

International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: Family Life

“What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family.” Mother Teresa

Look over the topics. Decide which ones your group wants to discuss.

Family Roles

Families are often defined by the roles each person plays. Even within one culture, how a family organizes itself can vary quite a lot. Explain how your family works, beginning with the roles your grandparents play. Next, explain the roles of your parents. If there is more than one child in your family, tell about your siblings and the role each plays. For example, some children are the peacemakers in the family while others are comedians.

Food and the Kitchen

Mealtimes also define families. Explain how meals work during the weekdays and weekends. Who cooks, who cleans, who complains? How many meals does your family eat in a day? How many meals do they eat together? What does a typical weekday dinner look like? What does a holiday meal consist of?

Vacation and Fun

Intentional times with families can make good memories. What kinds of things does your family do together for fun? Who in your family initiates the ideas? Does your family travel? Where have you been together? What went wrong on a vacation?

Conflict

Conflict happens in families. How does your family handle differences of opinions and choices among family members? For example, does your family argue loudly or do they stop talking to each other? Do they talk about how they feel? Tell a story about a conflict your family had. How do you think a family could handle conflict in a healthy way?

Challenges

Difficulties arise in every family. Perhaps it is a health crisis. Maybe someone is involved in an accident or one family member has a disability. Give an example of how your family faced a difficulty.

Money

Some parents are very open about finances. Others do not reveal how much money they have or need. How did your family handle finances? Did one parent take the responsibility for the finances or did they work together. Did they teach you how to handle money? What did you learn? Do adult children have a financial obligation to their parents?

Children

In some families, young children are taught good manners early. In other families, there are not many demands put on children until an older age. Some children are given responsibilities like cleaning their rooms or taking out the trash. How would you describe your parent's method of discipline? What will you do the same or differently when you have your own children?



The painting above is by a Dutchman, Jan Steen in 1665-68. It depicts family scene on St. Nicholas Day. This is the day when St. Nicholas visits children and rewards them with gifts for their good behavior throughout the year or leaves them with a piece of coal for bad behavior. Describe the family.