EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND
Kia titiro ki te tangata | See the person

Supporting siblings



Your child's epilepsy is likely to have an impact on other members of the family, including their brothers and sisters. Sometimes finding the words to explain epilepsy to a sibling can be difficult or challenging, but it is important to discuss it so that they feel included in their sibling's journey. The way you approach discussing epilepsy will very much depend on the child's age, level of understanding and ability to engage in discussion. It may also be influenced by your own family structure, cultural factors and social issues.

There are many positive experiences that come from being the sibling of a child living with epilepsy. Children who have a brother or sister who lives with epilepsy may possess greater compassion, have a better understanding of disability, demonstrate higher levels of loyalty, and be more open to diversity in our community.

However, some siblings can be affected by their brother or sister's epilepsy and it is important to initiate and maintain open communication as soon as you think it's appropriate to do so. Having open communication, recognising potential challenges faced by siblings, identifying how you can assist, and knowing when to seek support will greatly assist siblings in your family.

But it is important to remember that, like any family, challenges and issues will occur from time to time. This is a natural feature of growing up as siblings and developing relationships within the family.

If you think that your child needs some additional support there are a number of services you may want to access. You may want to consider speaking with your GP, social worker or a psychologist.

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