



# **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



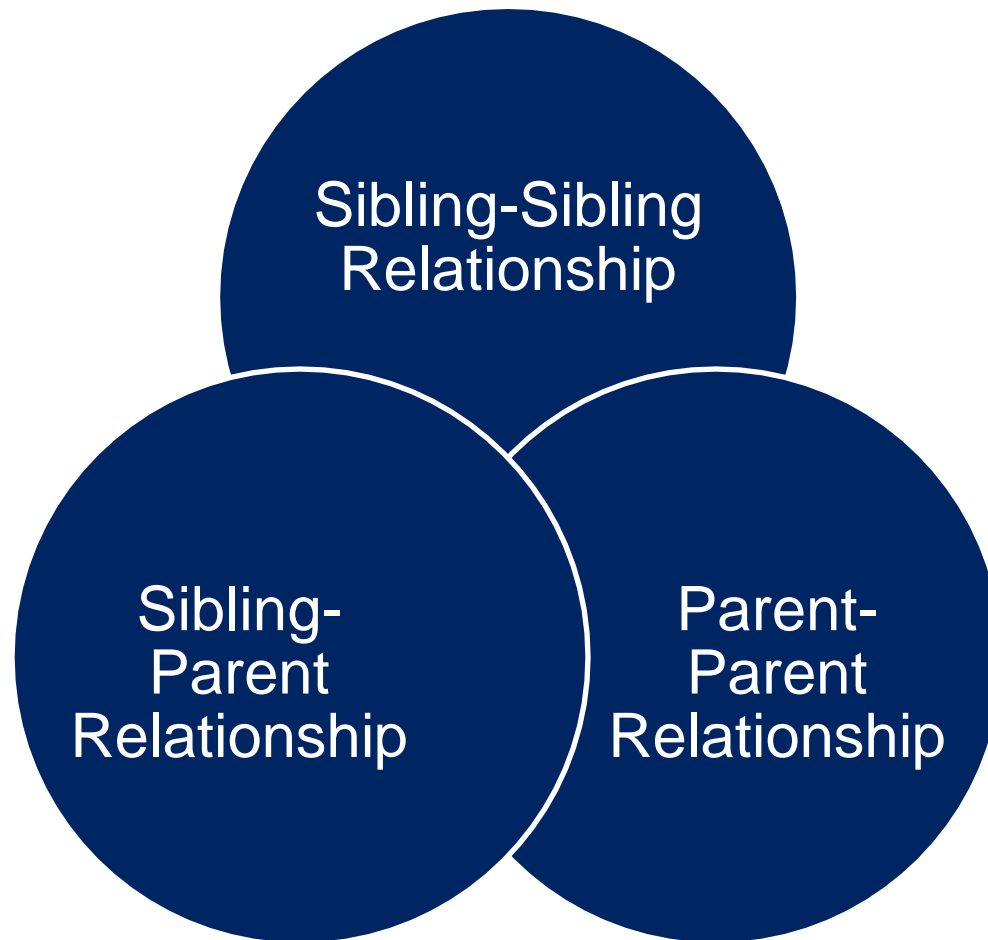
# WHAT IS A RELATIONSHIP?

- 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



# 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: 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



# MARITAL RELATIONSHIP

- 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



## 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



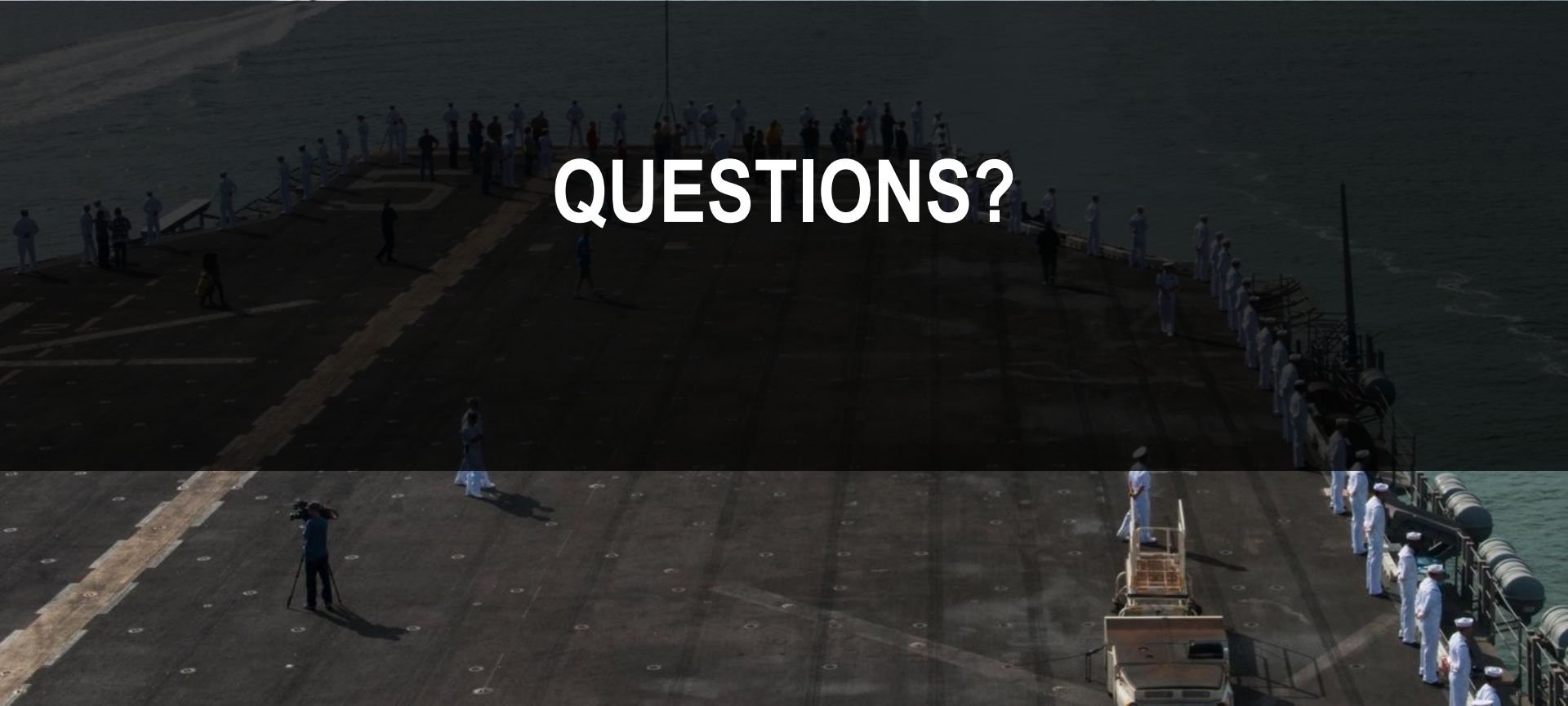
# SUMMARY

- 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](http://www.Tricare.mil)
- Behavioral Health Services





**THANK YOU**