

MY FAMILY

BY SHEILA E. WILSON

The family is ordained of God (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).



Banay, aiga, perbe, famiglia, rodina, fjölskylda, familia, család—these words may look different, but they all mean the same thing—FAMILY! All families are different. Some families have many children, and some have a few children, or one child, or no children. Some families have children, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles all living together. Some children have two parents, and some have one. Some children live with their grandparents or other adults; these adults make up their family.

Heavenly Father planned for us to come to earth and live in a family. He wants the best things for us and wants us to return to live with Him one day. He gave us parents to teach us and help us make wise decisions.

You are important to your family, and your family is important to you. The important thing about families is that family members love and care for each other. An important part of living the gospel is showing love for

your family and working to have a happy family. You can show your love for your parents by being helpful and obedient (see Ephesians 6:1). When you are kind to family members, you are showing your love for them. The scriptures teach us how to love our family. They tell us to be “kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving” (Ephesians 4:32).

Prophets teach us the importance and the blessings of families. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said, “The family is the basic unit of the kingdom of God on earth” (*Ensign*, May 1978, 45). President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said, “Your most important friendships should be with your own brothers and sisters and with your father and mother. Love your family” (*Ensign*, May 1986, 43). President Gordon B. Hinckley tells us, “The greatest joys of life are experienced in happy family relationships” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 205).

Heavenly Father has established families to bring us happiness, allow us to learn correct principles in a loving atmosphere, and prepare us for eternal life.

Whipstitched Message Pouch

Read Mosiah 18:21. You can apply this scripture in your life by the things you say and do. Think of something kind to do for a family member. (Suggestions: make a bed, cheer up someone who is sad, do one of your brother’s or sister’s chores, help Mom or Dad around the house without being asked, set the table for dinner, give Grandma extra hugs and tell her why she is special, say “please” and “thank you” all day to Mom.)

Trace the oval on page 21 twice onto heavy paper or felt; then cut out the two ovals. Thread a large needle with yarn or embroidery floss, and tie a knot at the end. Whipstitch (bring the needle from underneath, up through the ovals, around the edge, and up through again and again) the ovals together, leaving an opening at the top (see p. 21). Insert one of the messages on page 21 (or a message of your own) into the pouch. After doing something kind for a family member, leave the pouch on his or her bed.



I love you!

You're the greatest!

Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise indicated; GAK = Gospel Art Kit, TNGC = *Teaching, No Greater Call*. Be sensitive to the family situations of the children in your Primary. Help them understand that it is not the structure of the family that is important but that family members love each other.)

1. Briefly tell the children about Heavenly Father's plan for us. Heavenly Father blessed us with families to help us return to live with Him. Give the children a copy of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." Tell the children that it contains the Lord's teachings regarding the family. By following these teachings, we can strengthen and unify our families now and prepare to live as eternal families. As you read the first paragraph of the proclamation, have the children listen for what is at the center of His plan for His children ("The family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children"). Read together the first two lines of paragraph 7 ("The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan"). Help the children understand that "ordained of God" means Heavenly Father designed marriage and family not just as an earthly union, but one that will endure forever. Write the words from these sentences on pieces of paper, and cut out each word. On one side of the board, rearrange the words from paragraph 1. On the other side, rearrange the words from paragraph 7. Divide the children into two groups. Choose children to arrange the words in their correct order as their group repeats the sentences out loud. Scramble the words again, and see if they can do it without the groups repeating it. Encourage the children to keep their copies of the proclamation in their scriptures to use throughout the year. Suggest that they read the proclamation with their families in family home evening.

2. Divide the children into groups. Assign each group a song or hymn about home and family. Give the children a few minutes to read or listen to the words of their song or hymn to find how its ideas help us to show love for our family. Have each group sing their song or hymn and then share their ideas. Have the children draw pictures of ways they can show love for their family members (such as helping a sister pick up her toys, helping Dad with yard work, giving Mom a hug). Have as many children as possible explain their picture to the Primary. Encourage the children to show love for family members during the week. Bear testimony that their families will be blessed when they show love for each family member.

3. Heavenly Father gave the power and authority of the priesthood to His children on earth so He can guide and bless us here. Display on a tray some pictures and items that remind us of some of the blessings of the priesthood (for example: pictures of a baby for a baby's blessing, sick child for blessing the sick, number 8 for baptism, two hands for confirmation, a father for a father's blessing, sacrament tray or cups for the sacrament, temple for temple marriage).

Give the children an opportunity to choose an item or picture from the tray and tell what it represents. Replace the items and pictures on the tray, and show them to the children. Keeping the tray covered, remove an item or picture. Uncover the tray, and let the children view what remains. Have the children guess what is missing and say what it represents. Give the children an opportunity to do this a few times.

Sing a song that goes along with each priesthood blessing—for example, "The Fifth Article of Faith" (p. 125), "I Like My Birthdays" (p. 104), "Fathers" (p. 209), "Teach Me to Walk in the Light" (p. 177), "Before I Take the Sacrament" (p. 73), "I Love to See the Temple" (p. 95). Conclude by having a ward member express how the priesthood blesses his or her family.

4. Tell the children about King Benjamin's instructions to families (see Mosiah 4:14–15). Read the last half of verse 15 aloud together. It is important to show your love through your actions. Tell the children that there are many opportunities to serve family members every day.

Have the children play Family Service Charades. Using two containers, put the names of the children in one and ideas for service in the other. Have the child whose name you draw select a service and act it out for the other children to guess. If the child needs a partner to help, he or she can choose another name from the container.

Possible service ideas are writing to a missionary, making a sibling's bed, inviting a friend to family home evening, consoling a sad child, saying a prayer for someone, reading to a younger child.

5. *Song Presentation*: Draw a simple outline of a house on the board (large enough to fit the six pictures—from the GAK or the Church magazines—used in the second part of the presentation below). Pass out some paper hearts to the children. Tell the children that love can be spoken in their homes. As the pianist plays the melody to the first verse of "Love Is Spoken Here" (p. 190–91), have the children pass the hearts around and be thinking of some kind words they say in their homes. When the music stops, have those who are holding hearts share their responses. Write their responses on the board inside the house. Fill the house with "spoken words" until both verses of the song have been played through once.

Tell the children there are other ways that love is spoken in our homes. Place the pictures on the board around the outside of the house in random order. Pictures: Verse 1—family prayer, paper with word "whispers," heart paper, and the Savior. Verse 2—father blessing a sick child, parents teaching in family home evening, heart paper, and Jesus Christ (all heart papers should be the size of the pictures, with a red heart in the center of each).

Verse 1: Have the children listen as you sing the first line of the verse. Ask them to repeat it for you. As you sing the second line, have them listen for something that tells them there is love in our home (mother praying). Ask for a response, and then have them repeat that line. Sing the two lines together. Have the children listen for which word you sing on the highest note as you sing the last two lines of the verse. Ask for a response ("plea"). Tell them that a plea is a prayer. Have the children repeat those two lines for you. Have the children listen to how you sing the last line of the song (softly and gently). Ask them to repeat and sing the same way.

Verse 2: As you sing the first two lines, have the children listen for what my home is blessed with (priesthood power). Ask for responses. Have them repeat that line.

As you finish the verse, have them listen for what is crystal clear (the things our parents teach). Ask for responses and have them repeat the line. Sing the last line, and have them repeat it, singing softly. Review the second verse.

Remind the children that you have just sung about other ways that we can know that love is spoken in our homes. Choose someone who thinks he or she will be able to put the pictures in order inside our home while you sing the whole song. You may need to sing it a second time, having the girls sing the first verse and the boys sing the second, to give the child an opportunity to put the pictures in order. Bear testimony that we can feel our Savior near when love is spoken and expressed in our homes.

6. Additional *Friend* resources: Sharing Time ideas #1, 2, 3, Feb. 2002, 31; Feb. 2001, 6; June 1996, 44; July 1975, 6; Sharing Time idea #1, July 1992, 12; Feb. 1996, 22; Mar. 2003, 20. Other resource: *Family Guidebook* (item no. 31180).