

BIG HEARTS JUNE 2024: FAMILY STRUCTURE

What is family?

“a group of persons united by the ties of [marriage](#), blood, or [adoption](#), [constituting](#) a single [household](#) and interacting with each other in their respective [social](#) positions, usually those of spouses, [parents](#), [children](#), and siblings “ (Britannica, 2024). Families have common values, shared traditions (cultural, religious, etc.).

Types of Family Structures

- Nuclear Family: 2 Parents with children: mom and dad; 2 moms; 2 dads.
- Blended family: Parents and stepparents and stepchildren
- One Parent Family: 1 parent raising their children
- Grandparents raising children
- Aunt & uncle raising children
- Guardians/Foster Care caring for children
- Extended family: those who are related to us beyond our parents such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins.

Blood families

Related by parents and/or a common relative (grandparents, cousins). Extended family is one example of blood families.

Chosen/Non-blood families

Close friends who are not related by blood or DNA but are very important in your life. They may be a special Auntie or Uncle who is your parent's best friend. Sometimes you move far away and make new friends that give you a special connection like family but give you the support a family gives you.

What do all families have in common?

They provide a safe place for you, they love you, and care for you and your wellbeing.

Why are families so important?

“Some include: support; love and caring for other family members; providing security and a sense of belonging; open communication; making each person within the family feel important, valued, respected and esteemed.” (AAP, 2024)

Families provide more than just food, shelter, and clothing. They provide and demonstrate love, care, trust, and concern (AAP, 2024). Adults are very important role models because they also provide you with a value system through their words and actions, learning right from wrong and life expectations.

Sources

American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP] (2024). “Normal Functioning Family” found on <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/Normal-Family-Functioning.aspx#:~:text=Some%20include%3A%20support%3B%20love%20and,%2C%20valued%2C%20respected%20and%20esteemed.>

Britannica (2024). “Family” found on <https://www.britannica.com/topic/family-kinship>

RESOURCES

Guilford Free Library and other public libraries can assist you with resources through books and other library materials.

Below are book listings for both children and parents alike on the Big Hearts topic of Family. Also are a listing of websites for parents, other family members and caregivers. This is not an exhaustive list, please consult your librarian for further information.

CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Adoption

Krajnik, Elizabeth. *Families Through Adoption*

Parr, Todd. *We Belong Together: A Book About Adoption and Families*

Rogers, Fred. *Let’s Talk About It: Adoption*

One-Parent Families

Poole, H.W. *Single-Parent Families*

Swinton, Patty. *What’s Life Like with a Single Parent?*

Foster Families

Hicks, Dwayne. *What’s Life Like in Foster Care?*

Poole, H.W. *Foster Families*

ADULT BOOKS on families and parenting can be found at

Parenting Shelf located in the Children's Department at Guilford Free Library. Consult the librarian for further assistance.

Websites

American Academy of Pediatrics:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/>

Better Help:

<https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/family/there-are-6-different-family-types-and-each-one-has-a-unique-family-dynamic/>

Strong Bonds-Family Dynamics

<http://www.strongbonds.jss.org.au/workers/families/dynamics.html>