

After reviewing the conflict, "He said, She Said", it is obvious to see all threat house participants are competing; though each of them are using different competitive tactics. In brief, you have a common situation of divorce where Marie (the mother) has a child from a previous relationship - Lenny. Marie has a new fiancé, Mike, who is basically trying to be the head of household, and that is where our conflict begins. Mike does not like the way Marie punishes Lenny. Even though, at first, Mike avoids dealing with Lenny altogether, Mike is now trying to assert some control over Lenny and at the same time show Marie that he can run a household. Mike is *competing* for alpha-male status or just to be the man of the household. Mike does this by exercising authority. Lenny, who has been skimping on his chores, breaking curfew, is basically doing whatever he wants. Lenny is sending a clear message to Mike that there is only one man of the house, and that is Lenny. Lenny is the one and only alpha-male, and thus you have this constant territorial battle between Mike and Lenny. Now Marie, who also was not initially engaging in this conflict, is basically torn between the love of a new fiancé and the love of her son. Marie is competing for control over her son. And by doing this, Marie is sending a clear message to Mike that she is in charge, that she is control of her son Lenny.

So what are the goals of our three housemates? It is not surprising, there are no group goals. Mike, Marie, and Lenny are all trying to achieve their individual goals. Mike's goal is to be alpha-male. Lenny's goal is also alpha-male. And, Marie's goal is the ability to have one-hundred percent control over her son punishments - in a way, still wants to run the household. There are a couple of important questions to be asked. One, who is in charge? The answer is no one person is in charge. As long as there is a competition between all three, there will not be harmony in the household. And the second question, what should their goals (their group goals) be? Lenny offers to do his chores if Marie lets him come home late. Is that a group goal? It is more like a accommodation. Lenny *should* be doing

his chores anyway. Group goals should allow for equal and harmonious solutions for each person.

What Mike, Marie, and Lenny need is a collaboration. Everyone wins in a collaboration. So how do they get there? They need to set the right goal. And, that goal should be a smooth running household.

Mike, Marie, and Lenny should have a family meeting and open up the lines of communication with one another. The goal on the table is a smooth running household, and Mike, Marie, and Lenny should work together on ideas to make it happen.

Mike, Marie, and Lenny are all in competition. In this case study, no one is in charge and the conflicts in the house are aggressive. Each have their personal goals. Each are competing for control. And, even though there is some avoidance at the beginning from Mike and Marie and accommodation from Lenny 's trading of chores to break curfew, the main conflict tactic in this case is competition.

References:

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