

= Sister Wives =

Sister Wives is an American reality television series broadcast on TLC that began airing in 2010 . The show documents the life of a polygamist family , which includes patriarch Kody Brown , his four wives , and their 18 children . The family began the series living in Lehi , Utah , but has since moved to Las Vegas , Nevada in 2011 .

Brown and his wives have said they participated with the show to make the public more aware of polygamist families and to combat societal prejudices . Brown believes his polygamist arrangement is legal because he is legally married only to one woman , and the other marriages are spiritual unions . The series led to the Brown family being investigated for possible prosecution .

= = Concept = =

The show follows the lives of advertising salesman Kody Brown , his wives Meri , Janelle , Christine , and Robyn , and their 18 children . In the first season the show televised Brown 's courting and marriage of his fourth wife , Robyn Sullivan , in 2010 . Sullivan was the first new wife to enter the family in 16 years .

The only legal marriage was between Kody and his first wife Meri , until their legal divorce in September 2014 . ( He legally married fourth wife Robyn in December 2014 in order to legally adopt her three children ) . The other marriages are considered spiritual unions . As of 2015 Kody has been married to Meri for 25 years , Janelle for 22 years , Christine for 21 years , and Robyn for 5 years . Kody and Meri have a daughter named Mariah , their only child . Kody and Janelle have six children : daughters Madison and Savanah and sons Logan , Hunter , Garrison , and Gabriel . Kody and Christine have six children : daughters Aspyn , Mykelti , Gwendlyn , Ysabel , and Truely and son Paedon . Robyn had three children from her first marriage , which was monogamous : Dayton , Aurora , and Breanna . Kody legally adopted them in June 2015 . Kody and Robyn have two children : son Solomon and daughter Ariella .

Meri , Robyn , and Christine were all raised in polygamist families , but Janelle was not . Although Christine 's mother left the faith she still supports them . Months before the marriage of Janelle and Kody , however , Janelle 's mother entered into a polygamist marriage with Kody 's father . The Brown family belongs to the Apostolic United Brethren ( AUB . ) For years before the series , the family kept their polygamist lifestyle what they called a " quasi @-@ secret " .

= = Children = =

Kody has 18 children :

With Meri :

Mariah ( July 29 , 1995 ) daughter

With Janelle :

Logan ( May 21 , 1994 ) son

Madison ( November 3 , 1995 ) daughter

Married to Caleb Brush since June 4 , 2016

Hunter ( February 9 , 1997 ) son

Garrison ( April 10 , 1998 ) son

Gabriel ( October 11 , 2001 ) son

Savanah ( December 7 , 2004 ) daughter

With Christine :

Aspyn ( March 14 , 1995 ) daughter

Mykelti ( June 9 , 1996 ) daughter

Engaged to Antonio Padron

Paedon ( August 7 , 1998 ) son

Gwendlyn ( July 23 , 2001 ) daughter

Ysabel ( March 7 , 2003 ) daughter

Truely ( April 13 , 2010 ) daughter  
With Robyn :  
Solomon ( October 27 , 2011 ) son  
Ariella Mae ( January 10 , 2016 ) daughter  
Robyn 's children from her first marriage who were adopted by Kody on June 17 , 2015 :  
Dayton ( January 16 , 2000 ) son  
Aurora ( June 4 , 2002 ) daughter  
Breanna ( April 8 , 2005 ) daughter

= = Development = =

In the autumn of 2009 , independent producers Timothy Gibbons and Christopher Poole approached Figure 8 Films , a North Carolinian company , with the concept of a reality series about the Brown family . Bill Hayes , the president of Figure 8 Films , said the company agreed to the idea after meeting with the Browns and deciding their lives would make a great story . Camera crews shot footage of the family in mid @-@ 2010 to be used in the first season , ending in May with the marriage of Kody Brown and Robyn Sullivan . The crews continued to film them afterward in case the series was picked up for a second season . Sister Wives was publicly introduced on August 6 , 2010 , at the Television Critics Association summer media tour in Beverly Hills , California . The series ' first episode , an hour long , was broadcast on TLC on September 26 , 2010 , and the first season continued with six half @-@ hour chapters until October 17 , 2010 .

The broadcast of Sister Wives came at a time that polygamy and multiple marriages were a prevalent topic in American pop culture . Big Love , the hit HBO series about fictional Utah polygamist Bill Henrickson , his three sister wives , and their struggle to gain acceptance in society , had already been on the air for several years . In early September 2010 , the drama series Lone Star , about a con man on the verge of entering into multiple marriages , premiered on Fox but was quickly canceled after two episodes , and when Sister Wives debuted , actress Katherine Heigl was in the process of developing a film about Carolyn Jessop , a woman who fled from a polygamist sect .

In October 2010 , TLC announced it had commissioned a second season , which began in March 2011 . A TLC interview with the Brown family was broadcast on October 31 , 2010 , and a one @-@ hour program featuring the honeymoon of Kody Brown and Robyn Sullivan aired on November 22 , 2010 .

= = Episodes = =

= = = Season 1 = = =

The nine @-@ episode first season ran from September 26 to November 21 , 2010 . The season premiere introduced viewers to Kody Brown and his three wives , Meri , Janelle , and Christine , and their twelve children , all of whom lived in a ranch @-@ style home with three interconnected apartments . It also chronicled Kody 's dating and engagement to Robyn Sullivan , who herself has three children , marking the first time in 16 years Kody had courted another wife . The new relationship creates insecurity and jealousy among the other three wives , but they ultimately accept her and welcome her into the family . During the fourth episode of the season , Christine gives birth to her sixth child , Truely , which brings the family to 16 children including Robyn 's three kids .

Later , Kody and Meri go to Mexico to celebrate their twentieth wedding anniversary , where Meri discussed her sadness about her infertility problems and the jealousy that has arisen from Kody 's engagement to Robyn . Kody proposes in vitro fertilisation , but she turns down the idea as she is only interested in a naturally occurring conception . As Robyn 's wedding approaches , the three sister wives help Robyn prepare , and they begin to bond . However , Kody upsets his wives when he reveals he secretly chose Robyn 's wedding dress himself , which makes Christine feel so

betrayed that she angrily walks away in mid @-@ interview . Kody eventually apologizes , and the five reconcile . The first season finale ends with the wedding of Kody and Robyn , where Meri , Janelle , and Christine present her with a Claddagh ring to welcome her into the family .

= = = Season 2 = = =

Season 2 ran 23 episodes from March 13 , 2011 to November 27 , 2011 , though many sources refer to the episodes airing from September 25 , 2011 to November 27 , 2011 as Season 3 . This is due to a short hiatus from June 5 , 2011 to September 25 , 2011 .

Season 2 begins with the Browns heading to New York to appear on national television for the first time as open polygamists , while back home the kids head off to their first day of public school . Throughout the season , the Browns visit various friends and family members and reflect on how their relationships have changed with these people since they became open polygamists . These friends and family members include Kody 's parents ( also polygamists ) , Kody 's high school friends , and various monogamous couples that Kody and the sister wives know . Part 1 of Season 2 also follows the Browns through Kody and Janelle 's anniversary camping trip , preparing and participating in Halloween , and Christmas , which the Browns celebrate in a snowy mountain cabin . During Season 2 we also learn more about Meri 's personal struggle with her risk of cancer and the loss of her sister . In episode 5 , Kody , Christine , and their children take a trip to Las Vegas , which we later learn is the beginning of the Browns ' subsequent move to Las Vegas . The final episodes of Season 2 follow the Browns with their real estate agent Mona Riekkie through their struggle to find a home in Las Vegas suitable for polygamists , telling the kids that they are moving , and the subsequent move to Las Vegas . Realtor , Mona Riekkie finds rental homes for each of the wives and Kody . Once the Browns settle into their new homes they discuss the possibility of finding a home for all of them to live together or four homes in one cul @-@ de @-@ sac . In the last episode before the hiatus , Robyn announces that she is expecting her and Kody 's first child .

The second part of Season 2 brings the announcement of the sex of Robyn and Kody 's baby and the Browns ' struggle to adjust to life in Las Vegas . The episodes following the Season 2 hiatus focus largely on Robyn 's pregnancy and the kids ' adjustment to their new lives . The abrupt move to Las Vegas brings about behavioral problems in some of the older kids , which is also discussed largely in the second half of Season 2 . During these episodes the Browns also explore possible businesses that the five of them ( Kody and the sister wives ) can run together . Several episodes after the hiatus discuss specific topics such as jealousy among the sister wives , especially regarding courting a new wife , how the parents combat the influence of Las Vegas on their children , and how the Browns are preparing the older children for college . Mona Riekkie is back in this season and is working with the family on finding a permanent home in Vegas . In the finale , Robyn gives birth to baby Solomon on October 27 , 2011 and the possibility of Meri having more children once again resurfaces .

Although the ongoing investigation of the Browns is brought up during Season 2 , it is not extensively discussed , and the progress of the investigation is unknown .

= = = Season 3 = = =

Season 3 premiered on May 13 , 2012 after vague details surfaced about the show 's spring return on the Twitter account of sister wife Robyn Sullivan Brown . The twenty one episode season mainly dealt with the family 's inability to be a cohesive unit while living in four separate homes . Meri explains more about the infertility problems she has experienced , while Christine discloses more on her jealousy of Robyn . The season returned from hiatus on November 18 , 2012 , to the Brown family still discussing their options into moving their family onto one property , and invest in a cul @-@ de @-@ sac where they can build four homes . It is more evident this season that living in separate homes is tearing the family apart . Towards the end of the season , the family plans a three @-@ day trip to Nauvoo , Illinois , the birthplace of American polygamy . In the last episode on December 30 , 2012 , the family also deals with the upcoming departure to college of the eldest

Brown child , Logan .

== Season 4 ==

Season 4 premiered on July 21 , 2013 . It chronicles the family as they move into four adjacent houses within the same neighborhood . The wives are still working on starting their jewelry business . Meri comes to a decision following Robyn 's offer to be her surrogate .

== Season 5 ==

Season 5 includes seven episodes , eight if you include the " Tell All " at the end , and eleven if you include the " Sitting Down with the Browns " , " Meri @-@ Behind the Scenes " , and the " Robyn , -Behind the Scenes " episodes . Season 5 begins with two daughters graduating high school , Mykelti and Madison . The grown ups plan to lip sync a song to celebrate , but it brings out some negative feelings for Janelle , who is not comfortable being so outgoing and admits to being embarrassed in public by the others ' behavior . And a deeper issue of feeling like she 's not heard bubbles to the surface and she sees a therapist to discuss that along with her challenging relationship with first wife Meri . On a business level , the family discusses whether to turn down investors ' money and keep full ownership of Sisterwives ' Closet and whether to keep the products all their own creations or branch out and resale other artists ' designs and products . Christine 's mother moves in with her in Las Vegas , and in episode four , the Browns allow two anthropologists to live with them for two days to see the inner workings of polygamy , an arrangement that could either put their lifestyle in a positive or negative light .

Finally , after five years of mental deliberation , Meri files for legal divorce from Kody so Kody can adopt Robyn 's three children from her previous marriage . By the end of the season , Meri and Kody maintained that they would continue their relationship .

== Reception ==

== Critical reception ==

Sister Wives drew national media attention after its first season and garnered generally mixed reviews from critics . Washington Post staff writer Hank Stuever called it " refreshingly frank " and found most interesting the small details of the family 's everyday life , such as the food supply , division of labor , and minor arguments . Los Angeles Times television critic Mary McNamara said she was intrigued by the matriarchal nature of the polygamist family , a unit that is traditionally considered patriarchal . McNamara said the wives form the center of the family and that " their bonds appear far stronger and more vital than the casual fondness with which they all treat Kody " . Salon.com writer Schuyler Velasco praised Sister Wives for introducing viewers to unfamiliar subject matter and called it " refreshingly modest " considering its controversial subject matter . Velasco said it has " a natural , honest presence in a genre fabled for the camera @-@ hogging antics of Jersey Shore " . Shelley Fralic of The Vancouver Sun called it fascinating and surprising and was impressed with the sensible and articulate way in which the family defended their lifestyle . When the Brown family made an October 2010 appearance on The Oprah Winfrey Show , talk show host Oprah Winfrey said she found particularly fascinating the relationship between the sister wives .

Mark A. Perigard of the Boston Herald criticized Kody Brown for opening himself and his family up to potential criminal prosecution by appearing in the series , describing him as " a lawbreaker who is risking himself and the family he claims is so precious just to star in his own TV show " . Elizabeth Tenety of The Washington Post called the series " one part domestic drudgery , another part sensationalism " and claimed it relied on a " familiar reality TV recipe " shared by other TLC series such as 19 Kids and Counting and Kate Plus 8 . Religion Dispatches writer Joanna Brooks shared Tenety 's perspective , criticizing the show for presenting polygamy in a manner that " is about as

interesting to me as Kate Gosselin 's latest makeover . " In this vein Brooks criticized the show for not engaging the theology of plural marriage and for letting Kody Brown 's superficial comments about the dissimilarity of Fundamentalist and mainstream Mormonism pass onto the viewers without any critical scrutiny or added nuance . Shari Puterman , television columnist with the Asbury Park Press , felt the sister wives had issues with jealousy and self @-@ worth , and she compared Kody to a cult leader . Puterman added , " I can 't speak for everyone , but I believe in the sanctity of marriage . It 's sad to see that TLC 's capitalizing on people who don 't . " Former prosecutor and television personality Nancy Grace criticized the show and said she believed Kody Brown should go to jail , but she expressed doubt he would based on Utah 's history of overlooking polygamy . Christine Seifert , an associate professor of communications at Westminster College in Salt Lake City , said the show could give viewers who are unfamiliar with the LDS church the incorrect assumption that polygamy is accepted by the mainstream church . Several commentators have taken notice of the fact that the family 's religious convictions are downplayed in Sister Wives .

= = = Ratings = = =

According to Nielsen Media Research , the September 26 , 2010 , one @-@ hour premiere episode of Sister Wives drew 2 @.@ 26 million viewers , a strong rating for the network . It marked the biggest series debut for TLC since Cake Boss launched in 2009 and was a stronger rating than any of the season premieres for HBO 's Big Love . The remaining episodes of the first season were each a half @-@ hour long , with two broadcast together each Thursday . In the second week , the first episode drew 1 @.@ 88 million viewers , while the second drew 2 @.@ 13 million . The third week drew similar results , with 1 @.@ 89 million viewers watching the first episode and 2 @.@ 05 million watching the second . Sister Wives drew its strongest ratings during the fourth and final week of the first season , with 2 @.@ 67 million viewers for the first episode and 2 @.@ 74 million for the season finale . As a result of the 2 @.@ 7 million average viewership for the two episodes , TLC ranked first among all ad @-@ support cable channels in the 18 ? 49 and 25 ? 54 age groups . The series drew double- and triple @-@ digit ratings gains in all key demographics and ranked second in ad @-@ supported cable network shows during its time period .

= = Litigation = =