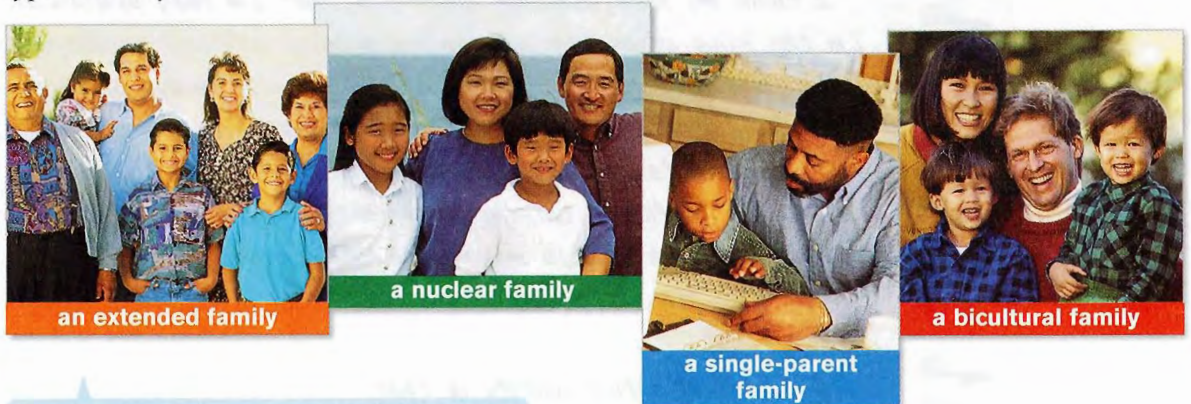


# Every family's different.

## Let me tell you about my family.

**starting point**

**A Group work** Look at these different types of families. Can you explain what these terms mean? What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of family?



An advantage of having an extended family is that you always have a baby-sitter in the house.

**B Pair work** What's your family like? Choose at least five questions to discuss.

- What type of family do you come from?
- What's something unusual or special about your family?
- What are some rules that people have to follow in your family?
- How does your family celebrate birthdays?
- Is there a holiday your family always celebrates together?
- Who do you talk to in your family when you have a problem?
- What's the best thing about spending time with your family?  
What's the worst thing?
- If you have any brothers or sisters, what things do you enjoy doing together?
- Do you have a close relationship with the other members of your family?  
What's an advantage of being close to one's family?
- Who takes care of the children in your family?

## How are their families different?

**listening**

**A** Listen to Paul and Andrea talking about their families. What are two things that are different about their families? Complete the chart.

	Paul	Andrea
1.		
2.		

**B Pair work** Is your family similar to Paul's or Andrea's? If so, how? If not, how is it different?

**grammar  
focus**

**Noun clauses after be**

*That* in noun clauses after *be* is optional. Notice the prepositions that are used with the following nouns.

An advantage **of** having an older brother is **(that) you always have someone to help you.**

The best thing **about** having brothers and sisters is **(that) you're never lonely.**

A problem **with** having lots of brothers and sisters is **(that) you don't get a very big allowance.**

**A** Complete these sentences. Then compare with a partner.

1. An advantage of having an extended family is . . .
2. The worst thing about being a parent is . . .
3. The best thing about having a nuclear family is . . .
4. A disadvantage of being an only child is . . .
5. The worst thing about living near your parents is . . .
6. A problem with being the oldest child is . . .
7. The best thing about having a supportive family is . . .

**B** Now combine these sentences, and complete them. Then compare with a partner.

1. I'm the most talkative person in my family. It's an advantage.

*An advantage of being the most talkative person in your family is that you get a lot of attention.*

2. I'm the youngest in my family. It's a disadvantage.
3. I'm a twin. It's an advantage.
4. I have young parents. It's an advantage.
5. I work in the family business. It's a disadvantage.
6. I live alone. It's a problem.
7. I have a large family. It's a disadvantage.

**C** Read the results of this survey question.

What do you think? Write two advantages and two disadvantages of living away from one's parents.

**Do you think children should live away from their parents after age 18?**

Yes 69%      No 29%  
Not sure 2%

**Your place in the family**

**discussion**

**A** Check the sentences that apply to you.

- Our family always discusses problems frankly when they come up.
- My parents were very strict when I was a child.
- Both my parents have always worked.
- I don't live with my parents.
- I got along with my brothers and sisters when we were young.
- I never share personal secrets with my brothers and sisters.
- I always talk to my parents before making major decisions.
- I don't plan to follow in my parents' footsteps.

**B Group work** Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the situations you checked in Exercise A.





## Describing parents and children

### vocabulary

**A** Look at these adjectives. Which do you think are positive (+)? Which are negative (-) or neutral (N)? Compare your answers with a partner.

- |                 |                   |                 |                |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| ___ active      | ___ generous      | ___ mischievous | ___ sensible   |
| ___ adventurous | ___ inexperienced | ___ patient     | ___ strict     |
| ___ frank       | ___ innocent      | ___ responsible | ___ supportive |

**B** Which words in Exercise A describe parents? Which describe children? Are there any adjectives that can fit under both categories? Can you think of two more words to add to each list?

Parents	Children

**C** Can you think of an opposite for each word in Exercise A?

**D Pair work** Choose an adjective to describe each person in your family. Ask follow-up questions.

A: My father is very supportive.

B: In what way?

A: For one thing, he . . .



## Family rules

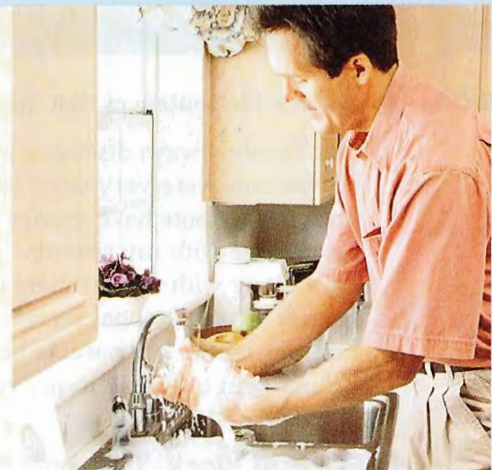
### discussion

**Group work** What rules do you have in your family? Discuss these topics and add others. Are there any rules your families all share? Make a list.

- doing household chores
- coming home late
- preparing meals
- watching TV
- talking on the telephone
- using the bath or shower
- settling disputes
- using the family car
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*During the school year, I wasn't allowed to watch TV until I finished my homework.*

*In our family, we all have weekend chores. For example, I have to wash the dishes and take out the garbage.*





**reading** **A Pair work** Discuss these questions. Then read the article, and compare your ideas to the author's.

1. Look at the title of the article. What do you think it's going to be about?
2. Do you think parents should be strict with their children?

## UPSIDE-DOWN FAMILIES

**T**he parents set the rules and the children obey, right? Wrong. In a growing number of North American families, adults have let their children take over. "Parents want to be nurturing and make their small children happy, but many have become confused about the best way to achieve this," explains a noted child psychologist. "Large numbers of parents are being controlled by their child, to the point that entire families end up organizing themselves around a small child's emotions."

The problem is that many mothers and fathers try to be a friend to their children. However, parenting is not a popularity contest. Challenging authority is a normal part of child development and is strongest between the ages of four and six. Setting rules and enforcing them teaches the child that he or she is equal in worth but not equal in authority. Then the child feels safe and secure and can be a kid again. Believe it or not, it's frightening for children to realize they are in charge of a situation. In upside-down families, when parents back down from rules they set, children become very insecure, anxious, and out of control. They don't trust their parents to protect them. Parents should follow these tips to avoid this situation and keep control.

- ▶ Be a leader. Parents cannot guide a child and seek his or her approval of their decisions at the same time. Don't say, "It's time for bed. OK?" Instead, say, "It's time for bed, kids."
- ▶ Don't make rules quickly and then change them. It's very important to be consistent. Once you make a rule, stick to it.
- ▶ Pay less attention to your children when their behavior is bad and more when it is good. Do not reward bad behavior by giving extra attention to it. Instead, save your attention for when the child acts appropriately.
- ▶ Don't allow your kids to call you by your first name. This removes the authority figure in a child's life. Children need parents, not another friend.

**B Pair work** Which of these statements would the author agree with? Which ones do you agree with?

1. Children don't usually challenge authority.
2. Children like to feel that they are in charge.
3. It's important for parents to discipline children.
4. Parents should be leaders, not friends.

**C Group work** Discuss these questions. Then share your answers with the class.

1. Do you think your parents were too strict? Why or why not?
2. Will you use the same rules in raising your children?