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My Family



4-H MEMBER MANUAL 1

MY FAMILY

4-H MEMBER MANUAL I

Studying families and how they are important to us can be fun. In this first project you can learn

- what families are and what they do
- how families grow and change
- what your family of the past was like
- how families are different and the same
- what makes families better
- how families live in other countries.



What To Do

- Read the *Family Strengths 4-H Project Planning Guide*, 4H PG-10-24.
- Talk with your 4-H leader and project leader about your plans.
- Ask them to look in the *Family Strengths Project Leader's Guide* for ways to help you.
- Talk with your parent(s) about your plans.
- List what you plan to learn and do in *My 4-H Plan*, 4H R-1-80.
- Keep a record of everything you do for this project as you work on it.
- When you finish Manual I, review what you did. Complete *My 4-H Plan*.
- Share what you did with your parent(s) and leaders.
- You will be awarded a certificate when the project is finished satisfactorily.

MY FAMILY

Who Families Are and What They Do

Who is a family? People have different ideas about who a family is. Some people say a family is a father, mother and one or more children. Other people believe a family can be children with just one parent or even a grandparent.

Most people agree that a family is made up of adults and children who live together to help each other.

Your **extended family** is all the people who are kin to you, such as your brothers and sisters, plus your parents and their brothers and sisters. Your extended family can also take in your grandparents, and their brothers and sisters. Then add all the children who belong to your brothers and sisters, and your parents' brothers and sisters, and your grandparents' brothers and sisters! Do you have a great grandparent? How

many of the people kin to you can you count? How many can you name?

What do families do? Children of all ages would have a hard time without families. Why?

Families usually make a safe place where children can grow up. Families provide a good place to learn how to do things for yourself. Living in families teaches you how to get along with other people, too.

Communities help families do their jobs. Schools and churches help families teach their children. Doctors, nurses, druggists and hospitals try to make family members well again. Sheriffs and policemen protect families. Who else in your community helps families?



How Families Grow and Change

Think about how much you have changed in the past two years. Families grow and change, too. A family begins with parents and one child. Then most families add children and grow larger. Sometimes other people, like a grandparent or cousin, join the family.

Families change as the people in them get older. The family with just a small baby has different jobs to do everyday compared to a family with grown children.

Sometimes families change by getting smaller. Older brothers and sisters leave home to start work, enter college or get married. A family grows smaller if a child or parent dies or parents divorce and one goes away. How has your family grown or changed?



How Families Are Different and the Same

We can find out how families are different and alike. Some families are large with many children, while others are small with only one child. Children may have both parents at home. One may be a stepparent, or one parent may live in another place. In a number of families, grandparents care for the children. Maybe you know a child who is adopted or lives with a foster family.

One family may differ from another, but in some ways they are the same. All families have some of the same jobs to do. Do you remember family jobs already mentioned?

1. Make a safe place for children to grow up.
2. Teach children to take care of themselves.
3. Help children learn to get along with other people.

What other jobs do families have?

Do you know a friend who lives in a family different from yours? Have you noticed that both families are helping children grow up?



Your Family of the Past

Your parents and grandparents probably lived in families when they were growing up. Hearing them talk about their families can be fun.

In your grandparents' time many families were large. Do you know how many children your mother's parents had?

When your grandparents were young, they probably did not have television, but they had more chores to do at home. What did they do in their free time?

Here are some other questions you may want to ask your parents or grandparents.

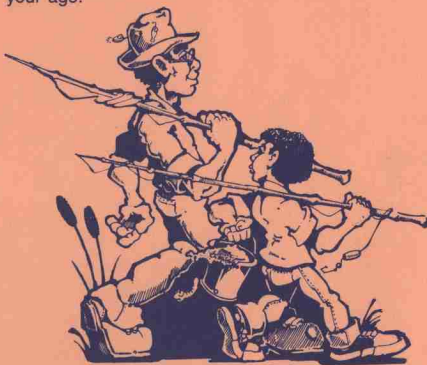
1. How have school clothes changed?
2. What was a favorite song when they were 10 years old?
3. What do they remember about being a child during the war?
4. What did their family do together?
5. How did they celebrate the Fourth of July?

What else would you like to know about the childhood of your parents, grandparents or great grandparents?

Hearing older people tell about their past is how Alex Haley learned about his family and kin people. He wrote a book about them called *Roots*. What will you learn about your family and your kin people?

Your family of the past is part of your present life. Were you named for someone in your family? Learn about that person. Was he or she named for an older person in the family?

Do you look like somebody in your family of the past? Ask to see a picture of that person when he or she was your age.



Maybe you act like another relative. Little children can be big copycats. Some children walk or talk like one of their parents.

Sometimes older people in your family can teach you crafts or skills. That is how these talents are passed from generation to generation. What skill or craft can you learn from someone in your family? What can you teach a younger person in your family?



What Makes Families Better

Living in a family is rewarding even though it is not easy. Sometimes you may get upset with your parents, or a brother or sister may bother you. Everybody must try to make the family a good place to live. What can you do?

Families get along better when each person feels good about himself. You can help the other family members by praising them. Think about the things your parents do for you. Do they earn money for groceries? Do they keep the house where you live? Do they listen to you and talk with you? Do they take care of you, especially when you are sick? What other ways do your parents help you? Thank your parents for helping you. The more you say thank you, the better they will feel about themselves. The more you say thank you to others, the better you will feel about yourself. Appreciation makes families better.

In some families people have not had much praise. Nobody has said thank you. They may be surprised when you praise them or say thank you. It may be hard for them to get used to it, but don't get discouraged. Keep saying thank you, and keep on praising other people in your family. Soon they can learn to say thank you, too.

How Families Live in Other Countries

What do you know about families in other countries? Boys and girls in other countries live in families, too. They have mothers, fathers, grandparents, brothers and sisters. In many ways their families are the same as yours. In other ways they are different.

How can you learn about families in other countries? Ask someone who has lived there. Read stories and books about families around the world. Read and study about their different houses, holidays and foods. For example, Japanese families sleep on the floor. Mexican families have a piñata filled with candy for celebration.



ACTIVITIES

Who Families Are and What They Do

1. Look up the word "family" in the dictionary. Ask three other people what they think a family means. What does the word "family" suggest to you?
2. Draw a picture of your family. If you have a camera, ask someone outside your family to photograph you and your family.
3. Think about what families do. Make a list of things your family does for you. Cut out magazine pictures that show family members doing things for themselves or each other.
4. Talk to someone in your community about how he or she helps families do their jobs.

How Families Grow and Change

1. Compare your size and abilities with a brother, sister or friend who is younger.
2. Look at your family's pictures to see how your family has grown and changed.
3. Make a family mobile. Your leader will have some ideas to help you.
4. Select something you want to do better. Talk with your parent or other grownup in your family about your choice. Ask how the family can help you improve. Keep a record of your success.

How Families Are Different and the Same

1. Talk to someone you know who lives in a family that is not like yours. Talk about how your two families are not alike. How are they alike?
2. Read stories about children who have only one parent, a stepparent, a foster or adoptive parent, or whose parents are not living together.

Your Family of the Past

1. Ask your grandparents or someone their age to tell about their life when they were growing up.
2. Ask your parents or someone their age to tell stories about being 9, 10 or 11 years old.
3. Find someone kin to you who looks like you. How are you like other people in your family?
4. Learn about your given name.
5. Learn a skill or craft from an older person.

What Makes Families Better

1. Make a list of things each person in your family does to help the family.
2. Make a thank-you card to give someone in your family.

3. Show appreciation for each person in your family at least once a week.
4. Make a thank-you card to give someone outside your family who has helped you.

How Families Live in Other Countries

1. Read stories about children and their families in other countries.
2. Talk with someone who grew up in another country. Ask about their parents, brothers and sisters. What chores did the children have at home?
3. Find out whether your family of the past came from another country. Read about that country.





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