What your other children without Down syndrome are thinking:

Sibling Issues

Brian Skotko, M.D., M.P.P.
Children’s Hospital Boston

Sue Levine, M.A., C.S.W.
Family Resource Associates, Inc.
Importance of Sibling Relationships

Most intense
Longest lasting
Shape who we are
Teach sharing, social skills, competition, coping skills, problem-solving
Moderating Factors

- Family size
- Birth order
- Age difference
- Gender association
Latest Research

More positive interactions (kindness, less conflict)
matched for gender, age, birth order in Australia

Less prone to behavioral problems
matched for age and socioeconomic equivalents in Australia

More caregiving, increased levels of empathy
matched for age, gender, and birth order in Australia
Medical Questions

How do they get the extra chromosome?
Can Down syndrome be deadly?
Is Down syndrome more common for boys?
Why are some people with DS short?
Are all kids with DS strong?
How can you tell someone has DS?
Why does his face look kind of odd?
How does one chromosome make kids so different?
Education Questions

Does my sister have to go to a special school?
Why did he do pre-school twice?
What is the best way to educate people with DS?
Why is it called “Down syndrome”?
Can people with DS graduate from college?
How do they think?
Social Questions

Can people with DS have normal jobs?
How come they talk different than us?
Does DS affect the way my brother’s life is?
Will she be ugly?
Will they get into fights?
My brother knows that he has DS and that he is different. Does yours?
Negative Feelings Questions

Does your brother throw big fits in public?
Why is my brother obsessed with TV movies?
How come he loves our new toys but not his?
I hate it when my sister copies me. What should I do?
Why does my sister make weird noises?
If my sister is annoying, how should I deal with it?
Sometimes my sister embarrasses me. What can I do about this?
Difficult Moment Questions

Why do people stare at my sister in public?

How should I make my sister stop listening to baby music when she is 13?

Since I am his little sister, he feels bad that I read much faster than him. What should I do?

How do you deal with people who use the word, “retard”?

How should I explain DS to my friends?
Where will my brother with DS live when he gets older?
What should I do when my brother talks about things I don't think are going to happen, like driving a car or becoming an actor?
Be open and honest, explaining Down syndrome as early as possible.
Allow brothers and sisters to express negative feelings.
Recognize the difficult moments that brothers and sisters may be experiencing.
Limit caregiving responsibilities.
Recognize the individuality and uniqueness of each child in the family.
Be fair.
Take advantage of supports for siblings.
Parents should access support for themselves.
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Brian Skotko: www.brianskotko.com

Sue Levine: slevine@frainc.org

Family Resource Associates: www.frainc.org
FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT
a crash course on Down syndrome
for brothers and sisters

Brian G. Skotko & Susan P. Levine

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