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FAMILY, HEALTH AND SECURITY

The oldest and most common human institution, ‘family’ is the most important group to which most people ever belong. Each one of us is born into a family – with a father, mother, may be grandparents, uncles, aunts and siblings. Among them we feel protected, wanted and loved. In a family we are cared for and feel emotionally and financially secure. Family teaches us how to interact and get along with others, obey and respect elders. It helps in learning customs and traditions and imbibing values and culture which are passed on from one generation to the next.

In this lesson you will learn more about the functions and types of family and its role in the health and safety of various members specially children.



OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to :

- define the term ‘family’ and state its important functions;
- describe the different types of families;
- relate the changing family scenario to the changing roles and responsibilities of family members;
- define the term ‘health’;
- elaborate the factors contributing to the family health;
- explain the meaning of ‘security’;
- present different ways of providing a safe and secure home.

3.1 DEFINE THE TERM FAMILY

Family is universal and typically consists of a married man and woman and their children. Family means a group of related people who share a common home.

**Notes**

Members belong to a family through birth, marriage or adoption.

Three characteristics of family emerge from here. These are, a couple is married and hence has legitimate status to sexual relationship between husband and wife. Second, it implies a common place of residence for all its members. Of course, it is seen that sometimes one or more members of a family may temporarily live away from the house for reasons of work or otherwise. Similarly, some members like old and aged parents/uncles/aunts or even cousin may stay with the family and are considered a part of the family.

Thirdly, a family consists of not just the married couple but also children, both natural and adopted. Natural children are those born to the couple and others may be legally adopted by the couple.

Clearly, therefore, the family is the first organized unit of a society. Now let us find out the functions of a family.

Functions of A Family

There are several important functions which a family performs.

- (i) It gives **protection**: Indeed, it provides the best setting for the rearing and care of newborns and infants, adolescents, the sick and the infirm or aged.
- (ii) It provides **emotional support** of a degree and kind that is not available otherwise. Such bonding is indispensable for the healthy development of children. In fact, the family is the primary group which allows intimacy and affection to be freely expressed.
- (iii) It **educates** its members, who learn to live life in the setting of a family. Children are taught the do's and don'ts of the society, how to interact with others, respect and obey elders, etc.
- (iv) It provides **financial security**. Basic needs such as of food, shelter, clothing are provided for members and they share responsibilities and work.
- (v) It acts as a source of **recreation**. A family can be a source of happiness, where members can talk to one another, play and do various activities together. These may range from house-hold work to celebration of festivals and other events like birth, engagement or marriage.
- (vi) Family also performs the function of **socializing** children. Parents give their children the first lessons in how to live with other people, to love, share, help in time of need and take on responsibilities. The family nurtures attitudes and values in children and influences their habits. Traditional skills are also picked up within the family. The family also prepares its young members to get formal education in school and beyond.
- (vii) Family also fulfills the **sexual function** which is a biological need of every human being. You know that family implies marriage and all societies approve of sexual relation between man and woman after marriage.



- (viii) **Reproductive function** is fulfilled as a result of sexual relationship between married man and woman. Children so born are the future members of the society.

Look at your own family and see whether all of the functions mentioned above are being fulfilled. Your answer will probably be yes.

Let us now see what are the different types of families around us.

3.2 TYPES OF FAMILY

You may have seen that some families are very small and others that are very large. You are right, of course. Two types of families are seen in India-

- Joint Family
- Nuclear Family

A great deal of importance is attached to the family as a unit. In our country, Indian families, generally, are very stable and child-centered. Let us learn about the characteristics of both joint and nuclear families.

Joint Family is made of a combination of nuclear families, and consequently it is much larger. It is made up of a man and his wife, their unmarried daughters, married sons, their wives and children. The men are of the same family and women enter the family by marriage. However, where the woman is the head of the family, it is the mean who enter the family through marriage. It is a group of more than one or even two generations living together.



Fig 3.1 A Joint Family

Typical characteristics of a joint family therefore, are as follows-

- i) All member live under the same roof.
- ii) Members eat food cooked in a common kitchen.



- iii) Members are co-owners of property of the family. The eldest male member of the joint family looks after the finances and the property i.e., there is a common purse.
- iv) Members participate in common family events, festivals and religious ceremonies.
- v) Daughters of the family get married and move out to their husband's house while sons remain in the house with their wives and children.
- vi) The decision making power in a joint family is with eldest adult male member. The eldest woman also plays a role in decision making but in a subtle way.

Traditionally, joint families used to be the rule in our society. Things are changing now especially in urban areas. However, the joint family system still continues in agricultural and business families.

There are several **advantages of a joint family**:

- It encourages family members to be co-operative and accommodating. Work, especially agricultural work, can be shared.
- It allows for the old, the helpless and the unemployed in the family to be looked after and cared for.
- Rearing of small children becomes easier, especially when both parents work.
- A child gets emotional and economic support in the event of the death of a parent.
- There is greater financial security.

Joint families also have their problems.

- Women are sometimes badly and unequally treated.
- Often disputes arise among the members over property or the running of a business.
- Some of the women have to do all the housework, and they get very little time or opportunity to develop their personality.

The Nuclear family is usually a small unit made up of the husband, the wife and their unmarried children. Sometimes a brother or unmarried sister of the husband may be living with them. This would be an **extended family**.

There are some **advantages of living in a nuclear family**:

- Members of a nuclear family are generally more independent and show greater initiative and self-reliance.



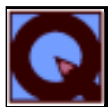
Fig 3.2 A Nuclear Family



- The children are frequently encouraged to make decisions. This increases their self-confidence.
- Deeper emotional ties develop among the members. This is on account of the greater privacy and also opportunities for mutual interaction which are available in a nuclear family.
- It is seen that as a society becomes more industrialised and urbanized, the incidence of nuclear families increases.
- One of the foremost reasons for families to be nuclear, especially in big cities is housing problem. Larger families need larger space to live in. If families have to live conveniently there is little option but to stick to a “nuclear” family.

Disadvantages of a Nuclear Family

- There is no adult support to the young couple. No experienced person of the family is readily available for advice.
- When both the parents are working no one from the family is there to take care of children.
- In case of adversity there is no one to support the family financially or emotionally.
- Social values like ‘adjustment’, sharing or cooperation are difficult to learn.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.1

1. Pick the correct alternatives. Give reasons for your selection.

i) In a joint family the purse is

- (a) common for the whole family
- (b) with every head of small unit
- (c) with every female head of small unit
- (d) with both male and female heads

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(ii) In a joint family all the decisions are made by

- (a) only male head of the family
- (b) only female head of the family
- (c) both male and female head of the family
- (d) all members of the family



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- (iii) In a joint family property is owned by
- (a) only male head of the family
 - (b) only female head of the family
 - (c) both male and female head of the family
 - (d) all members of the family
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2. List two characteristics which children living in joint family develop and two characteristics which children living in nuclear family develop.
- i) Joint
 - a)
 - b)
 - ii) Nuclear
 - a)
 - b)

3.3 CHANGING FAMILY SCENARIO

As we have said earlier, industrialization has brought about many changes in the type of family and as a result, in the roles and responsibilities of members of a family. So far, in a traditional family, the sons 'took on' the family business or profession. The father or male members used to earn the money and were responsible for the 'outside' work. The women looked after the home and the children.

Now children, boy or girl, are more educated and have greater and better opportunity for jobs. They leave their home to work elsewhere, most often to urban areas from rural areas and suburbs. This has resulted in more nuclear families. Because of smaller families, requirements of the family have changed, for example ration requirements are less and also different because the number of people at home are less.

Being on their own, women have a greater responsibility of looking after the home and outside work. Similarly, the men also have to help out at homes looking after



the children, etc. In some cases women have taken up jobs outside the house and have the added responsibility of earning and looking after the home and children.

The children too have to be more self-reliant and have to do their share of work at home.

Family life was earlier rigidly patriarchal, where children and wives had few rights and privileges and were not free to voice an opinion. It is now undergoing a change. In the modern home women have greater freedom and social importance. The children too have rights of their own. Their interests and desires have to be considered. They also are able to voice their opinion on family matters which concern them. Duties, which are divided in a joint family because of presence of grand parents, uncles, aunts and siblings become concentrated with the parents.

As the nuclear family is far away from the rest of the family and relatives, the larger community of neighbours, colleagues, friends etc. become important. The family members need to adjust and adapt to them harmoniously.



Activity: Look around and observe the type of families in your neighbourhood. Observe the members in any two families. Record the following information.

- Who is the head of the family
- Who controls the finances
- Are both partners working
- Who is the decision maker
- Who mostly does household chores
- Who does the shopping
- Who takes care of children

3.4 CONCEPT OF ‘HEALTH’

Can you define ‘Health’? Well you are right. Health is the state of being free from disease. But, this is not a complete definition of health. According to the World Health Organisation: **“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease.”**

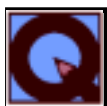
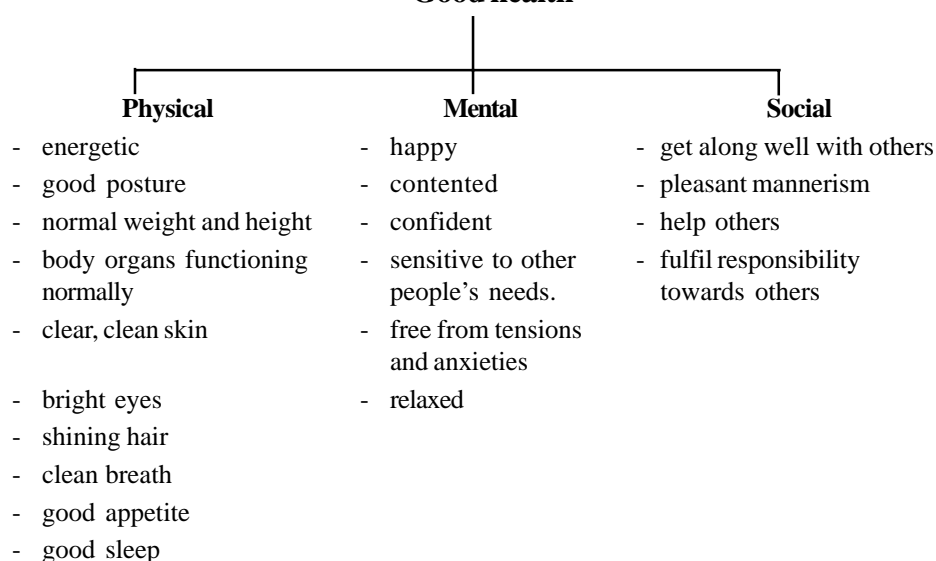
What does this mean? It means that health includes being physically fit, mentally relaxed, happy and free from worries and socially one is able to get along with people, have confidence in dealings with other people in society, help others and is sensitive to their needs.

Can you now list the indicators of good health? Yes, you are right. These are as follows:



Notes

Good health



INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.2

1. Define health in your own words.

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2. List ten characteristics of good physical health.

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3. List five characteristics each of mental and social health.

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Factors contributing to health of the family

A family includes the young and old, men and women, each with different needs and health requirements. Let us discuss requirements for good health of a family here.

1) Nutritious Food

Why do we need food? We need to eat so that we get energy, build muscles and bones and protect our body from disease. We must eat a balanced diet, which means our food must have carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals in the right quantity. The 'right quantity' depends on the age, sex, work of a person, status of health etc. A growing child needs more protein, an adult needs more carbohydrate, sick people need different types of food depending on the disease. A person with diabetes should not be given sweets. Food eaten at the proper time is a healthy habit. We should avoid eating in between meals. Children should be encouraged to eat fruits and vegetables and less of fried and 'fast' food like hamburgers and pizzas. Consumption of sweets, chocolates and 'cola' drinks should be minimal.

2) Personal Hygiene

There are four major aspects of personal hygiene:

- (i) Cleanliness
- (ii) Physical exercise
- (iii) Rest and sleep
- (iv) Healthy habits

Let us study more about these aspects.

i) Cleanliness

Hands: These must be cleaned regularly. We are continually handling a variety of things like furniture, books, coins, currency notes, animals etc. All these carry germs which may be picked up by your hand and fingers and transferred over other parts of the body or into your mouth through food. To avoid getting any infection through these modes remember the following:

- Never put your fingers into your mouth.
- Never turn the page of your book or newspaper by applying saliva to your finger and likewise never count the currency notes in a similar manner.
- Any time holding the currency notes or other objects in between the lips is even more risky as you may catch germs.
- After using toilets (latrines) always wash your hands very well with soap or with clean charcoal ash but never with any soil (*mitti*).

- Indian culture of washing hands before and after meals is certainly a hygienic practice, which must never be forgotten.
- Shaking hands, though very common, is a potential source of transmission of germs.

Skin: In order to keep the skin healthy take a bath daily because regular bathing does the following:

- Keeps the skin clean and free of germs
- Removes the body odours given out in perspiration
- Keeps the sweat pores open

Also, change undergarments daily and wash them daily. Use handkerchief/ disposable napkins for nose.

Hair: The hair should be kept clean by frequent washing and regular combing. This keeps them healthy and free of parasites (like the head lice) and dandruff. Applying oil to the hair in moderate quantities at frequent intervals is required.

Teeth: The teeth should be cleaned at least twice a day, i.e., before going to bed, at night and after getting up in the morning. The mouth should be washed after every meal. This removes most of the extra food particles stuck in between the teeth. Too many sweets and chocolates is harmful to both your teeth and gums. When teeth and gums are not clean and healthy one is likely to get bad breath.

Breathing by nose: Always breathe by nose and never by mouth. Your nose filters out the dirt and germs from the in-going air, thus protecting you from many diseases.

Eyes: The eyes must be cleaned and washed with clear water two or three times every day. Otherwise sticky white/yellow dirt sticks on inner sides of the eyes. Never share towels with others, even in the same family. Applying kajal may some times lead to eye infections specially if the same applying stick is shared by others.

Ears: The ears should be kept clean. If you do not wash ears every day you can see dirt depositing on the insides of the ears. The wax inside may be cleaned by a soft moistened swab (phurari). Never put pointed object into your ears.

Nails: Nature has provided nails for efficient working of fingers in holding and manipulating objects. These are also an item of personal beauty. But long or untrimmed nails gather dirt and germs underneath. So, always keep your nails trimmed and clean.




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INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.3

Mention two important indicators each for the following :

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Part of body</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1.	Hands	
2.	Skin	
3.	Hair	
4.	Eyes	
5.	Nails	
6.	Nose	
7.	Ears	

3. Physical Exercise

Some kind of physical exercise is necessary for all age groups. Children, adolescents and the young specially need it. Physical exercise improves blood circulation. As a result, all the organs of the body receive the required oxygen and nourishment for normal healthy growth.

There are a variety of physical exercises to suit you:

- Brisk walking, running or jogging, aerobics, yoga, etc.
- Playing fast games like kabaddi, kho-kho, football, hockey and other such sports
- Wrestling, dund-baithak, judo, karate, etc.


Fig 3.3 Exercise

For older people long gentle walks and yogasanas are excellent for keeping fit.

4. Posture

Fig 3.4 Good Posture

Correct posture is also important for health as well as for impressive personality. You know that posture means the manner in which one sits, walks, stands and works. You must learn to sit, stand and walk with your back straight and shoulders stretched.

5. Rest and Sleep

During the day you work a lot and your body muscles get tired. Similarly, your brain too gets tired because you read and memorize and do so many other things mentally. Resting for a short while after intense work and sleep at night


Fig 3.5 Rest is essential
HOME SCIENCE



Notes

refreshes your body for more work the next day. Sleep provides a good rest not only to the tired brain but also to the fatigued body muscles.

How much to sleep?

- Very young infants sleep for most of the day.
- For the adults 6-7 hours of continuous sleep is sufficient.

The room or the place where you sleep should be well ventilated to allow fresh air to come in, also it should be free of noise and disturbance.

6. Healthy Habits

You should develop good habits. Some important ones are as follows:

- Take your food at regular hours
- Go to bed at regular timings
- Clear your bowels (passing stools) every day, preferably in the mornings.
- Say 'no' to any temptation of even just trying once to taste drugs (stimulants and sedatives). Similarly, don't smoke or chew tobacco or even eat pan masala and keep away from alcoholic drinks.
- Never spit, urinate or defecate on the roadside or in public. Use only public latrines and that too carefully, without making them dirty.

7. Sanitation - Keeping the Surroundings Clean

Sanitation means not to allow our surroundings to become dirty. What are the things that can make your surroundings dirty?

(i) From your homes

- Kitchen waste, peel of vegetables and fruits
- Occasionally, the discarded stale food
- Water after washings of utensils
- Outflowing bathroom water
- Human excreta, though normally flushed into sewers if provided, or into the soak pits, or in very rare cases disposed off manually in dry latrines.
- Sometimes, deliberately killed dead rats, cockroaches, etc.
- Some waste paper, waste packing bags and tins.
- Sometimes plant wastes if there happens to be any kitchen garden or flower beds.

(ii) Garbage outside-on roads and streets

- Leaves fallen off from roadside trees and bird droppings



- Animals excreta. Stray animals such as cows, buffaloes and street dogs pass out faeces and urine. At times even the owners of pet dogs take them out and let them ease at public places.
- Occasionally dead animals like cats dogs or cattle may just be left in the open to rot for some days.
- Sometimes deliberately thrown out domestic waste articles.

(iii) Garbage inside your schools

Almost all the things as listed above under homes can be found in a school also. There may even be kitchen refuse if there happens to be a canteen or a refreshment stall in the school.

What happens if your surroundings are dirty?

If your surroundings are dirty, having rotten things, choked drains and accumulated dirty and stinking water, it presents an ugly look. Besides, these are the breeding places for insects and a whole lot of disease-producing germs grow there. People living or working in such conditions often suffer from a variety of diseases such as cholera, jaundice, malaria and tuberculosis.

- iv) **Climate and Clothing:** Wearing clothes according to season is also important to maintain good health. You know clothes protect you from extreme heat and cold. Besides, clothes must be clean or else will cause problems of skin. Wear cottons in summer. It keeps the skin comfortable because it absorbs perspiration and dries up quickly to keep the body cool and dry. Wool keeps you warm and protects you from cold during winters.



Fig 3.6 Appropriate Clothing



INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.4

Mention two reasons each for

- | | |
|----------------------|-------|
| (i) Regular exercise | _____ |
| | _____ |
| (ii) Good posture | _____ |
| | _____ |
| (iii) Rest and sleep | _____ |
| | _____ |
| (iv) Healthy habits | _____ |



- (v) Clothing to suit climate.

3.5 CONCEPT OF “SECURITY”

Security means safety to life. It can be physical and psychological or mental.

You know that **physical security** is safety of the body and its processes. It has a direct bearing on health. When air around you is polluted or the water you drink or the food that you eat is infected with germs you can fall sick. If the floor is slippery or when the roof top is unprotected you can fall and hurt yourself. The electric wiring, the gadgets, the plug points, the sharp tools and the fire in the kitchen, the broken glass/glass panes, etc., that you use or come in contact with can be a source of injury to your body. For protecting your body you have to make sure that your house/school, is a safe place to live and work and you yourself follow the rules of safety. Not only that, you also make others follow rules of safety.

Psychological/mental security is about how you feel about yourself and everybody around you. It depends on how you have been brought up.

Parents try to bring up children with loving care. They only socialize them i.e., teach them about family, relationships, rituals and rules of the society. They also inculcate in them the values and ethics of living with others and disciplining self. When children grow up in such an environment they are emotionally stable and contented. They become socially mature enough to get along with everybody around them. They respect all and have a positive image of self. They are ready to face any eventuality – success or failure. When they fail they know that their families are behind them.

These days in many urban homes with nuclear families, both parents are working. Children in these homes come back to empty house and fend for themselves for at least three to four hours. Contact between parents/adults and children is important and this can be through telephone and/or a good neighbour. Otherwise children can indulge in mischief or go astray.

When parents are home, both working or non-working mothers, need to spend some quality time with their children. During this time they can listen to their child's narration of what happened during the day, if they have attended to their homework, if they need anything for next day or need to prepare for a test etc. They can also share with them about their own interesting experiences and happenings. This whole exercise is to bring the children and parents close to each other, to give children a feeling that parents feel concerned, love and support them in any situation. Needless to say, all this is an investment by parents to raise mentally secure children.



3.6 SAFETY FROM CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can be physical, sexual or mental. In any form it is forbidden and against the safety of the child. Physical abuse is when adults beat the child or punish by locking in a room, making the child sit in a particular position for long hours. Sexual abuse means involving or forcing children into forbidden sexual activities. Mental abuse on the other hand is giving mental torture to the child. Calling a child good for nothing, emotionally blackmailing, socially boycotting the child and so on are forms of mental abuse. Children should have protection from all these.

3.7 SAFETY FROM SMOKING, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs generally start with peer pressure and for the sake of fun. But one soon gets into a habit of taking these and then there is no return.

When anyone smokes, one inhales carbon monoxide and nicotine, both harmful for the respiratory system leading to cancer of mouth and lung. Consumption of alcohol leads to hardening of arteries leading to a heart attack.

Drugs may be beneficial when administered under a doctor's supervision. They are stopped as soon as treatment is over. But the continued use of drugs like cocaine, morphine etc., produce addiction which in the long run can be fatal.

Breaking the habit of smoking and taking alcohol and drugs is very difficult but can be done under supervision and with a lot of support from concerned family member.

3.8 HOME AND SAFETY

Many accidents happen to people in their homes. People can hurt themselves by falling over or by burning themselves. Children may drink some of the poisonous things that we keep in the house such as insecticides or acids.

One of the most serious dangers is from fire. A room may catch fire because of a heater that tips over or malfunctions. Some very serious house fires start with a cigarette. Electrical wiring that is not properly done can also cause fires. It can also give you an electric shock.

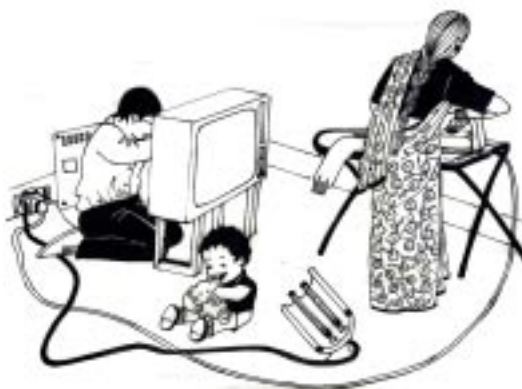


Fig. 3.7 Source of accidents



Activity

- Here are some pictures of dangers in the home. Use each picture to help you write a sentence of good advice. One has been done for you. Do the rest yourself.



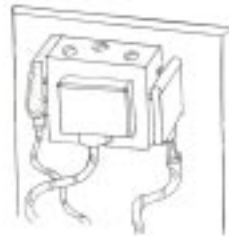
Turn saucepan handles so that they cannot be knocked over.



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- Compare the sentences that you have written with a partner. Work out four more sentences of good advice for safety in the home.
- Write a note on the safety measures observed at your home, keeping the following points in mind.
 - Kitchen
 - How safe is the cooking range/chullah
 - Gadgets you have, their condition and safety in use.
 - Sharp tools – condition and safety in use
 - Floor
 - Bathroom
 - Floor – for safety from falls.
 - Any other fixture if it comes in the way and can hurt

MODULE - 1

The art and science of managing home



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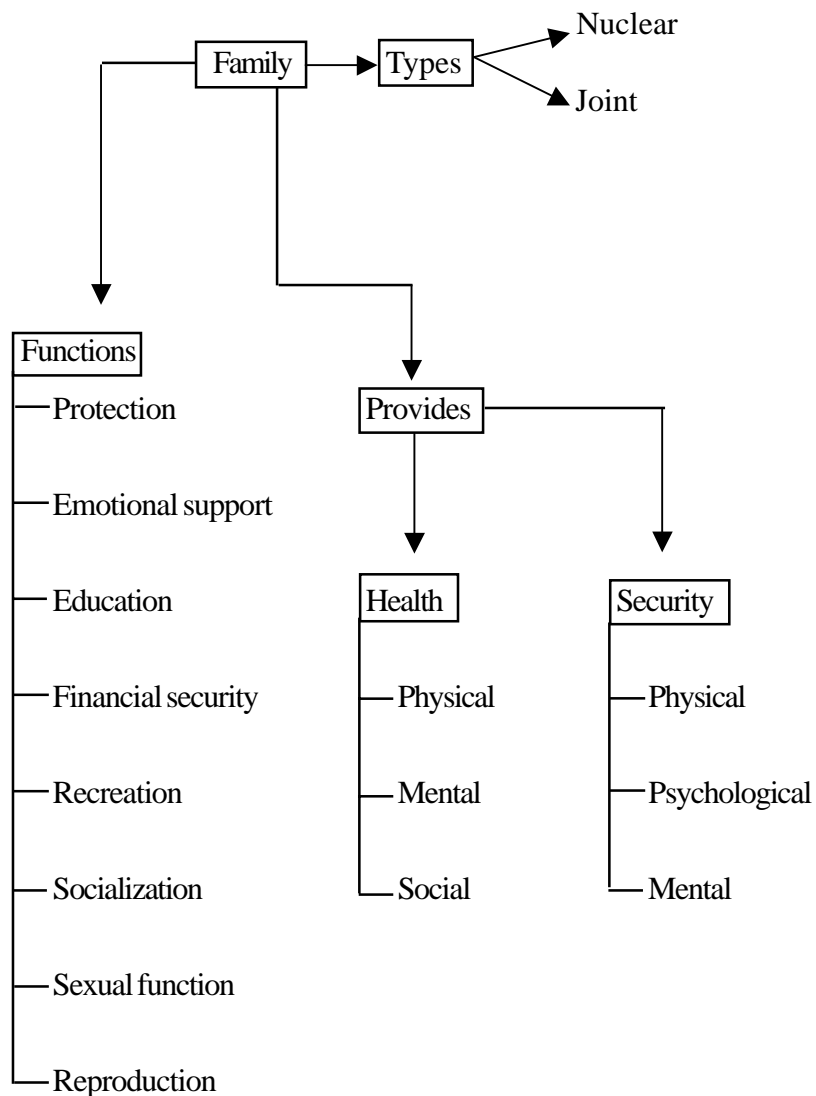
iii) Windows and glasspanes.

- If these can be conveniently closed and opened
- Any broken glasspanes that can hurt.

4. List some safety hazards at your home. What can you do to change unsafe conditions at your home?



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT





TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Define 'security'. State its two types.
2. Observe the following in your family and write a short note on their contribution in promoting mental security.
 - i) Members in the family
 - ii) Working members
 - iii) Closeness among members
 - iv) Division of labour among members
 - v) Any recent instance when one member has done something for the other.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

- 3.1** 1. i) a ii) a iii) d
2. i) a) sharing, b) emotional bonding with all
ii) a) independence, b) decision making
- 3.2** 1, 2, 3, → Refer to text
- 3.3** Refer to text
- 3.4** Refer to text

*For more information log on to
http://www.bccf.bc.ca/learn/wl_workfam.html*

MODULE - 1

*The art and science
of managing home*



Notes