

BBC



The Open University

Flesh and Blood

Siblings and friends are important for a child's development, not just because it's enjoyable to spend time with them, but also because psychologists now believe that lots of valuable learning goes on when young people solve problems, discuss issues or plan activities together.

This sort of learning, with other people who are close in age or ability, can help develop skills in understanding other people and negotiating shared agreements. It's also becoming clear that it can help to develop thinking skills more generally, as well.

Although it's good for young people to work towards agreement, it's part of the process to expose differences of opinion and ideas. A degree of such conflict isn't a bad thing, if it leads to sensible working out of solutions.

So, not all arguing is bad! What children may need help with is getting good outcomes from arguments and heated discussions. Almost always, this means making sure that each person's views get properly aired and heard.

Visit open2.net/childofourtime to find out more about these themes and for you and your family to add your views to our national survey