



## **Working out Sibling and Friend Fighting**

by Judy Arnall, Certified Family Life Educator

"Give me that!" "No, dumb face!" "No fair, it's my turn!" "Get lost!"  
Sound familiar? This happens every day, in every house with children, everywhere in the world.

How to respectfully work out issues between squabbling friends or siblings?  
Easy. You are the adult that can facilitate the conflicted parties talking to each other. The adult is the facilitator, not the judge and jury! You don't need to find out "who dunnit." You are going to get them to "resolve it".

### **1. Active Listen to each person in front of the other person**

"You felt \_\_\_\_ (insert feeling word here) because \_\_\_\_ (insert their situation)."  
And Jason, you felt \_\_\_\_ (insert feeling word here) because \_\_\_\_ (insert their situation)."

## 2. Have them repeat their feeling/annoyance in an "I-statement." "Hey, I feel annoyed when I wait here forever and you won't give up the game."

"Well, I feel pressured when you want the game and I haven't gone up the level I am aiming for."

## 3. "What are your options?"

Surrender, Leave, or Problem-solve



- Surrender is letting it go.
- Leaving the situation, physically, or emotionally
- Problem-solving is brainstorming solutions, then evaluating them, choosing a few and writing them out.

## 4. What are some other ways to work it out?

Generate class/family/group "rules" from them

Rock, paper, scissors

Pick a number from one to ten

Put names/ideas in a hat and draw one

Flip a coin with heads or tails

"Reserved" or name cards

"Bigger person" button

Time schedules, sign-up sheets, contracts

Tokens

Suggest/reject volley

Offer more desired alternative to get what you want

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