



# Family Issues Facts

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A FACT SHEET FOR FAMILIES AND PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH FAMILIES

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## Activities to Celebrate Your Family

Bulletin #4195

**C**elebrate your family by involving everyone in activities.

### Activities for families:

- Look at family photos together and reminisce.
- Have a family game night with your own family, or invite other families to join.
- Plant a family garden.
- Start a family cookbook of favorite foods and customs.
- Do a project that helps others in your neighborhood or community.

### Activities for classes, groups and clubs:

- Hang photos of classmates' (or club members') families in classrooms or club meeting rooms. Hold a discussion about the various meanings of "family."
- Encourage the student council to call for student-designed posters that celebrate or represent family life to display in school.

- Have schools or clubs and local restaurants cooperate and host weekly "family nights."
- Write short essays about families from different cultures. Describe what makes families the same and what makes them different.
- Hold a family hour at the library each week. Libraries can advertise family reading hour and might also emphasize adult literacy.

### Activities for individuals:

- Interview another generation of your family. Ask them how they grew up and experienced their family when they were children.
- Start a family tree.
- Research the ethnic background of your family, and share this with others in your class, club or group.
- Write about your family's history. Interview family members and gather information. Share this with your family or your class, club or group.

- Make coupons and give to family members for: hugs, walking the dog, brushing the cat, clearing the table, an "I love you," cleaning up the kitchen or bathroom, a "good job," or other special things.
- Form a parents' support group.

### Suggestions for people who work with families and for families, too: \*

- Institute a "Family Council" to debate decisions and problems affecting all family members. Model non-violent conflict resolution and a culture of communication and dialogue among generations.
- Avoid situations harmful or hurtful to the dignity of family members with and outside the family.

- Talk about values that the family imparts, and their importance to the family and its members. Consider how values, relationships and men's and women's roles change.
- Involve men in family life more to benefit the family as a whole.
- Accept the moral and actual obligations towards children, elderly, disabled or disadvantaged members. Stress full participation of all family members in the tasks of caring.
- Realize your own self-care abilities and strengthen family ties, especially under difficult conditions, such as unemployment, emigration, etc.
- Enhance the connection of family by arranging family reunions, celebrating family holidays, traditions, searching for ancestry, etc.
- Set aside at least one day per week for the whole family to share a meal (without TV!).
- Use all opportunities for families to share leisure activities (sports, music, games, singing, etc.).
- Take time and care to build informal relations and trust between families (among neighbors and friends).
- Join in on discussions and programs about the importance of parenting, new findings in child development, parent-child relationships, and roles of women and youth in society.

- Motivate and train all family members to assume their full responsibilities in household tasks, community and public life.
- Recognize that marriage and family are not static situations, but a life-long process of growth that requires flexibility and responsiveness of all family members at different stages.
- Explore ways to channel the earning capacities of family members so that they are involved in family budgeting.
- Meet with families from other communities or countries. Exchange experiences.
- Become aware of what the family (and all its members) contributes to society and the state.
- Explore what society and the state can offer for the benefit and protection of the family as a unit.
- Use family associations to voice the real needs of families, both material and non-material.
- Use family services offered by the state and society (assistance, housing, counseling, reuniting families, etc.). Become an advocate for creating new family-oriented services in areas of unmet needs.

\* Source: ©1994 Family Information Services, Minneapolis, MN

Prepared by **Marilyn Ellis**, state 4-H youth specialist, and **Judith Graham**, human development specialist.

For more information on family issues, contact your county Extension office or the State Family Living Office, UMCE, 5717 Corbett Hall, Orono, ME 04469-5717  
**(207) 581-3448/3104**  
**or 1-800-287-0274.**

*A Member of the University of Maine System*

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