

New Siblings Class

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New Siblings Classes

- New siblings programs are important for children to prepare for their soon to be brother or sister.
- New siblings classes can allow children to discuss their feelings on having a new sibling at home.
- New siblings classes be a great resource for giving children lessons on what to expect once the sibling arrives. Varies by the child's age and developmental level.



Some example of topics covered in a New Siblings Class:

- Usually through video there will be an explanation on what babies do and how they grow
- Teaching children that there is a special time for the baby
- Teaching children how to feed a baby
- Teaching children how to change diapers

New Siblings Classes continued...

- New sibling classes also important to help the parents slowly introduce the idea of a new sibling and learn strategies to make sure the siblings are connecting.
- New Siblings classes provided parents with resources such as books and dolls to help make the transition process goes smoothly.
- The New Siblings Program is not only important for the children or parents, but for the profession of Child Life by providing family centered care.
- When Child life supports a child or family and is seen as a positive resource. After families work with a child life specialist they will hopefully be inclined to ask for child life services and spread the word to others.

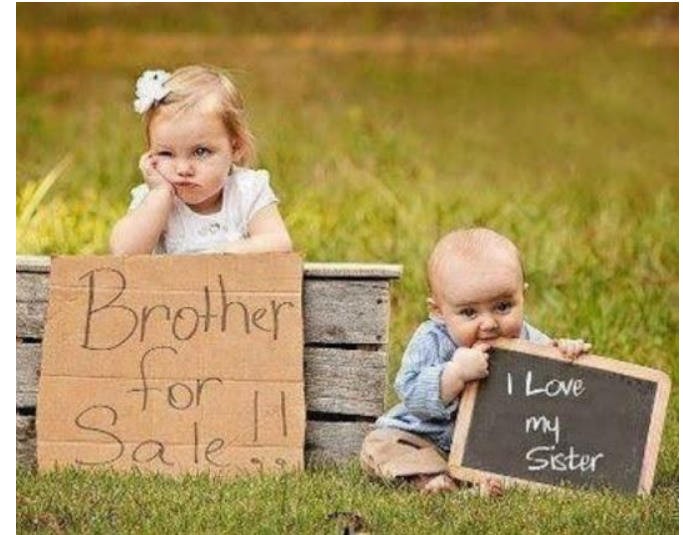


Stress and Coping

- Child Life is used to facilitate these programs by providing psychosocial and developmental support.
- New siblings classes can help reduce stress for the parents by preparing their child to cope, communicate and understand what life will be like with a new sibling.

Sibling classes can help the child accept their new sibling by:

- Asking what they think about having a new sibling
- Showing the child that their feelings are being acknowledged
- Giving him/her special jobs to feel more included
- Reading the child stories on what it means to be a big brother or sister



New Siblings Classes Information

- Many hospitals have New Siblings programs. The day and times of the New Siblings Programs may vary.
- Most sibling classes are held Saturday mornings at 10:00 am.
- A childbirth educator, health educator or experienced mother- baby nurse are trained and certified to teach a New siblings courses.
- Cancellations are typically done 72 hours prior to the class for a full refund.



Utilizing Volunteers

- Volunteers and other outside sources, like vendors or special guests, are always a very special way to bring excitement into the hospital.
- In our New Siblings Class, a great way to utilize volunteers would be to have them assist in a special art project, encourage them to sit with the new siblings while practicing holding a baby doll, and help out in any other activities previously planned.
- Small gifts could also be passed out to children who attend the class (t-shirts with “big brother” or “big sister” written on them, diplomas for attending class, etc.) and our volunteers could be put in charge of organizing and passing those materials out.



Working Together as a Healthcare Team

How can we incorporate other disciplines?



- Ideally, our New Siblings class could have several members from different disciplines, along with Child Life, represented. A nurse could come talk to the children about how she gets to help Mommy during childbirth, a Obstetrician could come in and discusses the job she does, maybe even some NICU volunteers could tell the children about how they get to cuddle the newborn babies after they are born.
- If possible, someone on the Child Life team could also give the children a tour of the maternity unit to see all of these people, if they were unable to attend the class. Tours are also extremely helpful for the child to see who will be taking care of Mommy and where she will be while having their new baby brother or sister.

Working Together, continued...

- The point of all of this is to allow the children to feel comfortable with each of the people they may interact with while in the hospital.
- In addition to helping the children feel comfortable, this also shows a united front from all members of the healthcare team, and helps build the foundation for family centered care.





- The New Siblings Class would work best in an open area where we have enough space for several children. A playroom could work, reserved lobby area, etc.
- Disposable masks, gloves, and gowns for children to try on.
- Big brother/sister T-Shirts and diplomas upon “graduation” from class.
- Ask parents to bring in a baby picture of the soon-to-be older sibling for a fun art project done during the class. Allowing children to view themselves as a baby can help get excitement levels up for their new sibling, while also remembering that they were once the new baby, too.
- Age appropriate posters showing pictures of where the baby is now, and how the baby will get out.
- Baby dolls to learn how to hold the new baby.
- Fabric paint and/or fabric markers.

Staying Respectful

- As with everything else, it is our highest goal to be a family centered program. This class is very much a family centered class, as we are teaching older siblings how incredible a new family member is.
- Some topics that may be a cultural concern for families regarding childbirth are: race and economic background, parent's sexual orientation, circumcision, infant baptism, and other religious birth rituals.
- Because all families believe different things, we will see a wide variety of traditions practiced within the walls of our hospital. Being that it is one of the happiest days of a family's life, it is our job to ensure that we are respecting their personal lives in every facet of our job.

Incorporating Play

Because Play is how we learn!



Art Project#1: with the baby picture brought in by parents, allow children to decorate a small picture frame with two openings. The first opening will hold the older sibling's baby picture, while the second one will remain open. Encourage the child to fill that space with a picture of their new brother/sister once they are born. This will give them something to take home, as well as something to look forward to completing once the baby is born!

- Art Project #2: Allow children to decorate their own big brother/sister T-shirts

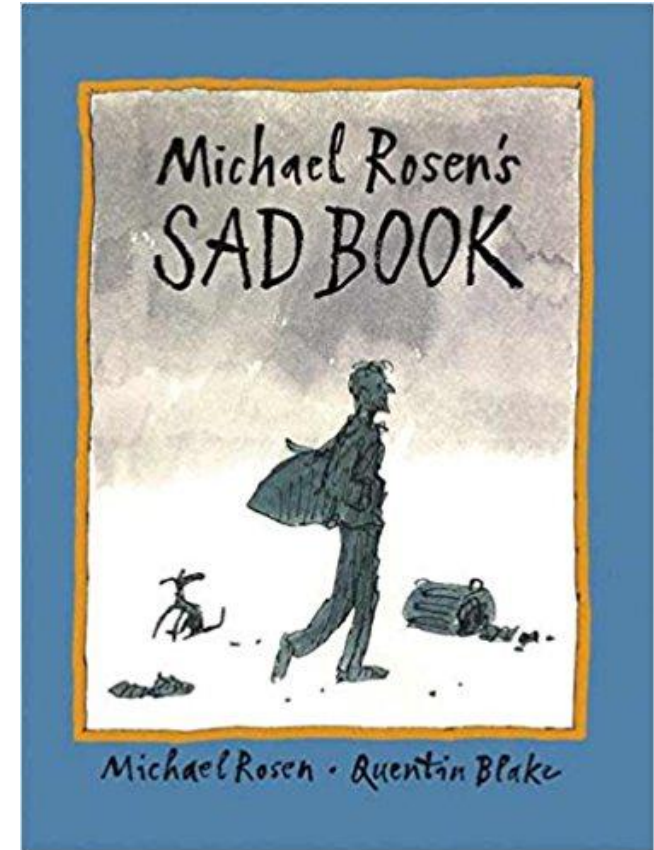


Incorporating Play

- Some of our planned games/activities involve disposable masks, gloves, and gowns for children to try on. This way children can see what their mommy's doctors and nurses will be wearing during birth. Medical play is always a fun way to get children introduced to what they will soon be seeing!
- Children who attend the class will be provided with baby dolls, and we will all learn the proper way to hold our newborn brother or sister.

Death and New Siblings

- A child would have to learn to cope with a pregnancy resulting in a miscarriage or stillbirth.
- Professionals advise parents and caregivers to be straightforward to children under the age of 4 due to them not understanding phrases as “April is no longer with us.” But caregivers would state, “Your sister died because she was sick.”
- Parents need to be prepared to answer some hard questions but most importantly is speaking the truth to the child if they are asking.
- There are several books on death and even support groups for children dealing with death.
- Michael Rosen’s Sad Book is a great way to show children and help them heal from the loss.



Death and Sibling Bonding continued...

- Understanding Piaget and Erikson, using sibling bonding with children.
- Children could play multiple games or activities with one another.
- Examples, T-shirt walk; where each child would be put into one big tshirt and they would try and walk around the room together.
- If the child is younger and waiting for a child to be born, what the parents could do is look at the child's baby pictures and talk about how the other child is going to be born soon too.
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Activities with New Siblings Class

We are going to do some sibling bonding.

Everyone check their chat board and look at the word scrambles

Everyone is going to have one word to unscramble and then you will put it in the group chat and we will try to figure out the phrase together

Ready... Set... Go!

Cooking Word Scramble

Unscramble the seven household activities to find the hidden word.

beak _ _ _

lobi _ _ _

rits _ _ _

koco _ _ _

whas _ _ _

lepe _ _ _

inarts _ _ _ _ _



Answers!

Bake

Boil

Stir

Cook

Wash

Peel

Strain

KITCHEN

Development and Growth for New Sibling Class

There are 7 ways in promoting growth between siblings:

1. Help the children with planning bonding activities, for example coloring together or building a fort together.
2. Make sure the child has solo activities to do and not always with their sibling
3. Let children try and work out fights together as much as possible
4. Have family traditions especially during the holidays, for example my family we go see christmas lights almost every saturday before christmas and on Christmas Eve in our pajamas.
5. Have the children do chores together.
6. Have annual family vacations.
7. See what they have in common and let them share that activity together.

Bonding Sites and Tips

- <http://www.siblingsaltogetherusa.org/> This is an organization that helps siblings in foster care stay together and they have support groups nationwide.
- <https://b-inspiredmama.com/17-tips-to-encourage-sibling-bonding/> These are tips for parents to use to help their children bond
- http://icea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Using_Teaching_Sibling_Class_11.pdf
- <https://www.baptistjax.com/patient-info/classes-and-events/sibling-class>
- <http://www.motherhoodcenter.com/blog/parenting-blog/preparing-big-brother-or-sister-for-a-new-sibling/>
- <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/sibling-prep.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/new-sibling/art-20044270>
- <http://www.mottchildren.org/posts/your-child/new-baby-sibling>
- <https://www.jccdenver.org/family/early-childhood-engagement/>
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