

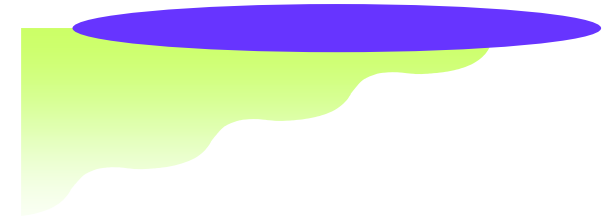
## ▶ Tips for Siblings of Children with Disabilities

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- Take care of yourself. Sometimes this is hard, but it is very important.
- Talk about how you're feeling. Find an adult or another sibling to talk to, write to, or send email to. You are not alone.
- Let your parents know when you need extra attention.
- Remember, you have a right to your own friends, interests, and to pursue your own goals just like any other brother or sister would.
- Encourage your parents to make plans for your sibling and to include you in the process.



- Give your brother or sister your love and the chance to love you back.



## ▶ Siblings of Children with Disabilities

Information from:

<http://www.autism.org/siblings/sibneeds.html>

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk/siblings.html>

<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/c.jones/11q/aug01nl/sibtips.htm>

<http://ericec.org/faq/siblings.html>

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## Worries and Concerns Siblings Have

- Limited time and attention from parents
- Why them and not me?
- May worry about bringing friends home
- Stressful situations at home
- Restrictions on family activities
- May feel guilt about being angry with a disabled brother or sister
- Embarrassment about a brother or sister in public
- Teasing or bullying about a brother or sister
- Protectiveness about a very dependent or ill brother or sister
- Concerns about the future



## Suggestions for Parents to Minimize Siblings' Concerns

- Provide them with age-appropriate, honest information.
- Provide them with opportunities to meet other siblings of children with special needs.
- Encourage good communication between you and your children.
- Set aside special time to spend with typically developing children.
- Provide time to have an open discussion with the family.
- Reassure them by planning for the future of the child with special needs.

## Warning Signs to Watch For

### ANXIETY

- Excessive Worry
- Tearful at slightest frustration
- Has difficulty separating from parents
- Sleeping problems or changes in sleeping habits
- School phobia
- Worry about health or well-being of family members
- Somatic symptoms (i.e.. Stomachaches and headaches)

### DEPRESSION

- Change in child's eating habits
- Sense of helplessness/hopelessness
- Continued sense of irritability
- Difficulty making decisions or concentrating
- Lack of pleasure in activities
- Social withdrawals