

Sibling cards



Sibling cards are a tool created for siblings of children with special needs. The cards are aiming to help siblings to express their feelings and thoughts. Sibling cards are a deck of cards in which each card has a sentence expressing a thought or a feeling based on real experiences from siblings. The deck also includes wild cards, if one doesn't know or can't relate to any of the sentences. Being a sibling to a child with disability or longterm illness can be a complex thing causing mixed feelings which may be hard to describe or say aloud. Sibling cards can help by giving words to siblings' feelings and thoughts. It can also make it easier to say things aloud when knowing that someone else has felt the same way too.

The cards have been used individually and in peer support groups with siblings. The recommendable age to use the cards is above nine years old. Siblings should be able to read themselves. The cards can be also used with parents and professionals to awaken them about siblings' thoughts.

Themes:

Ordinary Siblinghood

Invisible Child

My Sibling is Important to me

Knocks/Blows to the Basic Sense of Security

Eriityinen sisaruus (Special siblinghood) has been a project (2015-2019) in Finland aiming to raise awareness about the wellbeing, risks and strengths of siblings of children with special needs. During the project we gathered information about the experiences and needs that these siblings have. We have also developed tools to help siblings in different ages to express their feelings and thoughts that this special siblinghood awakens.

"To me my special needs sibling is still quite ordinary."



"I can't argue with my sibling."



"My sibling is so annoying!"



"Looking after my sibling is annoying."



"I still like my sibling even though there are many things they can't do."



"My sibling has many great qualities."



"I can't always tolerate my sibling."



"I can read and play with my sibling."



"We have plenty of great memories together with my sibling."



"We do all sorts of stuff with my sibling."



"I don't always want to share my things with my sibling."



"My sibling makes me laugh."



"I have to do more housework than my sibling."



"I wish somebody took care of me too."



"I can't show how I really feel."



"I have to be the big sister/brother even though I'm younger."



"Because my sibling has special needs, my parents don't have time for me."



"I'm envious of the attention my sibling gets."



"I'm angry!"



"Can't my parents see that I'm important too?"



"Everyone thinks that I don't need help and support."



"Sometimes I would like to be the centre of attention!"



"My special sibling hates it when I can do something they can't."



"It's not fair that I am well and healthy."



"I will always love my sibling for being my sibling."



"I want to protect my sibling."



"I'm proud of my sibling."



"My sibling is important to me."



"I wish my sibling didn't have a disability/illness."



"The support I get from my sibling means a lot to me."



"I've always understood my sibling."



"I feel we have a close relationship with my sibling."



"I've learned a lot from my sibling."



"I want to defend my sibling."



"I've had many wonderful experiences because of my sibling."



"Sibling with special needs has enriched my life."



"I find it hard to accept my sibling."



"I wish I was taken care of too."



"I feel sad."



"I wish my family was just normal!"



"I feel like I don't belong."



"I'm worried about my sibling's future."



"I'm worried about
my own future."



"Is my sibling's
illness/disability
somebody's fault?"



"What if something
happens while I'm
taking care of
my sibling?"



"What if I do
something that
upsets my parents?"



"I'm scared."



"Sometimes
I wish this would
just end."



Wild Card
I don't know.



Wild Card
I don't know.



Wild Card
I don't know.



Wild Card
I don't know.



Green = Ordinary siblinghood

1. "To me my special needs sibling is still quite ordinary."
2. "I can't argue with my sibling."
3. "My sibling is so annoying!"
4. "Looking after my sibling is annoying."
5. "I still like my sibling even though there are many things they can't do."
6. "My sibling has many great qualities."
7. "I can't always tolerate my sibling."
8. "I can read and play with my sibling."
9. "We have plenty of great memories together with my sibling."
10. "We do all sorts of stuff with my sibling."
11. "I don't always want to share my things with my sibling."
12. "My sibling makes me laugh."

Grey = Invisible child

1. "I have to do more housework than my sibling."
2. "I wish somebody took care of me too."
3. "I can't show how I really feel."
4. "I have to be the big sister/brother even though I'm younger."
5. "Because my sibling has special needs, my parents don't have time for me."
6. "I'm envious of the attention my sibling gets."
7. "I'm angry!"
8. "Can't my parents see that I'm important too?"
9. "Everyone thinks that I don't need help and support."
10. "Sometimes I would like to be the centre of attention!"
11. "My special sibling hates it when I can do something they can't."
12. "It's not fair that I am well and healthy."

Red = My sibling is important to me

1. "I will always love my sibling for being my sibling."
2. "I want to protect my sibling."
3. "I'm proud of my sibling."
4. "My sibling is important to me."
5. "I wish my sibling didn't have a disability/illness."
6. "The support I get from my sibling means a lot to me."
7. "I've always understood my sibling."
8. "I feel we have a close relationship with my sibling."
9. "I've learned a lot from my sibling."
10. "I want to defend my sibling."
11. "I've had many wonderful experiences because of my sibling."
12. "Sibling with special needs has enriched my life."

Violet = Knocks/Blows to the Basic Sense of Security

1. "I find it hard to accept my sibling."
2. "I wish I was taken care of too."
3. "I feel sad."
4. "I wish my family was just normal!"
5. "I feel like I don't belong."
6. "I'm worried about my sibling's future."
7. "I'm worried about my own future."
8. "Is my sibling's illness/disability somebody's fault?"
9. "What if something happens while I'm taking care of my sibling?"
10. "What if I do something that upsets my parents?"
11. "I'm scared."
12. "Sometimes I wish this would just end."