raising siblings
Fostering Positive Relationships

This is a supplemental parent-education module that is designed to support parents and caregivers of multiple children or those planning to increase their family size. Parents will be encouraged to think about their own experiences with their siblings, look at how siblings can influence their children's lives, and recognize how they can help their children develop warm and supportive sibling relationships.

Raising multiple children—especially when they are at different developmental stages—can be a positive experience for a family and, at the same time, complicated! Understanding the uniqueness of sibling relationships and how these relationships change over time can help parents and caregivers foster the positive development of their children's relationships with one another.

This module intends to help parents and caregivers understand how sibling relationships change as children grow older and enter different developmental stages and how parenting multiple children will change because of their children's development. Parents will learn about sibling relationships and what makes a sibling relationship unique. They will also learn about the role parents and caregivers can take in fostering positive sibling relationships through behaviors such as modeling positive interactions, establishing boundaries, and practicing a parenting strategy called "sensitive responding." Throughout the module, parents will explore communication and conflict-management strategies that can help them navigate common sibling-related challenges and promote positive sibling relationships.

This supplemental module builds on information and strategies that are discussed in the four universal Thrive parenting programs – *Take Root, Sprout, Grow, and Branch Out*. It is recommended that you participate in the age-appropriate universal Thrive parenting program prior to using the supplemental module.

In this module, you will learn how to do the following:

- **Understand the dynamics of a sibling relationship and how it is unique from other close relationships.**

- **Examine how parenting and co-parental relationships can influence sibling dynamics.**

- **Identify the difference between favoritism and differential treatment in your interactions with your children, and understand how these behaviors can impact sibling relationships.**

- **Incorporate parenting practices that can improve sibling relationships, such as sensitive responding, establishing rules and boundaries, and holding family meetings.**

- **Use strategies to resolve common sibling conflicts.**

- **Recognize red flags in sibling conflicts, and determine how you can intervene to prevent adverse outcomes in your children.**

- **Promote positive interactions among siblings to foster warm and supportive relationships.**

For more information about the Raising Siblings supplemental module, visit:

https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/