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noun (17)adjective (4)a basic social unit consisting of parents and their children, considered as a group, whether dwelling together or not.a social unit consisting of one or more adults together with the children they care for.the children of one person or one couple collectively.the spouse and children of one person.I'm taking the family on vacation next week.any group of people closely related by blood or marriage, as parents, children, uncles, aunts, and cousins.to marry into a socially prominent family.all those people considered as descendants of a common progenitor.the Tudor family of England.Chiefly British.approved lineage, especially noble, titled, famous, or wealthy ancestry.a group of people who form a household under one head, including parents, children, servants, etc.the staff, or body of assistants, of an official.a group of people or things that are related by common characteristics, features, or properties.the family of romantic poets; the halogen family of elements.a group of people who are generally not blood relations but who share common attitudes, interests, or goals and, frequently, live together: Im not in contact with my relatives, so my friends are my family.Many hippie communes of the sixties regarded themselves as families.Im not in contact with my relatives, so my friends are my family.a group of people who are considered to be united in a common occupation or enterprise.Our volunteers are an important part of our hospital family.an animal or animals with their young.There goes a duck family crossing the road.a group of products or product models made by the same manufacturer or producer.Chevrolet's family of cars.Biology.the usual major subdivision of an order or suborder in the classification of plants, animals, fungi, etc., usually consisting of several genera.Slang.a unit of an organized crime syndicate, especially the Mafia or Cosa Nostra, operating in one area under a local leader.Linguistics.the largest category into which languages related by common origin can be classified with certainty.Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, and Austronesian are the most widely spoken families of languages.Mathematics.a given class of solutions of the same basic equation, differing from one another only by the different values assigned to the constants in the equation.a class of functions or the like defined by an expression containing a parameter.a set.of, relating to, or characteristic of a family.belonging to or used by a family.a family automobile; a family room.suitable or appropriate for adults and children.not containing obscene language.The students made a game of looking up swearwords during library time, so the librarian is investing in a new set of family dictionaries.a primary social group consisting of parents and their offspring, the principal function of which is provision for its members(as modifier)family quarrelsa family unitone's wife or husband and one's childrenone's children, as distinguished from one's husband or wifea group of persons related by blood; a group descended from a common ancestor Compare extended familyall the persons living together in one householdany group of related things or beings, esp when scientifically categorizedbiology any of the taxonomic groups into which an order is divided and which contains one or more genera. Felidae (cat family) and Canidae (dog family) are two families of the order Carnivoraecology a group of organisms of the same species living together in a communitya group of historically related languages assumed to derive from one original languagean independent local group of the Mafiamaths a group of curves or surfaces whose equations differ from a given equation only in the values assigned to one or more constants in each curvea family of concentric circlesphysics the isotopes, collectively, that comprise a radioactive seriesinformalpregnantCollins English Dictionary Complete & Unabridged 2012 Digital Edition William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012A group of organisms ranking above a genus and below an order. The names of families end in ae, a plural ending in Latin. In the animal kingdom, family names end in idae, as in Canidae (dogs and their kin), while those in the plant kingdom usually end in aceae, as in Rosaceae (roses and their kin).See Table at taxonomyIn biology, the classification lower than an order and higher than a genus. Lions, tigers, cheetahs, and house cats belong to the same biological family. Human beings belong to the biological family of hominids. (See Linnean classification.)antifamily adjectiveinterfamily adjectiveOrigin of family1First recorded in 13501400; Middle English familie, from Latin familia a household, the slaves of a household, domestics equivalent to famul(us) attendant, servant, slave + -ia noun suffix; -y 3Origin of family1C15: from Latin familia a household, servants of the house, from famulus servantExamples have not been reviewed.Who is supposed to give permanent housing to elders, disabled and families with children?But if Sir Keir really felt in control of his party, why did he need to bother about a group of MPs that wouldn't even fill a family saloon?This is not only a heartbreaking loss for their families, but for all of us.It found that the bill will reduce poor families ability to obtain food and health care."My family are all coming to watch this time. York's obviously really beautiful and the Barbican is a nice venue, so I am looking forward to coming home to compete for it."clanfolkgrouphousehouseholdpeopletribeDefinitions and idiom definitions from Dictionary.com Unabridged, based on the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, Random House, Inc. 2023Idioms from The American Heritage Idioms Dictionary copyright 2002, 2001, 1995 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.famillefamily allowanceBrowse#aabbccddeeffgghhiijjkkllmmnnooppqqrrssttuuvvwwxxyyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day! 2025 Dictionary.com, LLCGroup of related peopleThis article is about the group of related people. For the taxonomic rank, see Family (biology). For other uses, see Family (disambiguation)."Family life" and "Family member" redirect here. For other uses, see Family Life (disambiguation). For the song, see Family Member (song). Part of a series on theAnthropology of kinshipBasic conceptsFamilyLineageAffinityConsanguinityMarriageIncest tabooEndogamyExogamyMoietyMonogamyPolygynyPolygamyConcubinagePolyandryBride priceBride serviceDowryParallel/ cross cousinsCousin marriageLevirateSororatePosthumous marriageJoking relationshipClanCohabitationFictive/ Milk/ Nurture kinshipDescentCognatic/ BilateralMatrilateralLinealCollateralHouse societyAvunculateLinealitiesAmbilinealityUnilinealityMatrilinealityPatrilinealityHousehold forms and residenceExtendedMatrifocalMatrilocalNeolocalNuclearPatrilocalTerminologyKinship terminologyClassificatory terminologiesBy groupIroquoisCrowOmahaEskimo (Inuit)HawaiianSudaneseDravidian(debated)Case studiesAustralian AboriginalBurmeseChinesePhilippinePolyandry in Tibet/ in IndiaFeministChambriMosuoSexualityComing of Age in SamoaMajor theoristsDiane BellTom BoellstorffJack GoodyW. D. HamiltonGilbert HerdtDon KulickRoger LancasterLouise LamphereEleanor LeacockClaude Lvi-StraussBronisaw MalinowskiMargaret MeadHenrietta MooreLewis H. MorganStephen O. MurrayMichelle RosaldoGayle RubinDavid M. SchneiderHeinrich SchurtzMarilyn StrathernRelated articlesAlliance theoryMatrilineal/ matrilocal societiesFeminist anthropologySex and Repression in Savage SocietySocial Bonding and Nurture Kinship"The Traffic in Women"Social anthropologyCultural anthropologyvteSauk family photographed by Frank Rinehart in 1899Family (from Latin: familia) is a group of people related either by consanguinity (by recognized birth) or affinity (by marriage or other relationship). It forms the basis for social order.[1] Ideally, families offer predictability, structure, and safety as members mature and learn to participate in the community.[2] Historically, most human societies use family as the primary purpose of attachment, nurturance, and socialization.[3][4][5][6]Anthropologists classify most family organizations as matrifocal (a mother and her children), patrifocal (a father and his children), conjugal (a married couple with children, also called the nuclear family), avuncular (a man, his sister, and her children), or extended (in addition to parents, spouse and children, may include grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins).The field of genealogy aims to trace family lineages through history. The family is also an important economic unit studied in family economics. The word "families" can be used metaphorically to create more inclusive categories such as community, nationhood, and global village.Detail of a gold glass medallion with a portrait of a family, from Alexandria (Roman Egypt), 3rd4th century (Brescia, Museo di Santa Giulia)[7]One of the primary functions of the family involves providing a framework for the production and reproduction of persons biologically and socially. This can occur through the sharing of material substances (such as food); the giving and receiving of care and nurture (nurture kinship); jural rights and obligations; also moral and sentimental ties.[8][9] Thus, one's experience of one's family shifts over time.There are different perspectives of the term 'family', from the perspective of children, the family is a "family of orientation": the family serves to locate children socially and plays a major role in their enculturation and socialization.[10] From the point of view of the parent(s), the family is a "family of procreation", the goal of which is to produce, enculturate and socialize children.[11] However, producing children is not the only function of the family; in societies with a sexual division of labor, marriage, and the resulting relationship between two people, it is necessary for the formation of an economically productive household.[12][13][14]C. C. Harris notes that the western conception of a family is ambiguous and confused with the household, as revealed in the different contexts in which the word is used.[15] Olivia Harris states this confusion is not accidental, but indicative of the familial ideology of capitalist, western countries that pass social legislation that insists members of a nuclear family should live together, and that those not so related should not live together. Despite the ideological and legal pressures, a large[quantify] percentage of families do not conform to the ideal nuclear family type.[16]Further information: Fertility factor (demography)Mennonite siblings, Montana, United States, 1937The total fertility rate of women varies from country to country, from a high rate of 6.76 children born per woman in Niger to a low rate of 0.81 in Singapore (as of 2015).[17] Fertility is below replacement in all Eastern European and Southern European countries, and particularly high in Sub-Saharan African countries.[17]In some cultures, the mother's preference of family size influences that of the children's through early adulthood.[18] A parent's number of children strongly correlates with the number of children that their children will eventually have.[19]A German mother with her children in the 1960sAlthough early western cultural anthropologists and sociologists considered family and kinship to be universally associated with relations by "blood" (based on ideas common in their own cultures) later research[8] has shown that many societies instead understand family through ideas of living together, the sharing of food (e.g. milk kinship) and sharing care and nurture. Sociologists have a special interest in the function and status of family forms in stratified (especially capitalist) societies.[20]According to the work of scholars Max Weber, Alan Macfarlane, Steven Ozment, Jack Goody and Peter Laslett, the huge transformation that led to modern marriage in Western democracies was "fueled by the religio-cultural value system provided by elements of Judaism, early Christianity, Roman Catholic canon law and the Protestant Reformation".[21]Much sociological, historical and anthropological research dedicates itself to the understanding of this variation, and of changes in the family that form over time. Levitan claims:Times have changed; it is more acceptable and encouraged for mothers to work and fathers to spend more time at home with the children. The way roles are balanced between the parents will help children grow and learn valuable life lessons. There is [the] great importance of communication and equality in families, in order to avoid role strain.[22]Nonetheless, the results of Steven Ruggles' assessment of world census data suggest "nineteenth-century Northwest Europe and North America did not have exceptionally simple or nuclear family structure."[23]Historically, the most common family type was one in which grandparents, parents, and children lived together as a single unit. For example, the household might include the owners of a farm, one (or more) of their adult children, the adult child's spouse, and the adult child's own children (the owners' grandchildren). Members of the extended family are not included in this family group. Sometimes, "skipped" generation families, such as a grandparents living with their grandchildren, are included.[24]Settled Sami (Lapplander) family of farmers in Stensele, Vsterbotten, Sweden, early 20th centuryIn the US, this arrangement declined after World War II, reaching a low point in 1980, when about one out of every eight people in the US lived in a multigenerational family.[24] The numbers have risen since then, with one in five people in the US living in a multigenerational family as of 2016.[25] The increasing popularity is partly driven by demographic changes and the economic shifts associated with the Boomerang Generation.[24]Multigenerational households are less common in Canada, where about 6% of people living in Canada were living in multigenerational families as of 2016, but the proportion of multigenerational households was increasing rapidly, driven by increasing numbers of Aboriginal families, immigrant families, and high housing costs in some regions.[26]The term "nuclear family" is commonly used to refer to conjugal families. A "conjugal" family includes only the spouses and unmarried children who are not of age.[27][failed verification] Some sociologists[which?] distinguish between conjugal families (relatively independent of the kindred of the parents and of other families in general) and nuclear families (which maintain relatively close ties with their kindred).[28][29]A father with his children in the United States in the 1940sOther family structures with (for example) blended parents, single parents, and domestic partnerships have begun to challenge the normality of the nuclear family.[30][31][32]A single-parent family consists of one parent together with their children, where the parent is either widowed, divorced (and not remarried), or never married.[33] The parent may have sole custody of the children, or separated parents may have a shared-parenting arrangement where the children divide their time (possibly equally) between two different single-parent families or between one single-parent family and one blended family. As compared to sole custody, physical, mental and social well-being of children may be improved by shared-parenting arrangements and by children having greater access to both parents.[34][35] The number of single-parent families have been increasing due to the divorce rate climbing drastically during the years 19651995, and about half of all children in the United States will live in a single-parent family at some point before they reach the age of 18. Most single-parent families are headed by a mother, but the number of single-parent families headed by fathers is increasing.[36][37]Main article: Matrifocal familyA "matrifocal" family consists of a mother and her children.[38] Generally, these children are her biological offspring, although adoption of children occurs in nearly every society. This kind of family occurs commonly where women have the resources to rear their children by themselves, or where men are more mobile than women. As a definition, "a family or domestic group is matrifocal when it is centred on a woman and her children. In this case, the father(s) of these children are intermittently present in the life of the group and occupy a secondary place. The children's mother is not necessarily the wife of one of the children's fathers."[39] The name, matrifocal, was coined in Guiana but it is defined differently in other countries. For Nayar families, the family have the male as the "center" or the head of the family, either the step-father/father/brother, rather than the mother.[38]Hispanic family eating a mealA family from Basankusu, Democratic Republic of the CongoExtended family with roots in Cape Town, Kimberley and Pretoria, South AfricaThe term "extended family" is also common, especially in the United States. This term has two distinct meanings:It serves as a synonym of "consanguineal family" (consanguine means "of the same blood").In societies dominated by the conjugal family, it refers to "kindred" (an egocentric network of relatives that extends beyond the domestic group) who do not belong to the conjugal family.These types refer to ideal or normative structures found in particular societies. Any society will exhibit some variation in the actual composition and conception of families.[40]Historically, extended families were the basic family unit in the Catholic culture and countries (such as Southern Europe and Latin America),[41] and in Asian, Middle Eastern and Eastern Orthodox countries.[41]The term family of choice, also sometimes referred to as "chosen family" or "found family", is common within the LGBT community, veterans, individuals who have suffered abuse, and those who have no contact with their biological parents. It refers to the group of people in an individual's life that satisfies the typical role of family as a support system. The term differentiates between the "family of origin" (the biological family or that in which people are raised) and those that actively assume that ideal role.[42]The family of choice may or may not include some or all of the members of the family of origin. This family is not one that follows the "normal" familial structure like having a father, a mother, and children. This is family as a group of people that rely on each other like a family of origin would.[43] This terminology stems from the fact that many LGBT individuals, upon coming out, face rejection or shame from the families they were raised in.[44] The term family of choice is also used by individuals in the 12 step communities, who create close-knit "family" ties through the recovery process.As a family system, families of choice face unique issues. Without legal safeguards, families of choice may struggle when medical, educational or governmental institutions fail to recognize their legitimacy.[44] If members of the chosen family have been disowned by their family of origin, they may experience surrogate grief, displacing anger, loss, or anxious attachment onto their new family.[44]The term blended family or stepfamily describes families with mixed parents: one or both parents remarried, bringing children of the former family into the new family.[45] Also in sociology, particularly in the works of social psychologist Michael Lamb,[46] traditional family refers to "a middle-class family with a bread-winning father and a stay-at-home mother, married to each other and raising their biological children," and nontraditional to exceptions to this rule. Most of the US households are now non-traditional under this definition.[47] Critics of the term "traditional family" point out that in most cultures and at most times, the extended family model has been most common, not the nuclear family,[48] though it has had a longer tradition in England[49] than in other parts of Europe and Asia which contributed large numbers of immigrants to the Americas. The nuclear family became the most common form in the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s.[50]In terms of communication patterns in families, there are a certain set of beliefs within the family that reflect how its members should communicate and interact. These family communication patterns arise from two underlying sets of beliefs. One being conversation orientation (the degree to which the importance of communication is valued) and two, conformity orientation (the degree to which families should emphasize similarities or differences regarding attitudes, beliefs, and values).[51]Blended families is complex, ranging from stepfamilies to cohabitating families (an individual living with guardians who are not married with step or half siblings). While it is not too different from stepfamilies, cohabiting families pose a prevalent psychological effect on youths.[52] Some adolescents would be prone to "acts of delinquency," and experiencing problems in school ranging from a decrease in academic performance to increased problematic behavior. It coincides with other researches on the trajectories of stepfamilies where some experienced familyhood, but others lacking connection. Emotional detachment from members within stepfamilies contributes to this uncertainty, furthering the tension that these families may establish.[53] The transition from an old family to a new family that falls under blended families would also become problematic as the activities that were once performed in the old family may not transfer well within the new family for adolescents.[54]A monogamous family is based on a legal or social monogamy. In this case, an individual has only one (official) partner during their lifetime or at any one time (i.e. serial monogamy).[55] This means that a person may not have several different legal spouses at the same time, as this is usually prohibited by bigamy laws, (the act of entering into a marriage with one person while still legally married to another[56]) in jurisdictions that require monogamous marriages.Chinese immigrant with his three wives and fourteen children, Cairns, Australia, 1904Polygamy is a marriage that includes more than two partners.[57][58] When a man is married to more than one wife at a time, the relationship is called polygyny; and when a woman is married to more than one husband at a time, it is called polyandry. If a marriage includes multiple husbands and wives, it can be called polyamory,[59] group or conjoint marriage.[58]Polygyny is a form of plural marriage, in which a man is allowed more than one wife.[60] In modern countries that permit polygamy, polygyny is typically the only form permitted. Polygyny is practiced primarily (but not only) in parts of the Middle East and Africa; and is often associated with Islam, however, there are certain conditions in Islam that must be met to perform polygyny.[61]Polyandry is a form of marriage whereby a woman takes two or more husbands at the same time.[62] Fraternal polyandry, where two or more brothers are married to the same wife, is a common form of polyandry. Polyandry was traditionally practiced in areas of the Himalayan mountains, among Tibetans in Nepal, in parts of China and in parts of northern India. Polyandry is most common in societies marked by high male mortality or where males will often be apart from the rest of the family for a considerable period of time.[62]Main article: Coefficient of relationshipFamily in India, 1870sFamily in a wagon, Lee County, Mississippi, United States, August 1935A first-degree relative is one who shares 50% of your DNA through direct inheritance, such as a full sibling, parent or progeny.There is another measure for the degree of relationship, which is determined by counting up generations to the first common ancestor and back down to the target individual, which is used for various genealogical and legal purposes.[63]KinshipDegree of relationship by coefficientCoefficient ofrelationshipDegree of relationship by counting generations to common ancestoridentical twins0100%[64]second-degreesister / brotherfirst-degree50% (222)second-degreemother / father / daughter / son[65]first-degree50% (21)first-degreehalf-sister / half-brothersecond-degree25% (22)second-degreegrandmother / grandfather / granddaughter / grandsonsecond-degree25% (22)second-degreeaunt / uncle / niece / nephewsecond-degree25% (223)third-degreehalf-aunt / half-uncle / half-niece / half-nephewthird-degree12.5% (23)third-degreefirst-cousinthird-degree12.5% (224)fourth-degreehalf-first-cousinfourth-degree6.25% (24)fourth-degreegreat-grandmother / great-grandfather / great-granddaughter / great-grandsonthird-degree12.5% (23)third-degreefirst-cousin-once-removedfourth-degree6.25% (225)fifth-degreesecond-cousinfifth-degree3.125% (26+26)sixth-degreeMain article: Kinship terminologyFamily tree with some family membersFamily tree with other family membersTable of degrees of kinshipSwedish family eating, 1902In his book Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family, anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (18181881) performed the first survey of kinship terminologies in use around the world. Although much of his work is now considered dated, he argued that kinship terminologies reflect different sets of distinctions. For example, most kinship terminologies distinguish between sexes (the difference between a brother and a sister) and between generations (the difference between a child and a parent). Moreover, he argued, kinship terminologies distinguish between relatives by blood and marriage (although recently some anthropologists have argued that many societies define kinship in terms other than "blood").Morgan made a distinction between kinship systems that use classificatory terminology and those that use descriptive terminology. Classificatory systems are generally and erroneously understood to be those that "class together" with a single term relatives who actually do not have the same type of relationship to ego. (What defines "same type of relationship" under such definitions seems to be genealogical relationship. This is problematic given that any genealogical description, no matter how standardized, employs words originating in a folk understanding of kinship.) What Morgan's terminology actually differentiates are those (classificatory) kinship systems that do not distinguish lineal and collateral relationships and those (descriptive) kinship systems that do. Morgan, a lawyer, came to make this distinction in an effort to understand Seneca inheritance practices. A Seneca man's effects were inherited by his sisters' children rather than by his own children.[66] Morgan identified six basic patterns of kinship terminologies:Hawaiian: only distinguishes relatives based upon sex and generation.Sudanese: no two relatives share the same term.Eskimo: in addition to distinguishing relatives based upon sex and generation, also distinguishes between lineal relatives and collateral relatives.Iroquois: in addition to sex and generation, also distinguishes between siblings of opposite sexes in the parental generation.Crow: a matrilineal system with some features of an Iroquois system, but with a "skewing" feature in which generation is "frozen" for some relatives.Omaha: like a Crow system but patrilineal."Grandson" redirects here. For other uses, see Grandson (disambiguation).Group photograph of a Norwegian family by Gustav Borgen c.1900: Father, mother, three sons and two daughters.Bjrnstjerne Bjrnson with grandchild, 1900Father and child, Dhaka, Bangladesh"Pibling" and "Aunt and uncle" redirect here. For aunts, see Aunt. For uncles, see Uncle.Most Western societies employ Eskimo kinship terminology.[67] This kinship terminology commonly occurs in societies with strong conjugal, where families have a degree of relative mobility. Typically, societies with conjugal families also favor neolocal residence; thus upon marriage, a person separates from the nuclear family of their childhood (family of orientation) and forms a new nuclear family (family of procreation). Such systems generally assume that the mother's husband is also the biological father. The system uses highly descriptive terms for the nuclear family and progressively more classificatory as the relatives become more and more collateral.Main article: Nuclear familyThe main members of the Brazilian imperial family in 1875The family of Finnish statesman J. K. Paasikivi (right) in 1906The system emphasizes the nuclear family. Members of the nuclear family use highly descriptive kinship terms, identifying directly only the husband, wife, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, and sister. All other relatives are grouped together into categories. Members of the nuclear family may be lineal or collateral. Kin, for whom these are family, refer to them in descriptive terms that build on the terms used within the nuclear family or use the nuclear family term directly.Nuclear family of orientationBrother: the male child of a parent.Sister: the female child of a parent.Father: a male parent.Grandfather: the father of a parent.Mother: a female parent.Grandmother: the mother of a parent.Nuclear conjugal familyHusband: a male spouse.Wife: a female spouse.Son: a male child of the subject.Grandson: a child's son.Daughter: a female child of the subject.Granddaughter: a child's daughter.Nuclear non-lineal familySpouse: husband or wifeStepparent: a spouse of a parent that is not a biological parentSibling: sister or brotherHalf-sibling: a sibling with whom the subject shares only one biological parentStep-sibling: a child of a parent that is not a biological parentA sibling is a collateral relative with a minimal removal. For collateral relatives with one additional removal, one generation more distant from a common ancestor on one side, more classificatory terms come into play. These terms (Aunt, Uncle, Niece, and Nephew) do not build on the terms used within the nuclear family as most are not traditionally members of the household. These terms do not traditionally differentiate between a collateral relatives and a person married to a collateral relative (both collateral and aggregate). Collateral relatives with additional removals on each side are Cousins. This is the most classificatory term and can be distinguished by degrees of collaterality and by generation (removal).When only the subject has the additional removal, the relative is the subject's parents' siblings, the terms Aunt and Uncle are used for female and male relatives respectively. When only the relative has the additional removal, the relative is the subjects siblings child, the terms Niece and Nephew are used for female and male relatives respectively. The spouse of a biological aunt or uncle is an aunt or uncle, and the nieces and nephews of a spouse are nieces and nephews. With further removal by the subject for aunts and uncles and by the relative for nieces and nephews the prefix "grand-" modifies these terms. With further removal the prefix becomes "great-grand-," adding another "great-" for each additional generation. For large numbers of generations a number can be substituted, for example, "fourth great-grandson", "four-greats grandson" or "four-times-great-grandson".When the subject and the relative have an additional removal they are cousins. A cousin with minimal removal is a first cousin, i.e. the child of the subjects uncle or aunt. Degrees of collaterality and removals are used to more precisely describe the relationship between cousins. The degree is the number of generations subsequent to the common ancestor before a parent of one of the cousins is found, while the removal is the difference between the number of generations from each cousin to the common ancestor (the difference between the generations the cousins are from).[68][69]Cousins of an older generation (in other words, one's parents' first cousins), although technically first cousins once removed, are often classified with "aunts" and "uncles".English-speakers mark relationships by marriage (except for wife/husband) with the tag "-in-law". The mother and father of one's spouse become one's mother-in-law and father-in-law; the wife of one's son becomes one's daughter-in-law and the husband of one's daughter becomes one's son-in-law. The term "sister-in-law" refers to two essentially different relationships, either the wife of one's brother, or the sister of one's spouse. "Brother-in-law" is the husband of one's sister, or the brother of one's spouse. The terms "half-brother" and "half-sister" indicate siblings who share only one biological parent. The term "aunt-in-law" refers to the aunt of one's spouse. "Uncle-in-law" is the uncle of one's spouse. "Cousin-in-law" is the spouse of one's cousin, or the cousin of one's spouse. The term "niece-in-law" refers to the wife of one's nephew. "Nephew-in-law" is the husband of one's niece. The grandmother and grandfather of one's spouse become one's grandmother-in-law and grandfather-in-law; the wife of one's grandson becomes one's granddaughter-in-law and the husband of one's granddaughter becomes one's grandson-in-law.In Indian English, a sibling in law who is the spouse of your sibling can be referred to as a co-sibling (specificity a co-sister[70] or co-brother[71]).Patrilineality, also known as the male line or agnatic kinship, is a form of kinship system in which an individual's family membership derives from and is traced through his or her father's lineage.[72] It generally involves the inheritance of property, rights, names, or titles by persons related through male kin.A patriline ("father line") is a person's father, and additional ancestors that are traced only through males. One's patriline is thus a record of descent from a man in which the individuals in all intervening generations are male. In cultural anthropology, a patrilineage is a consanguineal male and female kinship group, each of whose members is descended from the common ancestor through male forebears.Queen Victoria, with her eldest daughterMatrilineality is a form of kinship system in which an individual's family membership derives from and is traced through his or her mother's lineage.It may also correlate with a societal system in which each person is identified with their matrilinetheir mother's lineageand which can involve the inheritance of property and titles. A matriline is a line of descent from a female ancestor to a descendant in which the individuals in all intervening generations are mothers in other words, a "mother line".In a matrilineal descent system, an individual is considered to belong to the same descent group as her or his mother. This matrilineal descent pattern is in contrast to the more common patrilineal descent pattern.Bilateral descent is a form of kinship system in which an individual's family membership derives from and is traced through both the paternal and maternal sides. The relatives on the mother's side and father's side are equally important for emotional ties or for transfer of property or wealth. It is a family arrangement where descent and inheritance are passed equally through both parents.[73] Families who use this system trace descent through both parents simultaneously and recognize multiple ancestors, but unlike with cognatic descent it is not used to form descent groups.[74]Traditionally, this is found among some groups in West Africa, India, Australia, Indonesia, Melanesia, Malaysia and Polynesia. Anthropologists believe that a tribal structure based on bilateral descent helps members live in extreme environments because it allows individuals to rely on two sets of families dispersed over a wide area. [75]Main article: History of the familyEarly scholars of family history applied Darwin's biological theory of evolution in their theory of evolution of family systems.[76] American anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan published Ancient Society in 1877 based on his theory of the three stages of human progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization.[77] Morgan's book was the "inspiration for Friedrich Engels' book" The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State published in 1884.[78]Engels expanded Morgan's hypothesis that economical factors caused the transformation of primitive community into a class-divided society.[79] Engels' theory of resource control, and later that of Karl Marx, was used to explain the cause and effect of change in family structure and function. The popularity of this theory was largely unmatched until the 1980s, when other sociological theories, most notably structural functionalism, gained acceptance.Family arrangements in the United States have become more diverse with no particular household arrangement representing half of the United States population.[80]Contemporary society generally views the family as a haven from the world, supplying absolute fulfillment. Zinn and Eitzen discuss the image of the "family as haven ... a place of intimacy, love and trust where individuals may escape the competition of dehumanizing forces in modern society".[81]During industrialization, "[t]he family as a repository of warmth and tenderness (embodied by the mother) stands in opposition to the competitive and aggressive world of commerce (embodied by the father). The family's task was to protect against the outside world."[82] However, Zinn and Eitzen note, "The protective image of the family has waned in recent years as the ideals of family fulfillment have taken shape. Today, the family is more compensatory than protective. It supplies what is vitally needed but missing in other social arrangements."[82]Unhappily married couples are at 325 times the risk of developing clinical depression.[83][84][85]"The popular wisdom", according to Zinn and Eitzen, sees the family structures of the past as superior to those today, and families as more stable and happier at a time when they did not have to contend with problems such as illegitimate children and divorce. They respond to this, saying, "there is no golden age of the family gleaming at us in the far back historical past."[86] "Desertion by spouses, illegitimate children, and other conditions that are considered characteristics of modern times existed in the past as well."[86]Percentage of births to unmarried women, selected countries, 1980 and 2007[87]Others argue that whether or not one views the family as "declining" depends on one's definition of "family". "Married couples have dropped below half of all American households. This drop is shocking from traditional forms of the family system. Only a fifth of households were following traditional ways of having married couples raising a family together."[88] In the Western World, marriages are no longer arranged for economic, social or political gain, and children are no longer expected to contribute to family income. Instead, people choose mates based on love.[89] This increased role of love indicates a societal shift toward favoring emotional fulfilment and relationships within a family, and this shift necessarily weakens the institution of the family.[90]Margaret Mead considers the family as a main safeguard to continuing human progress. Observing, "Human beings have learned, laboriously, to be human", she adds: "we hold our present form of humanity on trust, [and] it is possible to lose it" ... "It is not without significance that the most successful large-scale abrogations of the family have occurred not among simple savages, living close to the subsistence edge, but among great nations and strong empires, the resources of which were ample, the populations huge, and the power almost unlimited"[91]Many countries (particularly Western) have, in recent years, changed their family laws in order to accommodate diverse family models. For instance, in the United Kingdom, in Scotland, the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006 provides cohabitants with some limited rights.[92] In 2010, Ireland enacted the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010. There have also been moves at an international level, most notably, the Council of Europe European Convention on the Legal Status of Children Born out of Wedlock[93] which came into force in 1978. Countries which ratify it must ensure that children born outside marriage are provided with legal rights as stipulated in the text of this convention. The convention was ratified by the UK in 1981 and by Ireland in 1988.[94]In the United States, one in five mothers has children by different fathers; among mothers with two or more children the figure is higher, with 28% having children with at least two different men. Such families are more common among Blacks and Hispanics and among the lower socioeconomic class.[95]However, in western society, the single parent family has been growing more accepted and has begun to make an impact on culture. Single parent families are more commonly single mother families than single father.[96] These families sometimes face difficult issues besides the fact that they have to rear their children on their own, for example, low income making it difficult to pay for rent, child care, and other necessities for a healthy and safe home.Furthermore, there are families that consist of two mothers, two fathers, non-binary, trans, and queer folks raising children. This is made possible due to surrogacy, IVF, IUI, adoption, and other processes.Main article: Domestic violenceDomestic violence (DV) is violence that happens within the family. The legal and social understanding of the concept of DV differs by culture. The definition of the term "domestic violence" varies, depending on the context in which it is used.[97] It may be defined differently in medical, legal, political or social contexts. The definitions have varied over time, and vary in different parts of the world.The Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence states that:[98]"domestic violence" shall mean all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.In 1993, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women identified domestic violence as one of three contexts in which violence against women occurs, describing it as:[99]Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.Family violence is a broader definition, often used to include child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent acts between family members.[100]Child abuse is defined by the WHO as:[101]Child maltreatment, sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity. Within this broad definition, five subtypes can be distinguished physical abuse; sexual abuse; neglect and negligent treatment; emotional abuse; and exploitation.There exists legislation to prevent and punish the occurrence of these offences. There are laws regarding familial sexual activity, which states that it is a criminal offence to have any kind of sexual relationship between one's grandparent, parent, sibling, aunt or uncle.[102][103]Elder abuse is, according to the WHO: "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person".[104]See also: Adverse childhood experiences and Child abuseChild abuse is the physical, sexual or emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child or children.[105] In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department for Children and Families (DCF) define child maltreatment as any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child.[106] Child abuse can occur in a child's home, or in the organizations, schools or communities the child interacts with. There are four major categories of child abuse: neglect, physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, and sexual abuse.Main article: Parental abuse by childrenAbuse of parents by their children is a common but under reported and under-researched subject. A factor why this subject is under-researched is because of the overshadowing effect caused by parents abusing their children instead. Parents are quite often subject to levels of childhood aggression in excess of normal childhood aggressive outbursts, typically in the form of verbal or physical abuse. Parents feel a sense of shame and humiliation to have that problem, so they rarely seek help and it is usually little or no help available anyway.[107][108]Main article: Elder abuseElder abuse is "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person".[109] This definition has been adopted by the World Health Organization from a definition put forward by Action on Elder Abuse in the UK. Laws protecting the elderly from abuse are similar to, and related to, laws protecting dependent adults from abuse.The core element to the harm of elder abuse is the "expectation of trust" of the older person toward their abuser. Thus, it includes harms by people the older person knows or with whom they have a relationship, such as a spouse, partner or family member, a friend or neighbor, or people that the older person relies on for services. Many forms of elder abuse are recognized as types of domestic violence or family violence.Main articles: Forced marriage and Child marriageForced and child marriages are practiced in certain regions of the world, particularly in Asia and Africa, and these types of marriages are associated with a high rate of domestic violence.[110][111][112][113]A forced marriage is a marriage where one or both participants are married without their freely given consent.[114] The line between forced marriage and consensual marriage may become blurred, because the social norms of many cultures dictate that one should never oppose the desire of one's parents/relatives in regard to the choice of a spouse; in such cultures it is not necessary for violence, threats, intimidation etc. to occur, the person simply "consents" to the marriage even if they do not want it, out of the implied social pressure and duty. The customs of bride price and dowry, that exist in parts of the world, can lead to buying and selling people into marriage.[115][116]A child marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses are under 18.[117][110] Child marriage was common throughout history but is today condemned by international human rights organizations.[112][118][111] Child marriages are often arranged between the families of the future bride and groom, sometimes as soon as the girl is born.[112] Child marriages can also occur in the context of marriage by abduction.[112]Main article: Family honorFurther information: Culture of honor and Honor killingFamily honor is an abstract concept involving the perceived quality of worthiness and respectability that affects the social standing and the self-evaluation of a group of related people, both corporately and individually.[119][120] The family is viewed as the main source of honor and the community highly values the relationship between honor and the family.[121] The conduct of family members reflects upon family honor and the way the family perceives itself, and is perceived by others.[120] In cultures of honor maintaining the family honor is often perceived as more important than either individual freedom, or individual achievement.[122] In extreme cases, engaging in acts that are deemed to tarnish the honor of the family results in honor killings. An honor killing is the homicide of a member of a family or social group by other members, due to the perpetrators' belief that the victim has brought shame or dishonor upon the family or community, usually for reasons such as refusing to enter an arranged marriage, being in a relationship that is disapproved by their relatives, having sex outside marriage, becoming the victim of rape, dressing in ways which are deemed inappropriate, or engaging in homosexual relations.[123][124][125][126][127]A family is often part of a sharing economy with common ownership.Further information: Dowry, Bride price, and DowerA traditional, formal presentation of the bride price at a Thai engagement ceremonyDowry is property (money, goods, or estate) that a wife or wife's family gives to her husband when the wife and husband marry.[128] Offering dowry was common in many cultures historically (including in Europe and North America), but this practice today is mostly restricted to some areas primarily in the Indian subcontinent.Bride price, (also bride wealth or bride token), is property paid by the groom or his family to the parents of a woman upon the marriage of their daughter to the groom. It is practiced mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa, parts of South-East Asia (Thailand, Cambodia), and parts of Central Asia.Dower is property given to the bride herself by the groom at the time of marriage, and which remains under her ownership and control.[129]In some countries married couples benefit from various taxation advantages not available to a single person or to unmarried couples. For example, spouses may be allowed to average their combined incomes. Some jurisdictions recognize common law marriage or de facto relations for this purposes. In some jurisdictions there is also an option of civil partnership or domestic partnership.Different property regimes exist for spouses. In many countries, each marriage partner has the choice of keeping their property separate or combining properties. In the latter case, called community property, when the marriage ends by divorce each owns half. In lieu of a will or trust, property owned by the deceased generally is inherited by the surviving spouse.The right to family is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 by the United Nations:The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16.3Georg Hegel's view of families as legal persons[130] is reflected in the legal system of some countries.[131]Main article: Reproductive rightsFurther information: Forced sterilization

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Retrieved 2015-11-19.Zinn, Maxine Baca; Eitzen, D. Stanley (1987). Diversity in American families. p. 3 p. 8Wikimedia Commons has media related to Family.Look up family in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.Wikiquote has quotations related to Family."Family". Encyclopdia Britannica. Vol.10 (11thed.). 1911.Retrieved from " Family Law Season 4 is officially returning, and it's bringing plenty of emotional chaos, office drama, and new beginnings. The CW has confirmed that the fourth season of the legal dramedy will have its release on Wednesday, July 23 at 8/7c, much to the excitement of fans who've been waiting ever since the Season 3 finale aired. The 10-episode run for Season 4 promises to shake things up even more. So what's coming next for Abigail and her wild world of messy relationships and courtroom twists? Let's break it all down. The release date is locked for Family Law Season 4 here's when and where to catch itMark your calendar: Family Law Season 4 premieres July 23 on The CW, airing every Wednesday night. After a long gap, the network is bringing back the Canadian legal comedy with a fresh batch of episodes that will run weekly in its prime 8 PM slot.Season 4 has 10 episodes, and each episode will bring out the perfect blend of messiness found in a family and workplace drama.A still from Family Law | Season 2 | (Via. Universal TV Africa)Now for those fans who prefer to stream the episodes, there are multiple ways to watch. Family Law Season 4 will reportedly be available across platforms like Apple TV, Prime Video, YouTube Streaming, and DirecTV, making it easier for viewers to watch at their own pace.However, that being said, the official streaming home for the new season hasnt been officially announced yet, and these platforms are just where earlier seasons can be found for now, based on the region you currently live in.This season's premiere is dropping just as The CW expands its Canadian TV lineup, giving Family Law Season 4 a timely return while other shows like Wild Cards remain uncertain. Major twists ahead: What Season 4 has in storeFamily Law Season 4 doesn't waste time getting into the thick of it. The story starts off with Abigail's life coming down from all sides, with her personal life, her job, and even her family relationships all in crumbles.Her boyfriend Ben has relapsed, her daughter Sofia writes an honest piece about her struggles growing up with an alcoholic parent, and her father Harry overlooks her for a key promotion.A still from Family Law | Season 2 | (Via. Universal TV Africa)As she tries to find herself, a surprise meeting with someone new brings something else to the table, hinting at a romantic shift. But the real question is if she's willing to open up again after everything that's gone fully wrong.Over at the firm, Abby starts to see changes she doesn't agree with, and she's done keeping quiet. Her response ends up shaking the entire office, challenging both loyalties and power structures. This isn't just another season of court cases. It's about personal growth, unexpected turns, and hard choices. The cast and charactersOne of the biggest reasons Family Law Season 4 stands out is its cast. Jewel Staite returns as Abigail, bringing her usual sharp wit and raw vulnerability. Victor Garber is Harry, and his personal and professional choices continue to affect everyone around him.A still from Family Law | Season 2 | (Via. Universal TV Africa)Lauren Holly is back as Joanne, and things between her and Harry are far from being okay. Their post-breakup sure does play a big role this season.Also returning are Zach Smadu as Daniel and Genelle Williams as Lucy. Daniel finds himself dealing with major life news after a one-night stand, while Lucy's breakup leaves her questioning everything.Characters like Jude, Sofia, and Kelly are also bringing a lot to the table, with each one of them adding their own layer of chaos, healing, or conflict this season.Relationships are put to the test, careers are being shaken, and nobody walks away in peace. The chemistry of the cast is one of the show's strengths, and Family Law Season 4 gives each actor proper room to explore new plots. With sharp writing and twists, Family Law Season 4 is perhaps on its way to be one of the show's strongest seasons yet. Between the plotlines and familiar characters, there's plenty to look forward to when it has its release on July 23.Whether you're watching on cable or you prefer streaming, this season promises to be anything but quiet and calm. Stay tuned to SoapCentral for more. Edited by Deebakar The word family is one of the most loosely defined terms in the English language; because it means something different to everyone. While one person may define family as the relatives who share their home, another may consider family to include extended relatives residing near and far. Still, someone else views their beloved circle of friends or their pets as family. Families are vastly different, but they all function under one single premise: shared love and commitment. The traditional family consists of a father, mother, and children. This is the nuclear family often shown on television as the familial standard. However, the 21st century showcases various family units, some very different from the standard unit of prior decades. Today, children are often raised in single-parent homes, by grandparents, or by LGBTQ+ parents. Some families opt to have no children or cannot have children due to medical or emotional barriers. The idea that parents and children make a family is a basic definition; however, to accurately acknowledge other family structures, a broader definition is necessary. In addition to a universal family definition, plenty of people consider a group of friends to be family, and many consider pets as defining members of the family unit. Who comprises a family is up to the people in the family themselves. People may opt to keep blood relatives in their lives, or let them go if they are toxic to their well-being. Many folks add caring and supportive people to their extended clan when they choose, deciding who belongs in their specific definition of family. In 2020, 25% of the children residing in the United States were living in single-parent households. Having two committed parents living under the same roof, raising their children was once the norm, but no longer. Single-parent households have tripled since the 1960s, and 19