

# A Family Is a Family Is a Family

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## Identities & Themes

- Feelings
- Identity affirmation
- Identity safety
- General racial/ethnic diversity
- Bi/Multiracial identity or relationships
- Same-gender relationships
- Multigenerational relationships
- Ability/Neurodiversity
- Separation/Divorce/Blended family
- Adoption/Foster
- Single parent

## Teacher Reflection Questions

1. Who was in your family when you were growing up?
2. Did you ever feel like your family was different from other families?
3. How did you feel about those differences?
4. What messages did you hear about families, family diversity, and families that are presented as “normal”?
5. Which family structures are rarely portrayed or portrayed negatively?
6. What are some ways that you can counter stereotypes and negative messages about family diversity with the children you care for?

## Background Information for Teacher

The illustrations in this book include a wide variety of family structures, racial and ethnic identities, and ways of living. This helps children see themselves and their lived experiences reflected in the book as well as see a window into the lives of someone who is different from them, which fosters empathy and respect across differences.

See also the **Diverse Family Structures Primer** in this guide.

## Anti-Bias Education Tenets

- Empathy & Understanding
- Healthy Complex Identities
- Respect Across Differences
- Notice, Name, & Reject Bias
- Responsiveness & Action

## Social-Emotional Learning

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Responsible Decision Making
- Relationship Skills

### Read this to the students before reading the book:

*This book is about the different kinds of families. Listen and look carefully at the pictures to discover the many different kinds of families people come from.*

### Discussion Questions (essential questions bolded)

1. At each page, pause to allow children to digest what is happening in each picture. Ask:
  - What kind of family is on this page?
  - What do you see in the picture that tells you about the family?
  - What makes this family special?
  - How is this family similar to yours?
2. After reading the book, discuss:
  - What are the different kinds of families in the book?
  - **Who's in your family?**
  - **What makes your family special?**

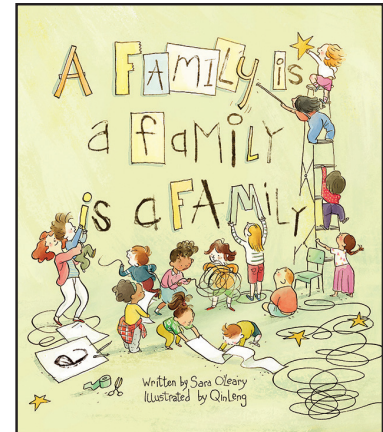
### Journal Prompts & Extension Activities

#### Family discussion

In a large or small group, ask the children to tell you all the different kinds of families they can think of. Draw each family with stick figures as the children mention it. Ask questions or add your own comments to expand the children's thinking. (For example: *"Does anyone know anyone who lives with a grandparent?"* or *"I have a friend who lived with someone else's family for a while when her family was having a hard time. That was called a foster family".*)

When you are done making the picture list, tell them: *"Lots of these families look different from each other. What are some of the things that are the same about all of the families? What makes each of them a family?"*

After the discussion, have students draw a picture of their families that shows what makes them special.



### Literacy Connections

- Realistic fiction
- Identify details in the text
- Compare and contrast characters
- Identify theme or main message
- Use illustrations/pictures/photos to gain information
- Make inferences
- Make text connections (to self, text, the world)