



Worksheet #4: Supporting Siblings

Understanding the Sibling Experience

Siblings of a child with a serious or terminal illness often experience their own emotional journey. They may feel worried, confused, left out, or unsure how to express what they're going through.

These reactions are normal and support can make a meaningful difference.

1. What You're Noticing

Take a moment to reflect:

Changes I've noticed in my child (sibling):

- ☐ More quiet or withdrawn
- ☐ Increased clinginess
- ☐ Irritability or acting out
- ☐ Changes in sleep or appetite
- ☐ Difficulty focusing
- ☐ Asking more questions
- ☐ Not talking about it at all
- ☐ Other: _____

What stands out the most right now?

2. What Siblings May Be Feeling

Siblings may experience:

- Fear about their sibling's health
- Confusion about what is happening
- Sadness or grief
- Jealousy or feeling overlooked
- Guilt for having their own needs

What do I think my child might be feeling?

3. Creating Space to Talk

Children don't always express feelings directly—they may show them through behavior.

Ways I can open the conversation:

- ☐ "How are you feeling about everything lately?"
- ☐ "Do you have any questions about what's going on?"
- ☐ "It's okay to feel however you feel."
- ☐ Sitting together quietly without pressure to talk

One small way I can connect today:

4. Reassurance & Stability

Children benefit from knowing:

- They are loved and supported
- They are not responsible for what is happening
- It's okay to continue being a child

A message I want my child to hear:

5. Small Moments Matter

Even brief one-on-one time can be meaningful.

Ideas for connection:

- ☐ Read together
- ☐ Take a short walk
- ☐ Share a meal
- ☐ Play a game
- ☐ Talk at bedtime

One thing I can do this week:

6. Balancing Attention & Guilt

It is common to feel pulled in multiple directions.

Gentle reminders:

- You are doing the best you can
- It is okay that your time and attention are divided
- Small moments of connection are enough

One way I can show myself compassion:

7. When Additional Support May Help

Consider additional support if your child:

- Becomes increasingly withdrawn
- Shows ongoing anxiety or behavioral changes
- Has difficulty expressing emotions
- Seems overwhelmed or distressed

Support can help siblings feel seen, understood, and supported.

Closing Thought

Siblings are part of this experience too. With support, communication, and small moments of connection, they can feel more secure and understood during a very difficult time.

Wellness Counseling Group

Supporting families navigating cancer and terminal illness

561-320-2018

www.wellnesscounselinggroup.org