

## Families – extended, nuclear, chosen

1. Write a short definition of the word *family*. Then, compare the definitions in class and find the similarities between them.

2. Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

blended      close-knit      extended      immediate      nuclear      single

- a) Your closest relatives, such as your parents, spouse and children, are your ..... family.
- b) Two parents and their children are a/an ..... family.
- c) Your parents, grandparents, children, aunts, uncles and cousins are your ..... family.
- d) A family whose members help and support each other is .....
- e) A/An ..... -parent family consists of children and one of their parents.
- f) A/An ..... family is a household with at least one stepparent, stepsibling or half-sibling.

3. Choose the correct words.

- a) For most people, the purpose of nuclear families is to **persevere/perverse/**  
**preserve** traditional values.
- b) Less **close-knit/affluent/upscale** nuclear households struggle to survive  
because the government is not supportive of them.
- c) **Fertility/Fertile/Fertilization** rates are dropping.
- d) Women are usually the ones **delegated/promoted/relegated** to housework.
- e) The **division/share/fraction** of people living in single-parent households is  
growing.
- f) The phenomenon of blended families has come to **eminence/**  
**prominence/importance** in the last couple of decades.
- g) Of course, to improve the perception of quality and **equitable/**  
**impartial/rightful** healthcare, improved access is needed.
- h) It is more common for couples to **cohere/coalesce/cohabit** than to get  
married.
- i) Families are not as close-knit as they used to be. Nowadays it's more of a  
transactional **bond/contract/warrant** between people.

4. Discuss whether the statements in ex. 3 are true for your country.
5. You are going to watch a video about the history of the nuclear family.  
Before watching, try to guess the answers to the questions.
  - a) When did nuclear households come to prominence in the US?
  - b) Why did nuclear households become so common there?
6. Watch the first part of the [video](https://youtu.be/sd9d5z7idyQ) [https://youtu.be/sd9d5z7idyQ] (to 02:45) and check your answers in ex. 5.
7. Before watching the second part of the video, write down three topics which you think will be addressed in it. Then, watch the second part of the [video](#) (02:45–05:00) and check your answers.
8. Complete the statements with the information you remember from the video. Then, watch the second part of the [video](#) (02:45–05:00) again and check your answers.
  - a) Over the last half century, the share of people living alone in America has .....
  - b) The thing that has not changed with the shift from an extended to a nuclear family unit is .....
  - c) The switch from an extended to a nuclear family has only been beneficial for .....
  - d) The phenomenon of chosen families came to prominence in .....
  - e) A chosen family can make its members' lives more .....
  - f) A family is a place where people offer unconditional love, and the bond between the members is not .....
9. Discuss the questions.
  - What surprised you most in the video?
  - In what way has the evolution of the family model been the same in your country as in the US?

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- To what extent do people in your country feel social pressure to form nuclear family units?
- What do you think of the idea of chosen families? Can people not related to each other form a family? Why/Why not?
- In what way can a chosen family make its members' lives more equitable? Can you give any examples?
- How has your family model been changing? Do you live differently than your grandparents, for example?



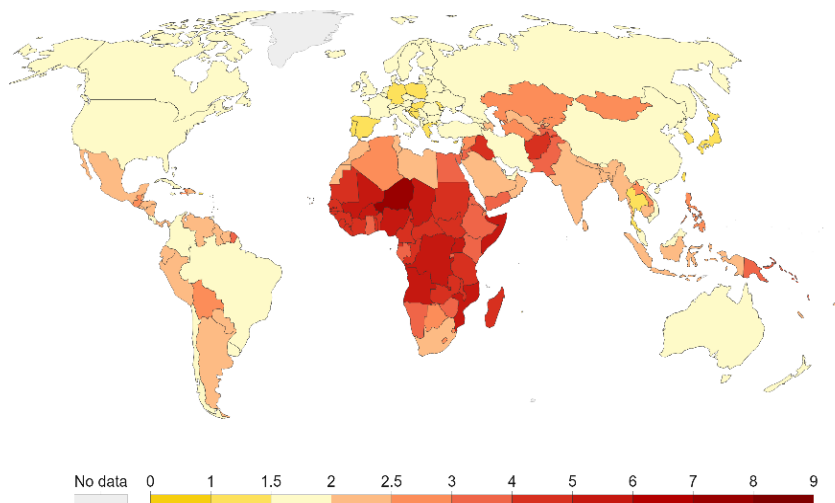
### 10. Look at the statistics. Discuss how the family model will change in the future and what implications for society the changes will have.

- Up to 1965 the average woman in the world had more than 5 children. Since then, the number has halved. Globally, the fertility rate is now below 2.5 children.

#### Children born per woman, 2019

Shown is the 'Total Fertility Rate' which measures the number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live to the end of her childbearing years and bear children in accordance with the age-specific fertility rates of the specific year.

Our World  
in Data



Source: Gapminder (2017)

OurWorldInData.org/fertility-rate • CC BY

## **Families – extended, nuclear, chosen**

- In some countries, population ageing brings an increasing proportion of households that include older persons. In Europe and Northern America, one third of households include at least one older person. By contrast, in Africa, where less than 5% of the total population is aged 60 years or over, less than a quarter of households have an elder.
- Across the 124 countries with available data, the median proportion of two-parent households is 73% among households with children under 15 years of age. The median proportion of one-parent households is much lower, at 21% for lone-mother households and 3% for lone-father households.

Sources: [ourworldindata.org](http://ourworldindata.org), [un.org](http://un.org)