



# How to deal with: arguments at home

This article was written by a Kooth worker (she/her) and contains the following themes: arguments, conflict, relationships.

When people live together, disagreements from time to time are understandable. After all, we are all different. We might have different views, different ways of doing things, and even different ways of saying things - but it doesn't mean we can't find ways to get along.

## Some disagreements can turn into full blown arguments which can happen for all sorts of reasons:

- Breaking the "house rules" - e.g. staying out later than you'd agreed
- Feeling disrespected - e.g. when someone takes something of yours without asking, or when someone feels like others aren't doing their fair share of the chores
- Feeling like your personal space has been invaded - e.g. when someone comes into your room without knocking

## Arguments can leave us with all kinds of difficult feelings, such as:

- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Frustration

Please note, that arguments should never leave you feeling afraid, or at risk of harm. **More on this shortly.**

Whatever your experience of arguments at home, we want to help you to deal with them.

**Let's take a closer look.**

## Disagreements can sometimes be helpful

Disagreements don't have to turn into full blown arguments. When we hear about people arguing, we might imagine raised voices, or unkind things being said, leaving people feeling sad, unheard, or angry. But it is possible to disagree without arguing.

In fact, sometimes disagreements (as long as they are respectful) between people you live with can also be surprisingly helpful:

- They can help you express how you feel rather than keeping your emotions to yourself.
- They can help you communicate better by hearing others points of view, and then learning how to share your own calmly.
- They can help clear the air when there's lots of hurt feelings between you. To appreciate these helpful factors, we also need to learn how to manage them, and how to communicate in more helpful ways when we disagree.

**Here are four simple things to consider when learning how to deal with arguments.**

### **1. Learn how to see the other person's point of view**

When we're arguing with someone, it might feel important to get our point across, or to get the other person to see where we're coming from. This is really important. But so is being able to see the other person's point of view.

#### **For example:**

Rather than seeing your parents/carers rules as unfair, and annoying - thinking about why the rules are set could help you see the other side. Sometimes rules are in place to:

- Keep you safe - e.g. a set time to be home
- Keep you healthy - e.g. a set bedtime so you get enough sleep
- Keep things fair - e.g. sharing things between your siblings

**In these examples, seeing why something is in place, rather than just how it makes you feel and how it affects you, can help you see another point of view.**

### **2. Learn the art of negotiation**

Negotiation is all about coming to an agreement that both sides are happy with. When you negotiate, you might both make a compromise. A helpful term to describe a negotiation is "meeting halfway". Learning how to negotiate is such a useful skill to have at any age. It's worth noting, however, that some things are not up for negotiation.

### **For example**

Your parents/carers might not change their rules on when you can use social media right now, but they might be open to talking about how you can have a bit more independence in other ways, like meeting up with a friend.

#### **Or**

Even if you ask nicely, your sibling might not want you to borrow something of theirs. But they might be more willing to compromise on something else if you make a deal that benefits them too. This might be helping them with a household chore they hate, or something equally as useful to them.

**Please note, learning the art of negotiation is not a guaranteed way to come to an agreement, but it's a useful skill to learn that might help you in all sorts of relationships.**

### **3. Learn the power of saying sorry**

As humans, we don't always get things right. Saying sorry after an argument (if you've done something you need to apologise for) can help repair your relationship, help you to move on, and encourage you to take responsibility for your actions. It's not the easiest thing to do, and often takes maturity and honesty.

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#### **4. Learn to be responsible for your own actions**

We get that sometimes arguments can make us do and say things we might not usually. But what's important to remember is that while you can't be responsible for what others say or do, you can be responsible for your own actions. Before you say something to someone (whether it's at home or somewhere else), it might be helpful to pause and ask yourself:

- Is it respectful?
- Will I regret saying/doing this tomorrow?
- Is it true?

**Sometimes taking some time out of the situation (for example, going to another room at home) is a useful way to calm yourself down, and think about how best to respond.**

**What if I'm not arguing, but other people at home are?**

If you can see, or hear people around you arguing at home, it can feel stressful, and sometimes make home feel like an uncomfortable place to be. We might wonder what to do, how to help, or even whose side to be on, even if the argument has nothing to do with us. If the arguments are happening a lot, it might help to talk to someone, such as a friend or adult you trust. Just sharing how you feel can make you feel heard, understood, and less alone with your thoughts and feelings.

If it feels safe to do so, talking to the person you saw/heard arguing might help too. Letting them know how you felt in that moment might help them:

- Find more helpful ways to communicate
- Be more aware of how you're affected
- Think about getting some help if the arguments are happening a lot

#### **What if I don't feel safe at home?**

If the arguments at home make you feel unsafe or afraid, please reach out. If you or someone you live with feels at risk of harm, you don't have to be alone. Everyone deserves to feel safe at home. And while arguments happen, feeling unsafe, or afraid is never okay. If this feels familiar, you could:

- Reach out to an adult you trust (such as a teacher, family member, or an adult you feel safe with)
- If this doesn't feel possible, you can always talk to one of the team here at Kooth by [chat or messages](#) about anything at all. While you are anonymous here, you always have the option to give us your details so we can get you immediate help. This is always your choice and never an expectation.
- If you feel at immediate risk (for example, if someone is hurting you or someone else at home at that moment) you can also call 999 where you will be supported as soon as possible.

**How do you deal with arguments at home? If you have any tips for our readers, please share them in the comments below.**

If this article has affected you in any way, or you just want to talk to one of our team about anything at all, you can do that by heading to [messages or live chat](#).

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