

Chapter 7

Family Relationships

1. Healthy Family Relationships
2. Strengthening Family Relationships
3. Help for Families

#OnedayIwokeup #Doppitup

Lesson 1 — Healthy Family Relationships

Types of Families

American families come in many different forms. About **65% of children** live with two married parents, **22%** with mother only, **5%** with father only, and **4%** with neither parent. What makes someone part of a family isn't a legal definition — it's love, commitment, and the bonds that form over a lifetime.

■■■■■ Nuclear	Two parents and one or more children living together
■ Single-parent	One parent caring for one or more children, often after divorce, separation, or death
■■■■■■■ Blended	Formed when a single parent remarries, bringing children from previous relationships together
■■ Extended	Includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins — some living in the same household
■ Adoptive	A parent or parents who have legally adopted one or more children
■ Foster	Temporary placement of children with adults who are not biological relatives

■■■■ Same-sex parent

Families with two parents of the same gender, raising children biologically, through adoption, or other means — legally recognized across the U.S.

Your Family and Your Health

- ■ **Physical health** — Family provides food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. They set rules that protect your safety and model healthy habits.
- ■ **Mental/emotional health** — Healthy families give you a safe space to express feelings, provide love and belonging, and build self-esteem through affirmation — positive feedback that helps you feel valued.
- ■ **Social health** — Your earliest social skills came from your family: how to communicate, share, cooperate, and resolve conflicts. They instilled core values that guide every relationship you'll ever have.

Lesson 2 — Strengthening Family Relationships

Traits of Strong Families

- ■■ **Good communication** — They share thoughts and feelings honestly, listen to each other, and show empathy
- ■ **Caring and support** — They express appreciation, help each other through hard times, and show up for one another
- ■ **Respect** — They honor each other's opinions, privacy, and individuality
- ■ **Commitment** — They make time for each other, work together on problems, and make sacrifices for the family's good
- ■ **Trust** — Parents keep their promises; children show they're reliable and honest

Coping with Family Change

Change is a normal part of every family's life. Common sources include:

■ Birth or adoption	Exciting, but shifts everyone's roles and demands. Less time, space, and new responsibilities can create tension until the family adjusts.
■ Separation and divorce	Painful for everyone. Custody — the legal right and responsibility to care for children — may be granted to one parent or shared. The most important thing: the divorce is not the children's fault.
■■■■■ Remarriage	Blending families can take 4–7 years to feel natural. It requires patience, communication, and mutual respect from everyone.

■ ■ Death of a family member	One of the hardest things a family faces. Sharing memories, respecting different grieving styles, and seeking counseling or a support group all help.
■ Moving	Leaving familiar places and friends is stressful, especially for teens navigating new schools and social circles.
■ Financial changes	Job loss, medical emergencies, or debt cause serious stress. Open communication about financial realities helps reduce anxiety.

The most important coping strategy is honest, open communication. Talking about your feelings — even when it's uncomfortable — reduces stress and helps family members support each other.

Lesson 3 — Help for Families

Violence in Families

Abuse — the physical, mental, emotional, or sexual mistreatment of one person by another — is one of the most serious family problems. When it involves family members, it's called **domestic violence**.

■ Spousal abuse	Any form of abuse directed at a partner or spouse — physical, sexual, or emotional. It is a criminal act. Help is available 24/7 at the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (or text START to 88788).
■ Child abuse	Any action that harms a child's health and development — physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect. Always wrong. Always dangerous.
■ Elder abuse	Abuse or neglect of older family members — often unnoticed. Can be physical, emotional, sexual, or financial.

Recognize · Resist · Report

- **Recognize** — Abuse is a crime. Take any claim seriously.
- **Resist** — If safe to do so, escape and reach a trusted adult.
- **Report** — Tell someone who can help: a trusted adult, counselor, doctor, abuse hotline, or police.

The **cycle of violence** — the pattern of abuse repeating across generations — can be broken with professional help. Seeking help is an act of courage.

■ *National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (24/7, free, confidential)* ■ *988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — also available for personal crises*

Chapter Vocabulary

Lesson 1

Siblings	Brothers and sisters
Nuclear family	Two parents and one or more children living in the same home
Blended family	A family formed when a single parent remarries, bringing together children from previous relationships
Extended family	A family that includes relatives beyond parents and children, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins
Foster care	The temporary placement of children in the homes of adults who are not related to them
Affirmation	Positive feedback that helps others feel appreciated and supported

Lesson 2

Separation	A decision by two married people to live apart from each other
Divorce	A legal end to a marriage contract
Custody	The legal right to make decisions affecting children and the responsibility for their care

Lesson 3

Abuse	The physical, mental, emotional, or sexual mistreatment of one person by another
Domestic violence	Acts of violence or abuse involving family members
Spousal abuse	Domestic violence or abuse directed at a spouse or partner
Child abuse	Domestic abuse directed at a child, including physical, emotional, or sexual harm
Neglect	The failure to provide for a child's basic needs
Elder abuse	The abuse or neglect of older family members
Cycle of violence	The pattern of repeating violent or abusive behaviors from one generation to the next

Crisis center	A facility that offers advice and support to people dealing with personal emergencies
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