



## TV3 IRELAND AM Q & A

### ***Six years between kids and they still fight? Ann, Cork***

***Everyone advised me to leave a big gap between my children so they would get on better and there would be less rows. There is 6 years between my daughter and son but they never ever stop fighting, they can't agree on anything. Its making everyone in the household unhappy what can I do.....?***

Hi Ann,

It sounds like your children need to learn how to get on and negotiate their lives under the one roof. It does not matter how many years they have between them, there will always be something to test sibling relationships! (see Resolving Sibling Rivalry Book)

Here are some ideas:

1. Sit them down and tell them calmly but firmly how you feel about the constant rowing.
2. Ask them to help you understand why things get so bad. Ask them:
  - Can you tell me what happens?
  - What were you thinking of at the time?
  - Who do you think is affected by your rows?
  - How do you think they/we are affected?
  - Is there anything else you want to say?

Give them each the time to reply. Encourage them to be honest and talk about what they really feel about each other.

3. Then ask: What would you suggest we do to help change things?
  - Is this fair?
  - Is this realistic and achievable?

4. When they start rowing, stay calm and ask them to try and sort things out as they agreed.

If you have any queries you can reach me on my blog.

### ***Why does my daughter keep snapping? Claire, Meath.***

***My 12 year old girl keeps snapping at me mostly when I ask her a question. She tells me that she hates me once every so often. What should I do? She is very nice to other people. She hangs out with people I don't want her with, would that be the cause?***

Hello Claire,

I am wondering if your daughter snaps at the same type of question? Is there a particular subject she gets annoyed with. It sounds like that there may be some tension over her friends. Have you talked about this with her? I am really meaning about how you both feel about these moments when tensions get high. Here are some ideas:

1. Sit down with your daughter and talk to her about what it is like growing up.
2. Tell her how you feel about the times she tells you she hates you.
3. Ask her to tell you how she feels at those times.
4. Be curious about what makes her snap and ask her if there is another way you can ask her that would be better.
5. Talk to her about what you hope for her in her teenage years.
6. Remember that talking like this helps your daughter learn how to be open and connected to you. If you disagree about her friends you can do so without it escalating between the two of you.

For more information on Sibling Rivalry visit us at

*[www.ResolvingBooks.com](http://www.ResolvingBooks.com)*



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### ***What can I do about sons temper tantrums? Maeve, Wicklow.***

***My son keeps having temper tantrums, especially in public when he can't get his own way oddly enough they are not as frequent when we are at home! It gets embarrassing so much so that as much as I don't want to, I have to give into him and let him have his way as he gets down on the ground screaming crying and kicking. What can I do to stop this behaviour?***

Hello Maeve,

Well, this is something that happened to me with my son, so I sympathize in a very real way! I always wondered if my son knew that he was catching me at my weakest, in public. He grew out of it after a couple of years.

I am not sure what age your son is but here are a few ideas:

1. Stay calm. Take a few deep breaths before you intervene. This will help your child to calm down. Be strong and calm in the words you use. Be clear that you want him to stop.
2. If he is old enough, talk to him about these times he behaves like this and explain that this has to stop. Give him a rule that when he behaves like this there will be a sanction (one you can carry out at home). This takes the pressure of you in those awkward moments.
3. Be patient. If you do give in when you get home sit down with him and say that you know you gave into his bad behaviour so now you are going to give him a sanction.
4. Have a look at the Resolving Anger Book. There are a lot of ideas in how to cool your child down when they get angry.

### ***My son is bullying his twin? Joanne, Mayo.***

***I have 4 year old twin boys and one of them is a lot bossier than the other, he dominates all conversation and attention and never lets his brother get a word in edge ways. What is worse is that Alex lets him. I have tried to correct Sean about this and also tried to tell Alex to stick up for himself more. I am worried about what implications this could have on Alex in the future, afraid that it will effect Alex's personality and character, making him a push over. What should I do?***

Hello Joanne,

It sounds like you have a strong character in Sean and maybe a more gentle one in Alex.

Bullying is a very particular type of relationship, which you can learn more about in our Resolving Bullying Book. At 4 years old it might be a bit too young to say that this is the case.

This is a great age to start good habits of listening and talking to each other and modelling this yourself can be very beneficial. If you show both boys you are interested equally in what they have to say they will learn to respect the other as they grow up. Here are some suggestions (you may be doing some of this):

1. Always make sure you ask both boys their opinions. When Sean monopolises say; " Hold on Sean, I would like to hear what Alex has to say".
2. When you are with Alex on his own ask him what he thinks. Encourage him to chat to you about his day. This is great practice for him.
3. When you are with Sean encourage him to listen to your news as well. This will help him to develop listening skills.
4. For a good way to help them resolve their rows fairly look at Resolving Sibling Rivalry.
5. Remember that the boys will learn over time so don't worry too much yet.

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## TV3 IRELAND AM Q & A

### **Sons are too violent? Beth, Waterford,**

***My two teenage boys keep fighting, and the fights are becoming more and more violent. My husband won't get involved saying its typical boy behaviour; he is no good at discipline. I don't know what to do, because they really hurting each other and the rows are out of control and I am afraid to get involved. What should I do?***

Hello Beth,

This sounds like a very hard situation for you. As your boys are growing physically bigger I am sure you are finding this harder to deal with.

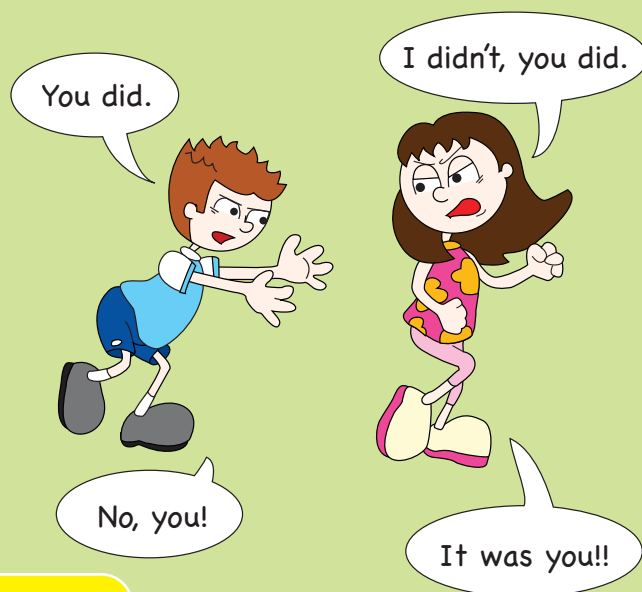
It is important for your husband to get involved and help to teach his sons how to argue without physically hurting each other. All brothers and sisters have their rows but they need to learn to do so without such an escalation of violence.

Fathers can be their sons role model and he can do a lot to intervene and help. Maybe it would be a good idea to talk to you husband about what he hopes for in his boys as they grow into men. What type of young men would he like them to grow into? In five years times how would he like to see his sons behave?

I suggest:

1. The two of you sit down with you sons, when you are all calm, and tell them how you feel about how they are behaving. They may not know how upset you are getting.
2. Ask them to help you understand why things get so bad. These are good questions to ask: Can you tell me what happens?  
What were you thinking of at the time?  
Who do you think is affected by your rows?  
How do you think they/we are affected?  
Is there anything else you want to say?  
Give them each the time to reply.
3. Then ask: What would you suggest we do to help change things?  
Is this fair?  
Is this realistic and achievable?
4. Try and agree a contract of behaviour that includes what they will do when they get angry with each other instead of fighting.

**I am available through my blog for any further questions.**



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