like arguments (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/Family-Arguments.aspx>).

Gender

Gender affects relationships as well. Many parents find that children of the same sex compete with each other more than do opposite-sex children.

Family size, spacing, and birth order

No two children view the family the same way. An only child's experience is different from that of a child in a larger family. Children who are less than 2 years apart sometimes have more conflict than children who are spaced further apart.

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[Back to Top](#)