

NAVIGATING SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SIBLING?

- NT + DD Siblings have unique and complicated experiences, emotions, perspectives, and relationships with their siblings.
- Often Siblings Report:
 - Taking on a caregiver role at a young age
 - Feeling overlooked
 - Experiencing empathy, affection, and anxiety about their sibling



STATISTICS

- Siblings of children with DD have an increased risk of depression and mental health disorders (approximately 2X)
- Often associated with fear of the future, feelings of isolation, identifying as a burden/ not expressing emotions, and helplessness.

WHAT IMPACTS SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS?

Age gap
between
siblings

Family size

Birth order

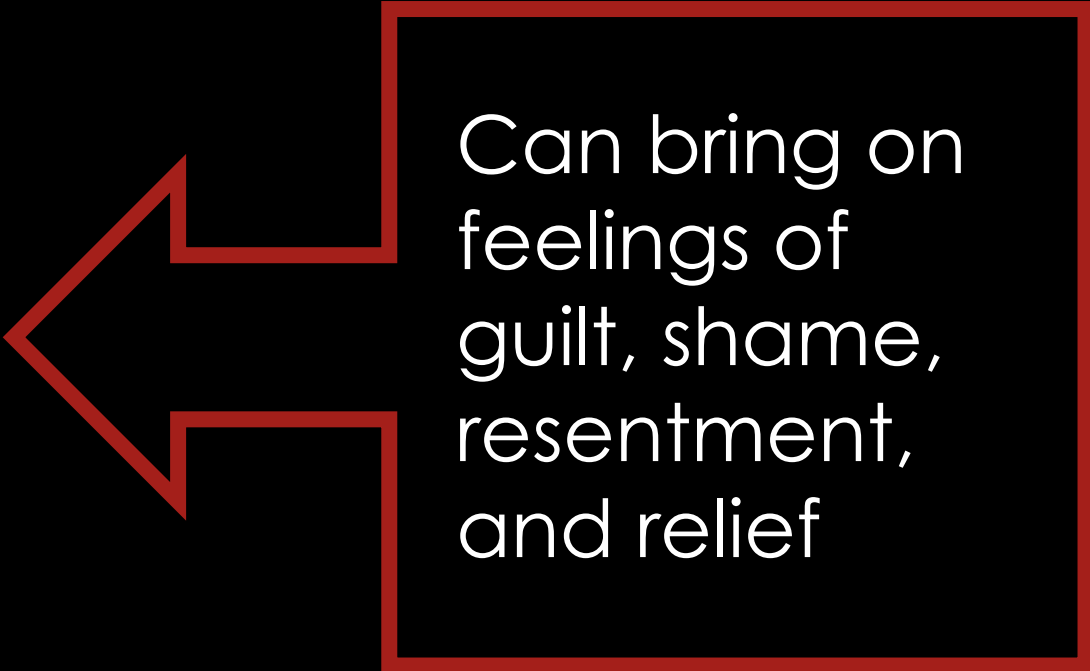
Socioeconomic
status

Parent/
Community
support

Behaviors

ADOLESCENCE AND ADULTHOOD

- Self exploration
- A loss for family ties
- Making independent decisions
- Autonomy



Can bring on feelings of guilt, shame, resentment, and relief

HOW DOES THE ROLE CHANGE WITH AGE?

Childhood

- Acting as a play partner
- Acting as a situational caregiver

Adulthood

- Moving out- Planning for sibling and parent housing
- Choosing a career- Evaluating location/ hour constraints
- Planning for a family- Processing responsibilities and setting boundaries

THE FUTURE?

- Housing
- Guardianship
- Health Care
- Financial Assistance
- Family Relationships

START PLANNING NOW

EXPOSURE TO THE PROCESSES

SIBLINGS NEED TO DISCOVER THEIR OWN RELATIONSHIP

HOW CAN YOU FACILITATE A RELATIONSHIP?

Educate your child about their sibling's diagnosis

Provide autonomy and empowerment

Provide a supportive environment

Strength based attitude

Provide access to a community

QUESTIONS???

LINKS

- <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/siblings-guide-autism>
- <https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/home/parent-tips-siblings/>
- <https://sibingleadership.org>
- SibNet, Sib20 Facebook groups
- Spectrum Design's sibling group

RESOURCES

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352827318303641>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0891422215300184>
- [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0891422219302148?
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