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Family Trends Today

Objectives

- Define *family* and describe how families play a part in society.
- Identify the common family types currently found in the United States.
- Summarize the family life cycle.
- Assess unique challenges that culturally or ethnically diverse families may face.

continued

Objectives

- Outline some of the challenges facing families today.
- Determine how the economic environment affects families.
- Recognize various special needs and disabilities that challenge children and their families.

What Is a Family?

- In a traditional definition, **family** means two or more people living in the same household who are related by blood (birth), marriage, or adoption
- In broader definitions, family might be defined as a group of people related by marriage

continued

What Is a Family?

- Families form in a number of ways
- Many people choose to marry, while others choose to remain single
- There are several common family types currently found in the United States
 - A nuclear family consists of a husband and wife and their biological children

continued

What Is a Family?

- A single-parent family includes a father or mother and his or her children
- An extended family includes several generations living under one roof, which might include parents and their children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins
- A stepfamily forms when a single parent gets married

continued

What Is a Family?

- An adoptive family forms when a married couple or a single person is legally granted permission by a state court to raise another person's child
- A foster family forms when an adult provides a temporary home for a child
- A childless family exists when a married couple does not have children

continued

What Is a Family?

- Life cycle refers to the developmental stages within a lifespan



continued

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What Is a Family?

- The **family life cycle** consists of six basic stages that many families go through

The
Beginning
Stage

The
Childbearing
Stage

The
Parenting
Stage

The
Launching
Stage

The
Mid-years
Stage

The
Aging
Stage

continued

What Is a Family?



- During the mid-years stage, many couples often face an **empty nest** when the last child leaves home
- When people of different languages, races, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic classes live in one society, this is called **ethnic or cultural diversity**.

continued

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What Is a Family?

- **Multiculturalism** addresses differences in race, **ethnicity**, religious beliefs, life experiences, values, and socioeconomic status
- Diverse families may face unique challenges
- Cultural **stereotypes** and **prejudice** can be difficult to overcome

continued

What Is a Family?

- Students who enter school in the United States with limited English skills are called *English language learners (ELLs)*
- These students often have difficulty communicating, learning, and succeeding in school



continued

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What Is a Family?

- The family is a **social system** because its members group together to meet each other's needs and the needs of society
- A family's **natural environment** includes all living and nonliving things on Earth not influenced by people

continued

What Is a Family?

- People's interactions with the natural environment can cause changes that might affect their health and well-being
- The **human constructed environment** includes products produced for consumer use
- This environment has a great impact on the family unit

continued

What Is a Family?

- The **human behavioral environment** includes all the societal systems that regulate behavior and relationships among people
- The judicial, educational, economic, religious, and political systems all play a part
- Within these systems are laws, rules, and policies that regulate human behavior



Did You Know?

- In the U.S., the international adoption process will differ according to whether or not the child's country of origin is a party to the Hague Convention, which was established in 1993.



Checkpoint

1. In your own words, define the term *family*. Compare and contrast your definition of family to the definition in this text.

✓ *(Answers will vary.)*

2. List seven common family types currently found in the United States.

✓ *nuclear, single-parent, extended, step-, adoptive, foster, and childless families*

continued



Checkpoint

3. Describe the six stages of the family life cycle.

- ✓ *beginning stage: the couple marries; childbearing stage: the couple has their first child; parenting stage: the couple raises their children through the school-age and teen years; launching stage: the couple's children leave home to live on their own; mid-years stage: the couple often faces an empty nest and may redefine their priorities; aging stage: the couple experiences retirement and eventually death*

continued



Checkpoint

4. Define multiculturalism.

- ✓ *idea that cultural identities should not be ignored, but instead should be maintained and valued*

5. Why is the family called a *social system*?

- ✓ *because its members group together to meet each other's needs and the needs of society*

Concerns of Families

- Families exist in an ever-changing environment and face many challenges
- Many marriages in the U.S. falter or fail
- All family members are affected by a divorce
- Divorce can have significant financial impact

continued

Concerns of Families

- For children, the impact can be lifelong



continued

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Concerns of Families

- **Child custody** determines who has the legal responsibility for a child
- In some cases, parents seek **joint custody** (a legal agreement in which both parents provide care and make decisions for the child)
- **Child support** is a legally binding agreement about financial responsibilities

continued

Concerns of Families

- Many divorced adults choose to remarry quickly after their divorce
- A new marriage and family life can be a source of significant stress for the family
- Families can cope with these changes by
 - working together
 - maintaining a positive attitude
 - keeping the lines of communication open

continued

Concerns of Families

- Through paid work, families financially support their needs and desires
- Work provides social interaction and a way to utilize individual talents, skills, and abilities

continued

Concerns of Families

- The loss of a job, especially the main income for the family, can cause tremendous stress on all family members



continued

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Concerns of Families

- Sometimes job changes require relocation
- Making new friends, starting new schools, and locating community resources take time and energy
- This transition time is full of ups and downs for many families

continued

Concerns of Families

- Work-life balance involves finding the right balance amid the many demands involving
 - family and friends
 - careers
 - organizations and causes you choose to serve
 - activities that promote physical, intellectual, and socio-emotional growth

continued

Concerns of Families

- Because many women bear children, taking a **maternity leave**, paid or unpaid time off from work to care for a new child, is common
- **Paternity leave** is paid or unpaid time off from work that fathers may take after the birth or adoption of a child



continued

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Concerns of Families

- In the U.S., the **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** allows full-time employed individuals to take job-protected leave without pay for the family transitions that involve close family members, such as spouses, children, and parents

continued

Concerns of Families

- Work can affect family life in positive ways
- It can be a source of identity, financial security, socialization, and fulfillment



continued

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Concerns of Families

- Work can also be a cause of frustration and stress, which can affect family relationships in a negative way
- Feelings of frustration and disharmony at work can carry into family relationships in the form of impatience, short temper, anxiety, or worry

continued

Concerns of Families

- People today live in a money-driven economy
- Economic swings can affect people's well-being and family life
- When the economy is in a **recession mode**, there is a slowing and decline in the economy
- When the economy is in a **recovery mode**, things again start to look hopeful



continued

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Concerns of Families

- When the economy is in an **expansion mode**, unemployment rates are usually lower
- A family's **standard of living** is a measure of the wealth, comforts, and material goods available to them
- The ways people react to their level of living impacts the family environment

continued

Concerns of Families

- **Special needs** include physical disabilities, cognitive disabilities, emotional and behavioral problems, and learning disorders
- The *Americans with Disabilities Act* defines a **disability** as a cognitive or physical impairment that impedes or limits common activities
- Children with special needs often require extra help that is different from what is necessary for most other children

continued

Concerns of Families

- Physical disabilities may involve mobility, such as walking or standing
- Assistive devices, medical treatments, or surgeries may improve some physical disabilities



continued

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Concerns of Families

- People vary cognitively, or in the ways in which they learn and process information
- Learning disorders usually involve reading and writing
- They are often not detected until a child enters school during middle childhood
- Educational therapists can help children with learning disorders

continued

Concerns of Families

- Social and emotional problems are often seen in behavioral issues that set children apart from their peers
- These disorders often keep children from normal activities and hamper relationships
- They can also affect a child's learning
- Therapy may help children find ways to deal with their emotions

continued

Concerns of Families

- The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** is a federal law that governs how states provide early intervention, special education, and other services to children with disabilities
- Part of the IDEA requires that public schools create an **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** for each eligible student

continued

Concerns of Families

- Students who are eligible for an IEP must have a **specific learning disability (SLD)**
- The most common placement is **inclusion**
- **Giftedness** or exceptionality in learning is detected early
- Children who are gifted are usually ahead of their peers in one or more areas of intelligence

continued

Concerns of Families

- Intellectual giftedness often requires additional family support and resources
- Many schools provide **pullout programs**, which allow children to leave the regular classroom for certain periods of time
- These programs allow students opportunities for advanced learning and socialization

Think Further

- Do you believe job stress and the status of the economy have affected your family life in a positive or negative way? How?



Checkpoint

1. How do divorce, remarriage, and stepparenting affect families?

- ✓ *(Answers will vary, but should include:) All family members are affected by the impact of divorce. Emotional challenges including loneliness, depression, and anxiety are common. A new marriage and family life can be a source of significant stress for all family members.*

continued



Checkpoint

2. Give an example of a workplace issue and describe how it can affect a family.
 - ✓ *(Answers will vary, but should reflect an understanding of text pages 55–58.)*
3. Beyond money to spend, how does a changing economy impact children and their families?
 - ✓ *Spending patterns change and as unemployment rates fluctuate so does the standard of living. Schools are affected by the changing economy as teachers and programs are added or cut.*

continued



Checkpoint

4. How does the *Americans with Disabilities Act* define a disability?
 - ✓ *a cognitive or physical impairment that impedes or limits common activities*
5. What is included in an IEP? Who helps develop an IEP?
 - ✓ *An IEP includes specific educational goals to best meet the student's needs. The parent or guardian, general education teacher, special needs teacher, school guidance counselor, psychologist, and school administrator are part of the IEP team.*

continued



Checkpoint

6. What are pullout programs?

- ✓ *school programs that allow children to leave the regular classroom for certain periods of the day or week for advanced learning in a particular subject area along with social opportunities with peers*