



# raising siblings

## Fostering Positive Relationships

### Parent Workbook and Syllabus

### Delivery Type 1:

### Supplemental Extension

This is an extension of a hybrid implementation of one of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs that should be delivered to an existing group.





## Summary of Training

Use this summary to help you track your completion times for sessions and meeting dates, times, and location(s).

### Thrive Initiative Course Registration

Due Date	
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### Introduction Meeting *(Meeting: 20 min/Homework)*

Date	
Time	
Homework	Complete the Module's Welcome and Introduction and Session 1
Due Date	

### Supplemental Module Meeting 1: Discussion of the Module's Welcome and Introduction and Session 1 *(Meeting: 60 minutes/Homework)*

Date	
Time	
Homework	Complete Sessions 2 and 3 and the Wrap-up
Due Date	

### Supplemental Module Meeting 2: Discussion of Sessions 2 and 3 and the Module's Wrap-up *(Meeting: 60 minutes)*

Date	
Time	
Homework (optional)	Visit the Thrive Initiative's website for additional parenting resources: <a href="https://thrive.psu.edu">https://thrive.psu.edu</a>

## Supplemental Module Registration

Complete these steps prior to delivery of the Supplemental Module Introduction (added to the last universal parenting program meeting).

### Access Course in Your Thrive Initiative Account

- Use this link to access the Thrive Initiative’s website: <https://thrive.psu.edu/>.
- Navigate to and select “Modules.”
- Select “Supplemental Modules” in the drop-down menu.
- Identify the module on Raising Siblings, and select the “Learn More” button.
- A new web page will open. Select the blue button that reads “Get this course.”
- A pop-up box will ask you to Login or Sign up. Since you have an existing account, select the “Login” button.
- Enter your username or email, and select the blue “Login” button.
- You will be directed to the supplemental module on Raising Siblings. Select the blue “Go to Course” button to start the online supplemental module.

**If you have any difficulty accessing the Thrive Initiative supplemental module, we would be happy to assist you!**



The Thrive Initiative Team can be emailed at [thrive@psu.edu](mailto:thrive@psu.edu).



Phone inquiries can be directed to **1.877.382.9185**.

# Introduction Meeting



**Introduction Meeting** *20 minutes*  
**Homework**

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





## Step 1: Attend Meeting

- Review the supplemental module welcome materials provided by your facilitator.
- At the first meeting, your facilitator will provide an overview of the program and ensure you have access to the Thrive Initiative website and supplemental module.

## Step 2: Complete Homework [For Supplemental Module Meeting 1]

Please complete the following activities in preparation for the next meeting:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the ***Raising Siblings: Fostering Positive Relationships*** supplemental module's Welcome and Introduction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download and review the materials mentioned from the Parent Toolkit resources in the supplemental module.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare to discuss the topics addressed in the Introduction and Session 1 during the next meeting by answering the questions in *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions*. If you have any questions you would like to ask during the discussion, note them in Step 4

## Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions

Write your responses in the blue boxes on the next few pages as you prepare for the *next meeting*. During the *Supplemental Module Meeting 1* group discussion, record your notes in the magenta boxes.

As you complete the questions and activities, recognize that understanding and implementing the information we are learning will not happen immediately. You will need to use the strategies and skills you have learned throughout ***Raising Siblings: Fostering Positive Relationships*** consistently and make them part of your everyday life in order to see desired changes in your children's or your reactions or behaviors. Keep practicing what you have learned!

Each time you meet with the other program participants as a group, share and celebrate the small, short-term, positive changes you see in your interactions with your child(ren). Also, consider what the long-term benefits may be for your family as you continue to use the skills and strategies you have learned and are learning in the ***Raising Siblings: Fostering Positive Relationships*** module.



## Supplemental Module Welcome and Introduction (Raising Siblings): Interaction and Discussion Questions

The supplemental module's welcome introduction acknowledged that raising multiple children, especially at different developmental stages, can be complicated.

- A. Think about your own experiences growing up. Did you have a sibling or siblings?
- B. If yes, what was that relationship like for you when you were a child? What is it like now? Do you want your child(ren) to have the same type of experience? Why or why not?
- C. If you didn't have siblings, did you enjoy being an only child? Did you ever wish you had siblings? Do you want your child to have the same type of experience? Why or why not?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship** **Siblings' Unique Relationship Interaction and Discussion Questions**

Session 1 discusses the unique aspects of the sibling relationship and how this connection changes over time. A sibling relationship is typically the longest close relationship an individual will have throughout his or her life. This connection can be supportive and beneficial and also challenging for your children to navigate.

- A. If you have siblings or your children have siblings: Do you see relational ambivalence—“love-hate” relationship—within your own sibling relationships or within your children’s relationships with each other?
- B. If you don’t have siblings or your child doesn’t have siblings: Do you know siblings who drive each other crazy because they know what triggers to use, but, if someone outside of the family were to use one of these triggers, the siblings would immediately advocate for their brother or sister?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship** **Different Types of Sibling Relationships Interaction and Discussion Questions**

As explored in the module, different types of sibling relationships, including biological, adoptive, half-, or step-siblings exist. These different sibling types can vary in terms of the amount of contact the siblings have with each other, their age spacing, and their relationship qualities.

- A. If you have more than one child, how would you define the relationship between your children?
- B. If you are a parent of one child and are considering adding another child to your family or are awaiting the arrival of another child, what do you want your children's sibling relationships to look like?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship Development and Change in the Sibling Relationship Interaction and Discussion Questions

As mentioned in Session 1, the sibling relationship begins when one child becomes aware of the existence of another child who is his or her sibling. This awareness usually occurs with the birth or adoption of a second child. The older sibling will probably experience an adjustment period; however, when parents prepare their first child for this change, the adjustment can be made easier.

- A. Would anyone like to share what he or she is doing, or what he or she did, to prepare existing children from the arrival of a new sibling?
- B. Did anyone start a ritual with his or her existing child(ren)? If so, are you still engaging in that same ritual?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship** **Siblings in Early Childhood Interaction and Discussion Questions**

As mentioned in Session 1, siblings can learn from each other.

- A. If you have siblings, what skills did you learn from your siblings, or what skills did you teach your siblings?
- B. What skills have you seen your children learn from one another or teach one another?
- C. Were these positive or negative learning experiences?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship Sex and Age-Spacing Interaction and Discussion Questions**

As noted in Session 1, the dynamics between siblings will continue to change as siblings enter their elementary school years and mature into adolescence.

- A. If you have a sibling, are you closest to your brother, your sister, or your sibling who is closer, or further apart, in age? How does this compare to your spouses sibling relationships or other sibling relationships you've seen?
- B. Do you notice sex or age differences in your children's relationships with one another or in the sibling relationships of other families you know? For families with multiple children, do you notice more conflicts with any one sibling compared to another? What do you notice?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 1: Introduction to the Sibling Relationship** **Siblings Becoming Adults Together Interaction and Discussion Questions**

As noted in Session 1, when siblings become adults, their relationship changes again. However, siblings can maintain (and even grow) their relationships in many different ways and circumstances.

- A. How have the sibling experiences described in this session been similar or different from your own experience or your experience with your child(ren)?
- B. What factors (i.e., sex, age spacing, developmental) do you think may have influenced your relationship with your siblings? What factors are influencing your child(ren)'s relationships now?
- C. Would anyone like to share the one word that came to his or her mind that represents what you learned in Session 1 of the module?


*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



**Step 4: Prepare Additional Questions for Supplemental Module Meeting 1**

 Note any additional questions you may have for the group or the facilitator.

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



# Supplemental Module Meeting 1



**Discussion of Welcome and  
Introduction and Session 1**

*60 minutes*

**Homework**

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





## Step 1: Attend Meeting

Return to Introduction Meeting, *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions* to discuss the activities and questions on the previous pages as a group. If new ideas are mentioned during the group meeting, note them in the magenta boxes under your prior homework responses.



*To engage in discussion, go back to the homework you completed after the Introduction Meeting.*

## Step 2: Complete Homework [For Supplemental Module Meeting 2]

Please complete the following activities in preparation for the next meeting:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 2: How do Siblings Impact our Lives
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Session 3: External Influences on Sibling Relationships
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete Wrap-Up
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download and review materials mentioned from the Parent Toolkit resources in the supplemental module.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare to discuss the topics addressed in Sessions 2 and 3 and the Wrap-Up during the next meeting by answering the questions in *Step 3: Prepare Community- Building Activities/Discussion Questions*. If you have any questions you would like to ask during the discussion, note them in Step 4.

## Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions

Write your responses in the blue boxes on the next few pages as you prepare for the *next meeting*. During the *Supplemental Module Meeting 2* group discussion, record your notes in the magenta boxes.



**? Session 2: How do Siblings Impact our Lives?**  
**Sibling Conflict and Negativity Interaction and Discussion Questions**

In session 2, you examined some situations that often create sibling conflict, such as one sibling borrowing a toy or article of clothing without asking first; siblings arguing about whose turn it is to sit in the front seat of the car or other favored spot, what game to play or how to play a particular game, or whose turn it is to perform a household chore or task; or one sibling going into another sibling's room or space without asking permission.

- A. If you had siblings growing up, which of these situations did you experience with your siblings? What type of situation do you find yourself refereeing regarding your own children?
- B. As a parent, which of these disagreements between your children frustrates you the most?
- C. How do you typically try to settle that argument? Does it work? Does the solution work for the short term or long term?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 2: How do Siblings Impact our Lives** **Sibling Warmth and Conflict Interaction and Discussion Questions**

While conflict may be common in sibling relationships, positive qualities such as warmth, support, play, help, and disclosure are also characteristics of these connections.

- A. Think about your siblings as you were growing up. Would anyone like to share some of your favorite memories? Did one of your memories involve playing a particular game or going on a special family vacation? Do you have a memory of one of your siblings helping you learn a new skill?
- B. If you did not have siblings while you were growing up, consider the special memories your children are making together. Are there any new experiences or memories you would like your children to create with each other as they grow up together?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Session 2: How do Siblings Impact our Lives?

### The Impact of Warmth and Conflict on Sibling Relationships Interaction and Discussion Questions

In session 2, you learned about four types of sibling relationships and discovered the best sibling relationships are high in warmth and support, regardless of how much conflict is experienced

- A. Of the four types of relationships described in the module, would anyone like to discuss the type of sibling relationship your children have with each other? If you have multiple children, do you see differences between one sibling relationship and another?
- B. If you had siblings while you were growing up, how would you classify your relationship(s)? Are there differences between one sibling relationship and another? In other words, would you classify your relationship with your older brother as high in warmth and high in conflict and your relationship with your younger sister as high in warmth and low in conflict? Did your relationship move between quadrants as you grew into adulthood?
- C. If you did not have siblings as a child, are there examples of sibling relationships that you remember from your friends, other family members (e.g., cousins), books, or movies? How would you classify these relationships? What do you notice about these relationships? Does one sibling relationship appear or feel closer or more disconnected compared to the other?

#### Reflection:



*Group discussion notes:*



**?** **Session 2: How do Siblings Impact our Lives?**  
**Promoting Positive Sibling Relationships Interaction and Discussion Questions**

Session 2 discusses how you, as a caregiver, can encourage and promote positive sibling relationships by nurturing mutual interests, incorporating or establishing family tradition, and enjoying special experiences together.

- A. Would anyone like to discuss a situation or event that you experienced with a sibling when you were growing up that made you feel close to your sibling?
- B. What have you done, or what might you do or try, to help promote a positive relationship between your children? What did your children tell you they enjoyed the most about what you did or tried?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## **Session 3: External Influences on Sibling Relationships** **How Parents Influence Siblings Interaction and Discussion Questions**

You learned in Session 3 that you can influence your children's relationships by how you treat your spouse or co-parent and how you treat each child.

- A. Have you noticed your child imitating words you've said or actions you've done that were positive? How did seeing this behavior in your child make you feel?
- B. Have you noticed your child imitating a behavior that was unflattering (we've all been there)? How did seeing this behavior in your child make you feel?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 3: External Influences on Sibling Relationships  
Fair and Equal Parenting Through Sensitive Responding Interaction and  
Discussion Questions**

When parents show favoritism, especially when dealing with a conflict, they may create or increase depression and anxiety, problem behavior, and poorer sibling relationships in their children. An exception to this would be if your child knows why you are treating a sibling differently. An example of this could be if the sibling has a disability or if household chores are sorted based on gender for specific reasons.

- A. Consider your interactions with your children. Are there words you say or actions you do with one child that differ from what you say or do with another child? How do you think your children perceive these differences? Is there anything you say or do that may be perceived as favoritism?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



**? Session 3: External Influences on Sibling Relationships**  
**Parenting for Stronger Sibling Relationships Interaction and Discussion Questions**

You have learned that sibling relationships can be influenced by other familial relationships, like co-parenting and parent-child relationships.

- A. How is your current method of resolving conflicts with your children similar to the conflict-resolution strategies shared in this module? How is it different?
- B. What new or learned strategies might you plan to incorporate into your conflict resolution with your children?

*Reflection:*

*Group discussion notes:*



## Session 3: External Influences on Sibling Relationships The Family Meeting Interaction and Discussion Questions

Engaging in Family Meetings can provide benefits, such as addressing sibling conflicts.

A. Does anyone hold family meetings? How did that go for you and your family?

*Reflection:*



*Group discussion notes:*



### ? Wrap-Up: Module Discussion Summary Questions


- A. Which topic discussed in the supplemental module was the most beneficial to you as a parent? Why?
- B. What strategies or skills did you learn about in the supplemental module that you will use to help you achieve the goals you have for your child(ren) or your family?
- C. What has changed in your interactions with your child(ren) since you began to complete the supplemental module?
- D. Have you noticed a difference in the way your child(ren) is responding to your parenting since participating in this module?

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Step 4: Prepare Additional Questions for Supplemental Module Meeting 2

 Note any additional questions you may have for the group or the facilitator.

*Reflection:*

 *Group discussion notes:*



## Supplemental Module Meeting 2



**Discussion of Sessions 2 and 3  
and Wrap-Up and Resource Sharing**

*60 minutes*

**Homework**

*None*

Date	
Time	
Link/Location	





### Step 1: Attend Meeting

Return to Supplemental Meeting 1, *Step 3: Prepare Community-Building Activities/Discussion Questions*, to discuss the activities and questions on the previous pages as a group. If new ideas are mentioned during the group meeting, note them in the magenta boxes under your prior homework responses.



*To engage in discussion, go back to the homework you completed after Supplemental Module Meeting 1.*

### Step 2: Complete Homework [optional]

Consider registering for additional Thrive Initiative universal parenting programs or supplemental modules.

- Information about the Thrive Initiative universal parenting programs can be accessed at <https://thrive.psu.edu/>.
- Supplemental modules can be accessed at <https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/>.

Visit the Thrive Initiative website at <https://thrive.psu.edu> to access additional resources and materials.

