



Our Family

• Introduction

We all belong to a family. The family consists of the mother, father, children and close relations. The family is the very first social unit where we get membership.

By studying this chapter, you will be able to understand your rights, duties and responsibilities. As a member of the family, you can develop your skills to enter society as a good citizen.

Family is the very first social unit where anyone gets membership at birth. It is the social unit in which one holds membership for a long period. Children from their infancy grow in the family with food, nourishment, sanitary aids, protection and love.

The family supplies the basic foundation to familiarize man with society to spend a good social life. The family environment is the base for a physically and mentally healthy child. The early social life of a person is spent entirely in family environment.



6.1

Members of the Family

People who live in a single home as a mother, father, children and their blood relations can be defined as a family.

The smallest social unit in society is the family. A society is made up of a number of families. The co-existence of individual family units contributes to the coexistence of society. A stable society will

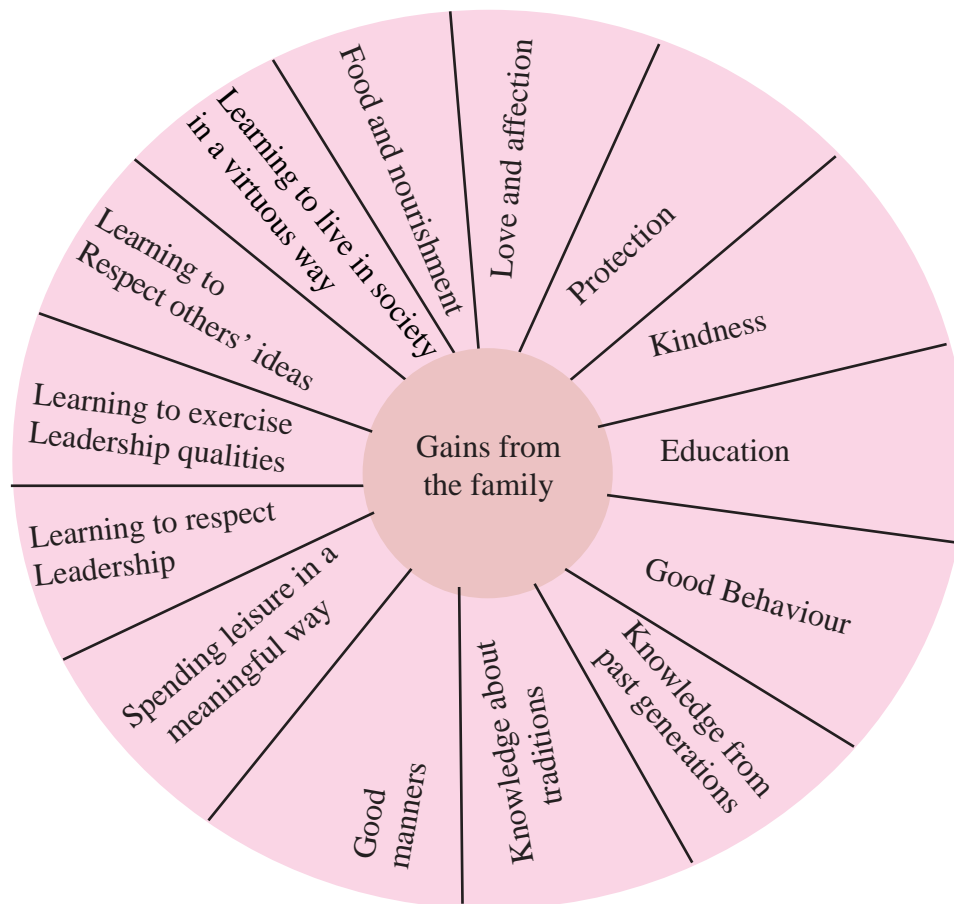
emerge with the build up of stable family units. It is very important to be good and kind towards each other, identify the needs of others and fulfill them. The wellbeing of each family builds up the wellbeing of society. Good relationships with each other is essential for the existence of the family.



fig. 6.2

A child supports her mother

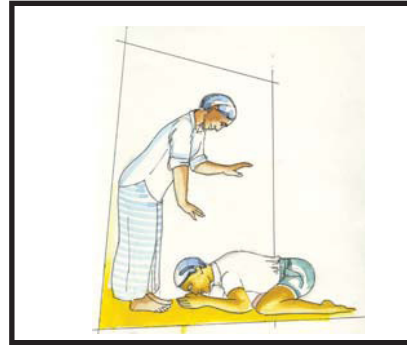
Through the family, its members will receive much more than from any other organization in society. There are many advantages one can get by living as a member of the family.





6.3

A mother helps a child in studies



6.4

Worshipping adults

Basic Qualities in the social unit - Family

- + Built on the kinship.
- + Consists of few people.
- + All members live in one residence/Home.
- + Close relationships among members.
- + Conduct of each others work with each others help.
- + Sharing of family resources among family members.
- + Living together for a long period of time.
- + Work for the betterment of the members of the family.

The importance of the family in the child's development has been emphasised in the United Nations Children's Charter which was published on 20th November 1989.

"A child should be in a happy, lovable and understanding family surrounding, for his complete and consistent growth"



Activity

Write an essay on the topic "Help I get from the members of my family for a better future."

Kinds of Families

According to their nature, families could be classified into two types.

1. Nuclear Family

2. Extended Family



Nuclear family

Look at the picture. In that picture you can see a family with the mother, father and two children. There may be many families with only the mother, father and children around your home. Families that consist of the mother, father and their children are called nuclear families. They are very common in the present society.



6.5

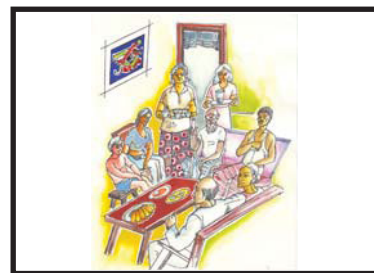
Nuclear family



Extended family

In this picture you can see a family consisting of the mother, father, children, grandfather, grandmother, aunt... etc. We call such a family an extended family.

An extended family includes many relatives. There are many members representing three or more generations in an extended family unit.



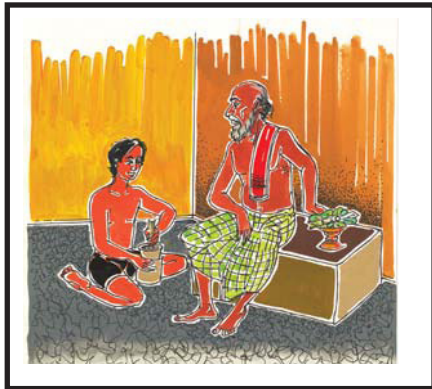
6.6

The extended family



Importance of an extended family unit

- The strength of the family is greater, as there are many members representing many generations and ages.
- Children get more love and affection.
- Adults get protection.
- Higher endowment of culture.
- More comfort and effort by decentralizing responsibilities.
- Ability to build up wider relationships with Society.
- Easy to get labour within the family.



6.7

Helping Grandfather



6.8

Members of the family
working together.

As there are more members in an extended family it is possible to learn various things. This can be clearly seen in agricultural and other work.



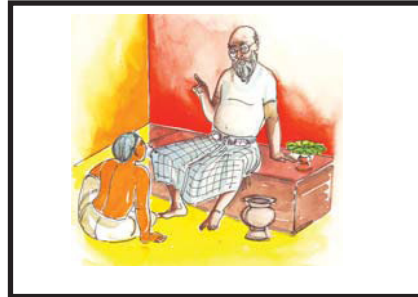
Socialization

Children who live in an extended family become better socialized as they get the opportunity to learn a lot of things from not only the mother but also from the grandfather, grandmother and other relatives.



Receiving Love, Kindness and Protection

Children who live in a nuclear family get love and protection only from his mother, father, sisters and brothers. But as there are many members in an extended family the child receives love and protection of more people.



6.9

A child listening to a story



Exchange

It gives one the opportunity to get used to a frugal consumer pattern in an extended family as members exchange food and many other things.

If you are living in an extended family with your relations mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, aunty and uncle, you will have the opportunity to help them. Also you will be able to spend your leisure happily and involve yourself in religious activities with them.



6.10

A girl who is going to the temple with grandmother



Activities

1. Give a list of occasions where you can help the members of your family.
2. Indicate some help you and your family receive from your grandmother and grandfather.



Family members and kinship

If you belong to a nuclear family, you live with your mother father and siblings. If you are a member of an extended family you get the opportunity to have a good contact with relations, daily.

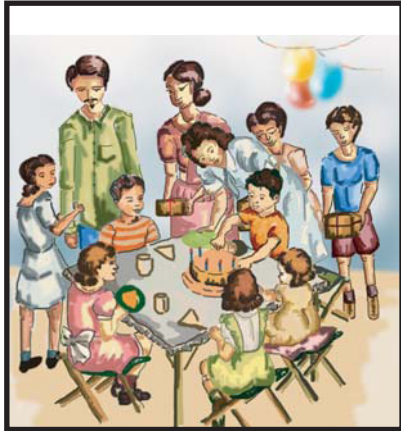
Words used to address Relations

Your father's	Relationship to you	Your mother's	Relationship to you
Father	Seeya	Father	Seeya
Mother	Achchi	Mother	Achchi
Elder brother	Mahappa	Elder brother	Mama
Younger brother	Bappa	Younger brother	Mama
Elder Brother's wife	Loku Amma	Brother's son	Massina
Younger brother's wife	Punchi Amma	Brother's daughter	Nena
Brother's son	Cousin Brother	Elder sister	Lokuamma
Brothers daughter	Cousin Sister	Younger sister	Punchi Amma
Sister	Nanda	Sister's husband	Mahappa/Bappa
Sister's husband	Mama	Sister's son	Aiya/Malli (Cousin brother)
Sister's son	Massina	Sister's daughter	Akka/Nangi (Cousin sister)
Sister's daughter	Nena		

You may have heard of different forms of address when introducing relationships in different areas. The chart below gives you some examples.

Father	-	Tatta	-	Appachchi
Grandfather	-	Seeya	-	Mutta, Atha
Grandmother	-	Achchi	-	Atta, Athtamma
Uncle	-	Mama	-	Mamandi
Uncle	-	Bappa	-	Punchitatta, Kudappa
Aunty	-	Punchi Amma	-	Balamma, Kudamma, Podiamma
Uncle	-	Mahappa	-	Lokutatta, Lokuappachchi

There are numerous advantages in maintaining relationships in the social unit, known as the family. Building up unity, ability to obtain knowledge about customs and traditions, developing skills to maintain these customs and traditions, helping each other and getting others to help are some of the main advantages. Most of the time all the relations take part in important occasions of the members of the family.



Relations at a birthday party

fig.6.11

Think about occasions where your relations helped your family and your family helped them.

Some lullabies also help to inculcate these type of thoughts in children about relations. Such a Lullaby is given below.

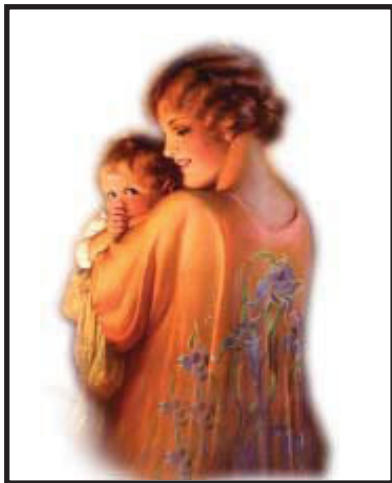


fig 6.12

Mother nurses an infant

*Puthe numbe loku amma
Athe walallak demma
Hithe adara netha nimma
Nada nidiyan pemma*



Activities

- Prepare a list of different forms of address used for relations in different areas.
- Collect poems and songs emphasising qualities of one's Mother, Father and Relations.



Customs and Traditions in the Family



Customs

There are many customs followed by the family from the birth to the death, of a person. Things we should follow and continue are called customs. According to Sinhala tradition, what you should maintain is called as 'Sirith' and what you should not do is called as 'Virith'.

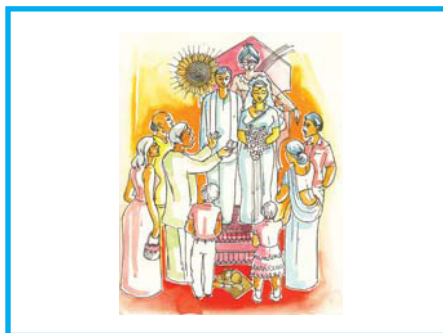
Many customs are followed on occasions such as a house warming, start of feeding solid food to a baby and introduction of letters to a child. There are differences in customs followed by different families on such occasions. These customs may change according to area, race and religion.

We are used to following such customs on occasions, such as special religious festivals, weddings, funerals and special cultural festivals.



6.12

Introduction of the alphabet
to a small child



6.13

Poruwa Customs at a wedding



Sri Lanka is a multi ethnic, multi religious and multi cultural country. According to these differences customs also differ.

6.14

Respecting elders on New Year day



Activities

01. Inquire from an elder, the customs, followed in a house warming ceremony in your area and note them.
02. Illustrate through drawings, customs followed by members of your family, on New Year's day



Traditions

Customs in a family followed for a long time, perhaps for generations, can be called 'traditions'. Think of such traditions specific to your family.

Worshipping parents and adults when children leave home is an admirable tradition.

Another important custom, followed by many families, is religious observances at home.

Visiting religious places and following religious activities are some other special traditions that can be seen in a family unit.



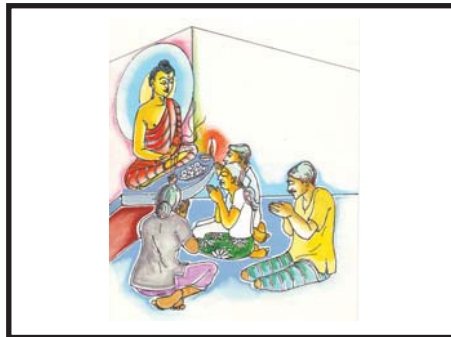
6.15

Respects Parents

Taking meals together is another important tradition.

Such traditions are helpful for the good relationship and well-being of members of the family. The younger generation will become good citizens by following such traditions.

Traditions may vary according to the religion, culture and area etc.



6.16

Religious Observances



Activities

1. What are the customs and traditions followed by your family members daily.
2. Describe how such customs and traditions affect the members of your family.



Rights, Duties and Responsibilities of the Members of your family



6.17

An occasion taking meals,
by family members

What we should get from the family to have a good life, can be regarded as rights.

Receiving love and affection, mercy and kindness, and protection are some rights that a member of the family should receive from other members of the family.

Receiving educational facilities is also your right as a member of the family. You will be able to develop and improve your skills to lead a good social life through education.

A member of any society has the opportunity to enjoy many rights. We are committed to fulfill our responsibilities while enjoying our rights.

You should be kind and affectionate to your parents, and you should love and obey them as a child receiving parent's love, affection and kindness.

When receiving education as your right, it is your duty to use the facilities provided by the family, have a good education and try to serve the family, society and country by becoming a good citizen.

It is very important to fulfill your duties and responsibilities to build up goodwill among the family members.

Earning money, leading exemplary lives, protecting one's family, providing nutrition to the family, taking leadership and correct decisions are considered the duties of parents.



6.18

A mother preparing the child for school



6.19

A father taking children to School

Protecting household things, performing the leadership role when parents are away, protecting siblings are the duties of a child.



Activities

- Prepare an article on the topic of , “My duties and responsibilities as a member of the family.



The importance of the relationship between family and neighbours

Think about incidents, where you needed help and assistance of your family members.

And also think about the incidents where you helped other members.

Think about occasions, you and your family received help from neighbours and the incidents where your family helped your neighbours.

No one can live all by oneself in society. Similarly, no family can live all by itself too. So we have to build up positive relationships with neighbours. On various occasions you require the cooperation of families in the neighbourhood.



fig.6.20

Laying foundation stone



fig. 6.21

Harvesting

Occasion where you work in co-operation with your neighbours.

- At a Sramadana campaign
- In religious festivals
- Occasions like laying of a foundation for a house
- Preparation of paddy fields for cultivation

It is important to conduct activities in your family without disturbing the lives of your neighbours. For instance, improper disposal of garbage, having the radio on full volume, engagement in illegal business with people so as to disturb neighbours can be cited.



Activities

- How can you help when an emergency arises in a neighbour family?
- Draw a picture illustrating one occasion where you received help from a neighbour family.



Qualities of a good citizen

Now you know that society is made up of many families.

For there to be a good society, members should have good qualities. There are many good qualities which, you also should develop to work with others. By developing those skills you will be able to work as a good citizen in the future. Try to develop the skills given below by obeying the advice from your parents and elders.

Qualities of a good citizen:

He/She should have;

- Love, affection and kindness
- Goodwill
- Simplicity of life
- Empathy
- Regularity
- Patience
- Altruism
- Honesty
- Respect for other's idea
- Leadership qualities
- Humility
- Self-discipline



Activity

You will have to build up connections with many people in society in future. List out qualities you should develop to lead an effective life in the future.

SYNOPSIS

The family is the first social unit that a person gets membership in and where the membership continues for a long period. According to the composition of families seen in modern society, families could be classified as Nuclear and Extended families. The responsibility of every member of a family unit is to work for the betterment of one's family. There are many rights that a person gets as a member of a family. of a family is to provide physically and mentally The duty healthy people to society. While enjoying your your rights as a member of the family, train yourself to fulfill duties and responsibilities. It is the duty of all the members of a family to build up good contacts with neighbours. A good Society is built by a collection of good citizens. So, each person must try to improve good qualities to make a better society.