

Turns and Sharing

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As a parent, we quickly realize that we need to start teaching our children about taking turns and sharing. “You don’t always have to be first and all of the toys don’t belong to just you.”

The first-born frequently has some difficulty with this concept because she was first in the family, was taken care of first and the toys were given to her. And now, here is this new interloper – who happens to be a BOY, not the sister she had expected – who requires way too much attention and care just when she’s sitting down with her parents to read her favorite book. Then as that interloper grabs her favorite toy right out of her hands, mommy and daddy talk about sharing. WELL, why don’t they explain it to him! They keep saying he is just a baby and as his big sister she needs to help show him how to share by letting him have the toy “this time.” “This time” seems to be coming around way too often for big sister to hear.

As the years pass and the children grow up and grow older, new opportunities for taking turns and more opportunities for sharing seem to pop up. There is only one computer in the family and mom and dad get to use it first. That’s not fair either, is it? Finally, there is a second computer purchased for the children to share. REALLY!

Sis reaches the magic age of 16, gets her driver’s license and periodically gets to drive the family care IF her parents aren’t using it, IF she has her homework done, IF her chores done, IF she has behaved and shared with her brother. In other words, she doesn’t get to drive too often! As she becomes more experienced, she is allowed more chances to drive.

And then the unbearable day arrives when her brother turns 16 and he too now has a driver’s license. It seems to sis that the rules for getting to drive the family care are far more lax with him than they were with her! But complaining is not the way to keep peace or to get her turn to drive the car.

YEAH! A second used car is purchased for the children to “share.” Of course, they both want it on the same day and at the same time. The schedule gets printed and tacked to the family bulletin board as to who gets to drive where and when. At last! During her junior year sis is allowed to drive to school; however, her brother gets to ride along. Then when brother is a junior, he figures he too should be allowed to drive to school. She can’t believe that as a senior in high school she has to arrive with her little brother at the wheel. So they now have to take turns on who gets to drive each day. Arguing will only result in both of them being relegated to the school bus.

Both children go off to colleges – different ones for sure! – and eventually get married and have children of their own. Now it is their turn to teach about taking turns and sharing. Good luck kids!!