

# Family dynamics essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



## I. Introduction

Families in the 21st century are both similar to and different from families in the past. When exploring family relationships and dynamics. It is important to understand the ways that families work, how they relate to each other and how they function in society in terms of child rearing. The family still remains the central unit to raising children in society today. But there have been ways that technology affects the family dynamics. What is Family dynamics?

Family dynamics refers to the ways in which family members relate to one another. Because humans are capable of change, and family members take part in different experiences, the dynamics within a family never remain the same. People often look at family dynamics in the context of what makes a family dysfunctional.

How family dynamics formed? Is there has factors that influence the family dynamics? Family dynamics are influenced by things like the structure of the family- the number of children and adults and how they are related- the personalities of each family member, cultural background, values, and personal or family experience. Variations of the family structure and its inherent dynamics over the following sections: •The Nuclear Family

The Nuclear Family is traditionally thought of the parents and the siblings. Though this is the most basic family arrangement, it also rife with complexities. One thing parents much consider is whether to have multiple children. This question raises a host of others, such as, the effect of being the oldest, youngest, and middle child. We will also discuss only children and

children who are much older than their siblings. Finally we will talk about how to form strong family bonds. •The Extended Family

The extended family refers to grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. A strong relationship with your extended family can be just as rewarding as close ties inside the nuclear family. However, building those bonds inside the extended family can be a little more difficult because, obviously, everyone does not live under the same roof. In this section, we offer some suggestions for building a close extended family. •Working Parents

The decision to go back to work can be a tough one to make for new parents. Naturally, the financial stability of a regular paycheck can take a lot of pressure of your household. Then again, missing your child's first encounters with the world cannot be replaced. Each family must learn how to make this difficult decision for themselves, but on this page you will find some advice for weighing the pros and cons. We will also talk about corporate benefits for new parents and how to make the time you have with your child count.

#### •Single Parents

Numerous extenuating circumstances can result in a single parent. Traditionally, single parents are thought to be a product of a divorce, but a widower or a mother who had never been married can also be a single parent. Regardless of the causes, single parents face an uphill battle. On this page, we will offer some advice for dealing with an ex-spouse and a child who misses their other parent. While being a single parent is difficult, it can be just as rewarding a traditional, nuclear family. •Older Parents

Parents who have children later in life face several advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, they are most likely more financially stable, secure in their job and home, and clear about what they want. On the other hand, they probably have less energy than their younger counterparts and the situation will only be more pronounced as their child matures. On this page, we will lay out all of the positives and negatives to help you make the most informed decision possible. •Much Older Siblings

If you have another child many years after your first born, your new baby may have three parents. A much older sibling can help watch, mentor, and care for your new baby. Of course, not every big brother or sister will want to embrace this role. On this page, we will examine the pros and cons of much older siblings. •Younger Parents

Parents who have children in their teens face a variety of problems. First, there is the social stigma attached to have a child at such an early age. Without the support of your family and friends, the new parents will most likely not get the financial and emotional support they need to bring a child into the world. As a result, teen parents have difficulty going to college and finding satisfying careers. On this page, will explore all aspects of this difficult situation. •Stepfamilies

In past generations, stepfamilies were uncommon and most people did not know how to relate to them. Now, as the stigmas against divorce and remarriage continue to dissolve, more and more stepfamilies are coming together. While it's never easy to merge two families together, stepfamilies can be an opportunity to forge new, lasting, loving bonds. On this page, we

will offer some advice for relating to your new family, and for smoothing out the potential conflicts that will inevitably arise. We will also discuss the subject having children once you've remarried into a stepfamily. No one said it would be simple and easy. •Adoption

Adopting a baby can be very difficult. There are long — and sometimes embarrassing — probes into your life and home to judge your potential ability as a parent. There are also many different types of adoption to consider. You can adopt through an agency, choose private adoption, foreign adoptions, open adoptions, or independent adoptions. Don't worry — we'll explain all of the options to you. Unfortunately, when you take your new baby home, your challenges are just beginning. On this page, we will explore all aspects of adoption and what to do as your adopted child grows.

These different family structures can create a variety of family dynamics.

### Family Dynamics and Health

Family dynamics significantly impact health in both positive and negative ways. Having a close-knit and supportive family provides emotional support, economic well-being, and increases overall health. However, the opposite is also true. When family life is characterized by stress and conflict, the health of family members tends to be negatively affected.

### Positive Aspects of Family Dynamics and Health

A family's social support is one of the main ways that family positively impacts health. Social relationships, such as those found in close families, have been demonstrated to decrease the likelihood of the onset of chronic

disease, disability, mental illness, and death. Marriage in particular has been studied in the way it affects health. Marriage is thought to protect well-being by providing companionship, emotional support, and economic security. Marriage is associated with physical health, psychological well-being, and low mortality. One study found that “controlling on or taking into account every other risk factor for death that we know, including physical health status, rates of all-cause mortality are twice as high among the unmarried as the married.” Another study found that “on the whole, marriage produces a net improvement in avoiding the onset of disease, which is called primary prevention.”

Married people are more likely to avoid risky behavior, such as heavy drinking and high fat diets, and married people are also more likely to see the doctor for checkups and screenings. One does not have to be married to obtain the health benefits from family. Studies have also confirmed that social support from parents, friends, and relatives has positive effects, especially on mental health. “Prospective cohort studies have confirmed the direct beneficial effects of various forms of social support on global mental health, incidence of depressive symptoms, recovery from a unipolar depressive episode, psychological distress, psychological strain, physical symptoms and all-causes of mortality.” Social integration and social support, like marriage, have protective effects on reducing mortality risks. For example, “those reporting higher levels of support from close friends and family exhibit lower heart rate and systolic blood pressure, lower serum cholesterol, and higher immune function.” Thus, available data provide evidence to support the idea that one’s social environment or family

situation “ does get under the skin to affect important physiologic parameters, including neuroendocrine, immune, and cardiovascular functioning.

### Negative Aspects of Family Dynamics and Health

Though good familial relations and social support serve as protective factors against mortality risks and improve overall health, studies have shown that not all familial relations positively impact health. Problematic and non-supportive familial interactions have a negative impact on health. “ There is increasing evidence that poor-quality relationships can actually harm physical and mental health. Indeed, persons in unhappy marriages exhibit worse physical and mental health than unmarried persons.” Further, marriages characterized by an equal division of decision making and power are associated with high levels of depression on the part of both spouses. Growing up in an unsupported, neglectful or violent home is also associated with poor physical health and development.

### Family Dynamics and Children

Families characterized by conflict, anger, and aggression have particularly negative effects on children. Physical abuse and neglect represent immediate threats to the health of children. In addition, “ the fact that children’s developing physiological and neuroendocrine systems must repeatedly adapt to the threatening and stressful circumstances created by these environments increases the likelihood of biological deregulations that may contribute to a buildup of allostatic load, that is, the premature physiological aging of the organism that enhances vulnerability to chronic

disease and to early mortality in adulthood.” Children who grow up in risky families are also especially likely to exhibit risky behaviors such as smoking, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse. “ Anger and aggression are highly noxious agents in a family environment. Conditions ranging from living with irritable and quarreling parents to being exposed to violence and abuse at home show associations with mental and physical health problems in childhood, with lasting effects in the adult years.”

Negative effects of technology on family dynamics:

### 1: The “ Inside” Generation

More than ever before, parents have to encourage, coax or even force their children to get outside and play. Kids spend more time inside because of school, homework, working parents and other factors dictating their schedules, but when they have free time, how do they spend it? Author Richard Louv coined the phrase “ nature deficit disorder,” describing the younger generation’s disconnect with nature. How often do you see kids playing in the woods, building forts or rolling down grassy hills? A University of Michigan 2004 study said kids play outside two hours less a week than two decades ago, choosing instead to spend the extra time watching TV, on the computer, reading or just doing nothing. Technology isn’t exactly great for our health either. In 2004, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention said childhood obesity had tripled since 1980 in the U. S. A. One of the most technologically advanced countries also has one of the highest shares of obese people in the world — not a correlation of which to be proud. However, parents can manage their kids’ “ inside” time much like their screen time. Schedule outdoor time, and stick to it. If it’s pretty, get them outside. And



from time to time, go with them for a bike ride or a walk. Sending your kids outside while you sit inside and text or send e-mails just “sends” the wrong message.

## 2: Blurred Boundaries

Once upon a time, a family’s biggest technological nuisance was the phone ringing during dinner or late at night. Twenty-four hour TV programming, the Internet and cell phones didn’t permeate the inner sanctum of the home. School stayed at school, work stayed at work, and those boundaries weren’t crossed except in an emergency. That was then; this is now. For adults, work doesn’t end just because you leave the office; in fact, companies equip their people with smart phones and laptops so employees are accessible 24/7.

Physicians are used to getting emergency calls, but now there are insurance emergencies, technology emergencies, sales emergencies, accounting emergencies and the list continues. Likewise, schools send out e-mails – announcements about homework and events — so kids are getting “business” as well as social messages when they’re at home. Once the walls between home and the outside world come down, it’s hard to build them back up again. But, you can make it better. It goes back to setting limits; your child’s social life won’t implode if she doesn’t answer 50 texts that night. Also, minimize the double standard. If you limit screen time for kids, do the same for yourself. You don’t want to lose your job over it, but consider how much work you do at home because you “have to” versus what you do because you can and your computer’s right there.

### 3: A Less Empathetic Generation

A benefit of a family is that children learn the give and take of society — how to interact with other people, the importance of the individual and the group, and how to communicate. However, with the inundation of technology in all facets of life, parents run the risk of raising a generation who can't relate to other people. Children with unlimited gaming, computer and TV time may not get enough interpersonal face-to-face interaction needed to develop proper social skills. A Wall Street Journal article called this “ silent fluency,” the ability to read cues like tone, body language and facial expressions.

E-mail and texts don't convey empathy, tone or subtext the way face-to-face or phone conversations do. While the effects are still being quantified, the digital generation is at risk to lose their silent fluency abilities. Larry Rosen, a well-known psychologist, has studied the psychology of Facebook interaction and feels that while it can be good practice for introverted kids to get comfortable talking to peers, it is no substitute for real-world interaction. “ Our study showed that real-world empathy is more important for feeling as though you have solid social support,” he writes. “ Although those who had more virtual empathy did feel more socially supported, the impact was less than the real-world empathy.” So, if your child seems to spend most of her time on social media or texting, encourage her to talk to or make plans with friends.

### 4: Quality Time

Between responding to e-mails during kids' activities, texting at meals, and constant phone time while driving, parents use technology almost as much

as teens. This dynamic creates feelings of jealousy and distress in children since they now have to compete for both their parents' time and focus. The family dinner is a perfect example of technology affecting quality time. Traditionally a haven from the outside world and a chance to reconnect, today's dinner is often a frenzied event where members tend to be distracted during the meal by the computer, cell phone or TV. Or they can't wait to finish to get back to these devices. Often, parents are just as guilty as their kids. Here's an alarming fact: A group of children, aged 4-6, were asked whether they'd want to watch TV or hang out with their dad. Dear old dad lost out! According to an A. C. Nielsen report, 54 percent of kids preferred to spend time with the TV. It's a sad commentary when Bakugan or Barney, however educational, wins out over quality time with a parent, especially for young children who think their parents are still "cool." So what's the answer? Schedule one-on-one time with children and take family dinner hour seriously. One mother insists that all family members put their electronic devices in a basket when they come through the door and retrieve them only after dinner is over.

#### 5: School Performance

Kids who get too much "screen time" — through watching lots of TV, surfing the Internet and playing video games — tend to perform poorly at school. Researchers have found the brain releases dopamine, a chemical related to attention and focus, when kids watch TV or play video games — something that gives the child a "stimulus surge." With too much screen time, kids get desensitized and can't focus on something like a book without that super-stimulating effect. Another study examined boys aged 6 to 9 and the

relationship between video games and their declining reading skills. The boys didn't seem to have any underlying reading problems; researchers speculate that their desire to play video games just surpassed the time they devoted to reading and writing, bringing down their abilities. So, what's a parent to do, especially with computers a part of school curriculum these days? •Limit screen time, especially if computer homework is a part of their evening. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends one to two hours per day for children over two, and none for kids younger. •Talk with and read to your children — along with the quality time spent, this puts your kids in a language-rich environment. •Be involved in their academics, even on the computer. Watching your child do his math online lets you encourage him, help him and see his problem-solving skills in action.

Positive effects of technology on family dynamics:

- Coordination of busy schedules: No more stranding a child at school or a parent at the airport. Text, phone or e-mail lets someone know plans have changed.
- Safety: In a crazy world, you want to know where your family is and that they have a way to reach in trouble.
- A “ new connectedness”:

Texting has opened doors between parents and teens. Dr. Gene Beresin, a child psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital, said texting gives teens “ optimal distance” from parents, allowing for communication that wouldn't happen otherwise.