SIBLING/PARENT RELATIONSHIPS
BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONS

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors
WHAT WE NEED TO CONSIDER

• What is a relationship?
• Different types of relationships
• Factors affecting sibling relationships
• Marital relationship
• Sibling rivalry
• How to deal with conflict
• Family communication and strengthening the relationship
WHAT IS A RELATIONSHIP?

• A relationship is a connection between two individuals

• Many types of relationships exist including: marital, parent-child, sibling, friendship, and romantic

• A relationship influences beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and feelings toward each other

• A relationship is defined by different degrees of closeness
DISCUSSION

Types of Relationships

- Sibling-Sibling Relationship
- Sibling-Parent Relationship
- Parent-Parent Relationship
UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

• Usually the longest relationship an individual will experience in their lifetime
• We cannot choose our siblings as we do our friends
• Usually one of daily intimate contact within the home
• Siblings often see themselves as equal
• Siblings share a long history as well as a lifetime of memories and stories
FACTORS AFFECTING SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

- Birth order
- Age Spacing
- Gender
- Temperament
- Parenting Behaviors
- Marital relationship
BIRTH ORDER: FIRST BORN

- Almost everything a firstborn does breaks new ground
- First to be born
- First to toilet train
- First to attend school
- First to drive
FIRST BORN RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR YOUNGER SIBLINGS

• Becomes leader of children in the family
• The “Little Boss”
• Protector outside the home
• Younger siblings often idolize even if tormented by the firstborn
BIRTH ORDER: MIDDLE CHILD

- They may not take on the same role as their older sibling
- May feel that there is favoritism toward their younger sibling
- Middle child may feel invisible and left out
- Middle children may rebel against the family rules in order to seek attention
MIDDLE CHILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR SIBLINGS

• Compete with older sibling
• Work hard to stand out and be noticed
• Employ non-aggressive strategies to get what they want
• Nurture younger siblings
BIRTH ORDER: YOUNGEST CHILD

- Special status as the baby of the family
- Youngest child is fussed over and pampered
- May get away with behaviors that other siblings can’t
- Often believes that they are not taken seriously
YOUNGEST CHILD/OLDER SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

- Team up with one sibling or another
- May act helpless when they are not
- Might exploit the baby role
- Might become more independent
Children are very tuned into their parents’ relationship.

Keeping the parents’ relationship healthy is crucial for the well-being of the family.

When the family environment is stable, children feel secure and reassured.

Sibling conflict and aggressive behavior becomes more frequent with marital discord.

When a parents’ relationship is under strain, children can feel anxious and insecure.

It’s important to work out problems and seek help, if needed.
WAYS TO MANAGE CONFLICT BETWEEN SIBLINGS

• Allow your older child to assist in the care of the younger one.
• Give your children permission to disagree.
• Let your children know that violence is unacceptable.
• Don't compare your children in front of each other.
• Set aside personal areas for each child.
• Set aside private time for each child.
REMEMBER

Children need:

• To feel good about themselves
• To be heard
• To have their feelings validated
• To know there are boundaries created by those who care about them
REMEmber

With Your Partner

• Discuss what causes misunderstandings
• Use effective communication skills
• Know when to get help
• Recreate intimacy
Building Good Relationships

• Show affection
• Do things together
• Share your feelings
• Show your appreciation
• Be flexible
SUMMARY

• Characteristics of the sibling relationship are unique

• Factors such as birth order, gender and temperament affect sibling relationships

• The parent’s relationship affects the sibling relationship

• Parents and caregivers must help children learn to manage conflicts

• Children need to feel good about themselves, be heard and have their feelings validated
QUESTIONS?
RESOURCES

• Military Community Services
• Chaplain and Local Clergy
• Military OneSource  (800) 342-9647
• TRICARE  www.Tricare.mil
• Behavioral Health Services
THANK YOU