Family Training Series
We Are All In This Family: Supporting Siblings
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Rob Heffer, Ph.D., Clinical Professor
Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences
Texas A&M University
Supporting Siblings

• Common Issues
  ■ Over-Identification
  ■ Embarrassment
  ■ Guilt
  ■ Shame
  ■ Resentment
  ■ Isolation, Loneliness, & Loss
  ■ Increased Responsibilities
  ■ Pressure to Achieve / Excel / Fulfill “Dreams”
Supporting Siblings

- **Common Needs / Experiences**
  - Developmentally-Appropriate Information
    - Determine Current Knowledge
    - Clarify Possible Misconceptions
    - Answer Questions
    - Convey Open Attitude & Availability to Talk
    - Include in Appointments with Providers
  
  - Prepare for Future
    - Siblings’ future / expectations
    - Special needs person’s future / expectations
Supporting Siblings

• Common Needs / Experiences (con’t.)
  • Unique Personal & Family Experiences
    ✦ Maturity, Responsibilities, Perspective
    ✦ Self-Concept & Social Competence
    ✦ Awareness, Insight, & Appreciation
    ✦ Tolerance & Acceptance
    ✦ Joy, Pride, & Satisfaction
    ✦ Advocacy
    ✦ Loyalty & Commitment
    ✦ Planning & Problem-Solving
Supporting Siblings

• Conversation Prompts
  Challenges & “Benefits”
  
  - Pre-School Ages
    Explanations; Differences in Behavior /Routine
  
  - Elementary School Ages
    Misconceptions; Beliefs; Relationships
  
  - Intermediate / Middle School Ages
    More Detailed Questions / Explanations; Relationships
  
  - High School Ages
    Implications; More Detailed Questions / Explanations
  
  - Adults
    Roles; Responsibilities; Implications; Planning
Supporting Siblings

Resources:

• Sibshops: Workshops for Siblings of Children with Special Needs, Revised Edition

• The Sibling Survival Guide: Indispensable Information for Brothers and Sisters of Adults With Disabilities

• Thicker Than Water: Essays by Adult Siblings of People with Disabilities

• Special Siblings: Growing Up with Someone with a Disability, Revised Edition

• The Sibling Slam Book: What It's Really Like To Have A Brother Or Sister With Special Needs

• Being the Other One: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister Who Has Special Needs

• I Have Needs Too!: Supporting the Child Whose Sibling Has Special Needs

• Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs

• Living with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs: A Book for Sibs