



How to Deal With New-Baby Jealousy

Prepare yourself for the common and perfectly natural feelings of jealousy that big brothers and sisters may feel.

By Scholastic Parents Staff



Could there possibly be any parent out there who isn't prepared for a show of sibling rivalry when a new baby comes along? Well, remarkably, quite a few of us still harbor the idea that it won't happen in our house. In fact, you may be more concerned about whether you can possibly love a second child as much as you love your first. How could the big one feel jealous when you've done everything possible to include and prepare him? Readyng the new baby's room has been a family project, as has shopping for baby clothes and supplies. Even the bassinet in your bedroom has been carefully explained, and a toy one now sits in the family room. Your eldest is excited and

looking forward to being the best helper. What is more, you have always talked about the importance of sharing with other children. Doing so with a new sibling should just come naturally, right? WRONG!

Jealousy Is Only Natural

No matter how diligent and accomplished you may be in meeting life's challenges, this blip can't be avoided. It's going to happen. The timing differs, as does the method of expressing the "shock and awe" of a new baby's arrival, but it will happen, and it will be perfectly normal.

Expect These Common Responses

Don't be shocked if your 3-year-old suggests returning the new baby to the store when you're shopping. Other variations of this give-her-back theme include "Why do we need a baby?" "Let's sell her," or "We should give her away." Be prepared for hugs of welcome that are a bit too tight, and be mindful when leaving the two children alone together.

Some older children do not have much immediate reaction, showing no hostility initially, but the boom falls later when the baby gets more responsive and is universally admired. Some children

Whatever negative reaction you may face, be assured it is normal. Let your older children know that you understand their angry feelings, but they must use their words and not hurt the baby or one another. Take a deep breath. It will get better.

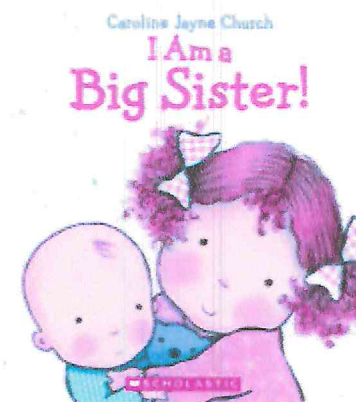
Banish Guilt

In the face of all this, you might begin to feel guilty for betraying your child's trust. Of course, there is no basis for that. While only children do just fine, having a sibling can enrich life well into adulthood. Think about the benefits you have had from close sibling relationships (rather than about any unresolved jealousies). You and your partner have every right to bring more children into this world. Just don't expect unanimous agreement in your household for now.

Accept Help

Like many of the most joyous moments in life, it's a challenging time for everyone, but things will calm down. You are very likely sleep deprived, and the demands of an irate older child can be overwhelming. Have another family member or friend care for your infant while you share an exclusive playtime or trip to the park with your eldest. And don't forget time alone for a nap or a quiet shower. Aunts, uncles, and grandparents have never been more vital; call on them without hesitation. And welcome that casserole from the neighbor. You will return the favor one day.

FEATURED BOOK



BOOKS | INDIVIDUAL TITLES | BOARD BOOK

I Am a Big Sister

With the arrival of a new baby comes many transitions, and big sisters may need a little extra tender loving care to adjust to a new family situation. This sweet story with adorable toddler illustrations by Caroline Jayne Church is just right to share with and prepare an older sister getting ready for an expanding family.

[learn more](#)

GRADES

Early Childhood - Pre-K

\$6.99

ADD TO CART