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# Challenges and Joys

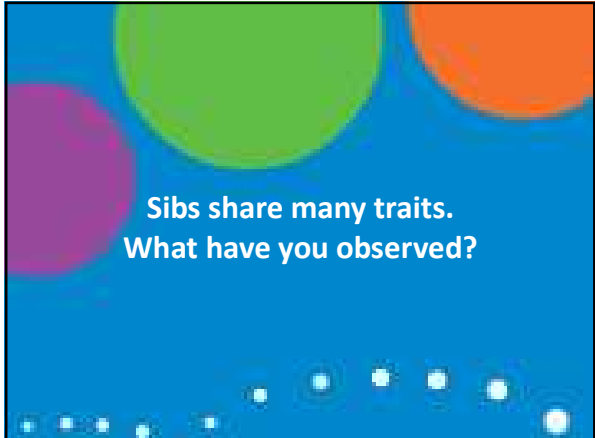




Sisters and brothers of people with disabilities grow up together.

Most expect to be caring for them in the future.

Support throughout their lives keep them healthy and prepared.

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Sibs share many traits.  
What have you observed?

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## Traits shared by most siblings growing up with a person with disabilities

- **Maturity**
- Compassion
- Empathy
- Tolerance of individual differences
- Appreciation of own health
- **Pride** in sibling's accomplishments
- Sense of family closeness
- Self-confidence
- **Independence**
- **Humanitarian concerns/careers**

- Feelings of parental neglect
- Resentment
- **Anxiety** Siblings are 3 times more likely to feel sad, nervous, or afraid than their school peers\*
- Embarrassment
- **Guilt about own health**
- Perceived parental demands and expectations
- Extra responsibility at home
- **Worries about future family**
- Reduced social interaction, especially for older girls

• Lobato (1990)  
• Powell & Ogle (1985)  
• \*Pediatrics (2013)


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## Top Ten Things Sibs Wish You Knew

- **1. It's Our Life.**
- **2. Don't assume.**
- **3. Understand us.**
- **4. We're kids.**
- **5. Keep us safe.**
- **6. Help us meet others.**
- **7. Help us find information.**
- **8. Include us in policies.**
- **9. We are part of family.**
- **10. Invite us to participate.**

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## Acknowledge and recognize sibling's role/feelings



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## Keep siblings informed. Keep open dialogue.



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**Questions I wish my parents had asked me** YOUNG MINDS  
#Take 20

Who are the people you feel safe with?  
Is there anything you want to talk about?  
When was the last time you were very happy?  
What makes you feel safe?  
If you could change anything in your life, what would it be?  
What difficulties are you facing now?  
What can I do to help?  
I can tell that you really like "insert video game/ app/ tv show/ fossil collection", what about it do you love so much?  
Where is a place you feel safe?  
Do you have any worries about starting a new school?  
What are you most looking forward to this week?  
It's okay to keep stuff private, but did you want to tell me more about "insert subject"?  
How are you coping since your dad died?  
What are you worried about when you lie in bed and can't sleep?  
What are you most dreading this week?  
How do you feel about things changing?  
Is there a lot of picking on people at your school?  
Is there anyone who is upsetting you?  
How do you feel about growing up? What's exciting, what's scary?

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**Get respite.**

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**Help sibling meet other siblings.**

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**Key Benefits**

- Children become more confident advocates for themselves and their brothers and sisters.
- Children have pride in themselves and their siblings.
- As adults, siblings feel better prepared to make decisions, seek support and have positive attitudes toward their roles.

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**wisconsibs**  
Sisters & Brothers of People with Disabilities

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Wisconsin Chapter of the Sibling Leadership Network

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**What Wisconsibs Offers Sibs**

**Sibshops** Summer Programs

For Sibs ages 4-12	For Sibs ages 9 and older	Teen Leadership and Fun
SibDays of Summer	Sib Camp	Teen Sib Leadership

**NEW for the very young**

**For adult siblings**  
journeyforward

A practical future planning program for adult siblings to help stop the worry and start the journey forward

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