

Handling Sibling Rivalry

7 MIN • YOUTUBE • [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=XVW4CB_0IJG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVW4CB_0IJG)

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SUMMARY

Michelle, a certified parenting instructor and mother, shares her transformative journey with Hand In Hand parenting, emphasizing the importance of connection over compliance in raising her children. Through the tool of "Stay Listening," she learned to validate her children's feelings, fostering resilience and improving their sibling relationships.

- Michelle initially struggled with parenting, resorting to yelling and punishment due to a lack of tools for conflict resolution.*
- Hand In Hand parenting introduced her to the concept of connection, which shifted her approach to parenting.*
- "Stay Listening" is a key tool that allows her to empathize with her children's feelings without trying to fix their problems.*
- By listening to her children during conflicts, she helps them process their emotions, leading to calmer resolutions.*
- Michelle emphasizes the importance of not taking her children's feelings personally, which reduces her stress as a parent.*
- She uses Stay Listening to address sibling rivalry, encouraging her children to express their feelings and find solutions collaboratively.*
- The approach has improved her overall interactions, making her a more patient and understanding parent.*

Speaker 1: Hi, my name is Michelle, and I'm a certified parenting instructor for Hand In Hand. And I'm also a mother of two girls, 9 and 12. I just want to talk a little bit about how Hand in Hand has helped me, how I got there, and I want to read a couple of anecdotes that I wrote in the book Listen by Patti Butler and Tasha Shore. I wanted to be a mom more than anything, and I thought that that desire to want to be a mom would be enough to make me the perfect mom.

Speaker 1: And when I imagined my household, I imagined, you know, really compliant, sweet, kind, and loving children with very little conflict. And that wasn't the case. And when my kids started to have conflict with one another and when I started to have conflict with them, I didn't have the tools to mitigate, you know, those conflicts and upsets. And I ended up doing things that I didn't want to do. I ended up yelling where I didn't want to and bribing and threatening and punishing.

Speaker 1: And I just did anything I could to get people to comply with me. And I didn't realize that I was missing the whole idea of connection, and that Hand In Hand parenting brought me to the idea of connection and how I could help my kids be happier and kinder and more loving, with more connection. Patty Whitfler was smart enough to come up with five tools that have helped thousands of people around the world. And those five tools include the tool staylisten.

Speaker 1: And I want to talk a little bit about how Stay Listen has helped me as a mom. And I'm going to read a couple of anecdotes from the book Stay Listen. And so let me read one, and then I'm going to tell you what I think about how it helped me somehow. My oldest child didn't think Santa was fair this year.

Speaker 2: She felt her sister's presence were bigger and better and hers were smaller and worse. I felt badly for her because she truly felt wronged. I wanted to point out how hers were just as good as, in some cases, better. And I also had the urge to make her shut up and stop complaining about her presence, but I didn't. I listened to her while she complained and whined and explained to me how

Speaker 1: she didn't like Santa anymore and how

Speaker 2: Santa was a bad guy.

Speaker 1: I tried to tell her Santa and

Speaker 2: I both loved her.

Speaker 1: I didn't take this personally, which I

Speaker 2: would have done in years past. I empathized and listened intently. She was sad for a while, but once I let her Offload the hurt

Speaker 1: and gave her a chance to be heard.

Speaker 2: She started to let it go. She actually loved her gifts and said so at the end of her upset. It was so nice to see her come all the way through.

Speaker 1: I think as parents, when we see our kids upset, we want to fix it, or we want it to go away, or we don't understand why they're upset and we don't think that it's necessarily valid. And I think what Stay Listen has done for me, it's allowed me to just say, okay, they're having an upset. I can just be there with them and listen and be like a concierge, as opposed to trying to fix everything, as opposed to saying, well, you know, look at your present.

Speaker 1: Is this present is a lot better than your sister's present? Or don't you remember you asked for this? And instead of trying to explain their feelings away, to just validate their feelings and. And how this kind of allows them to work on their perseverance and their resiliency and help them learn how to get through harder times when they get older. And it's really relinquished this responsibility for me to fix everything. I don't have to fix everything.

Speaker 1: I can just be a good listener. And so Stay Listening has kind of just. It's given me a way to breathe and a way to just be a kind, calm presence as opposed to being a fixer. Stay Listening also has helped me with sibling rivalry. And, you know, my kids still have conflict where it's difficult. And I think as parents, we. When we see our kids fighting and our siblings having arguments, that we take it personally as if we've done something wrong as a parent and that it's our fault or that, you know, they're going to end up not having a good relationship because they're fighting all the time as kids.

Speaker 1: And so it ignites us and gets us really upset. It gets me really upset. And so I've learned to be a good listener as opposed to, you know, kind of coming in and being judge and jury. And I'm going to give you another example of how I use day listening with my siblings. My older daughter had been complaining about me giving more attention to her sister. She was so upset and felt I loved her sister more.

Speaker 1: She would cite examples and tell me I gave her breakfast first or I asked her how her day at school was first. I didn't see the bias, but had no intention of arguing with her. In the past, I would have said yes, but I did such and such with you yesterday. And don't you remember X, Y and Z that we did last week? Instead, I listened and told her I understood what she was saying. I said I could see how she would think that, and I was sorry if I made her feel slighted.

Speaker 1: But mostly I listened and let her cry while I told her I loved her. And I was there to listen to her while she was upset. She came around first full circle. She felt validated, became calm and relaxed, and was able to play easily with her sister and me. It was great. Stay Listening has helped me not take on my daughter's feelings so much. It's helped me, you know, let them own their feelings and be okay with upset feelings and not feel like it's my fault.

Speaker 1: And a lot of these feelings, you know, come around sibling rivalry. And I think also, you know, stay Listening has helped me mitigate sibling rivalry where I can come in when there's an upset. And instead of being the judge and jury, instead of saying, you're wrong and you're right and making one person feel good and the other person feel really bad and that person that feels really bad will, you know, they take that with them and maybe for the rest of the day or maybe for the rest of the week, they're taking out their hurt feelings on the people around them and they're feeling disconnected from me and disconnected from their sister.

Speaker 1: So instead of doing that, I think I've been able to come in and stay listen to upset between them and really listen and say, okay, what happened in this situation and have each of them be able to explain without me saying, okay, you're wrong and you're right, and just saying, okay, these things happened. How can we fix it? How can we make it better? They're old enough to be able to tell them that you know, how to ask them how to fix it and make it better.

Speaker 1: And then also to be able to say, okay, how can we rephrase what we've said, these mean things that we've

Speaker 2: said to one another.

Speaker 1: Instead of saying, I hate you, you're mean, can you say, I don't like it when you touch my things? Can you please ask for permission first? And really getting in and listening and helping them learn how to speak to one another, I think Stay Listening has initiate that kind of groundwork that I've done with the girls. And it's been really, really helpful. So I just want to reemphasize how important these tools have been for me and how hand in hand parenting has changed the way I parent.

Speaker 1: It's changed the way I interact with people in general. It's changed the way I think about the world. And I really want to thank Patty Whitfloor for having really good thinking around parenting and to persevere and to keep working. And I know it's been, you know, it probably hasn't been easy for her all these years, and I want to thank her for, you know, publishing this great book. Listen, and just thank you.