

Definition of a family essay



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Defining a family is difficult because many different people have many different ideas on what a family is and is not, there is no right or wrong answer, its all about others perspectives. Since many people have many views on what a family is, there is no set definition. Vanier institute claims that a family is 2 or more people bound together over time and mutual consent, while in 1949 Murdock defined a family as a couple that is sexually active and have one or more children.

Later in 1971, Burgess et al defined a family as “ a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption” and Social Science defined a family as a group of “ individuals who are related by affection, kinship, dependency or trust. ” All these different people have had a different idea on what families are, but are any of them wrong? When reading each definition, I only found one similarity, a family is at least two people who are together. So is it possible that that has become what a family is? My definition of a family is similar to the definitions given by the Vanier institute and the Social Science institute.

I believe a family is a group of individuals who want to be together and who trust each other and love one another (either as a romance or as a friendship or kinship). I do not believe that one has to be married or has to have children to be considered a family. In today's times Burgess et al, as well as Murdock's definition of a family would not match many of the families in our community. Our society is able to view different ways of living to still be called a family, for example today we would call a single mother with two children a family.

This is because they care for each other unconditionally, and support each other's needs. Jane Howard once said, " Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family: Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one. " I believe this is true, there is no set definition on a family because each family has flaws and differences that make them the family that they are. Therefor, Jane is pointing out that no matter what your family looks like, or who they are, the most important thing is that you have people to love and care for you, and in the end that is your true family.