

# Family support in the community

[Education](#)



Family support in the Community Kwanzaa is celebrated by African Americans, and is a cultural and ethnic celebration. The purpose of Kwanzaa carnival is to celebrate the black heritage, unity among blacks and their culture. Kwanzaa is celebrated for a week and is considered to be equivalent to Christmas. The date of Kwanzaa is from December 26th till January 1st . The meaning of Kwanzaa is first fruit, which is inspired from harvest celebration in Africa, first of its kind (Karenga, 2012). Kwanzaa reflects restoration of African culture and Black Liberation Movement, which was carried out in 1960s. Professor of California State University, Dr. Maulana Karenga, who taught African studies, created Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, but a cultural one. The understanding of values rooted in the Kwanzaa celebration, helps an individual to appreciate the cultural events. The aim behind Kwanzaa celebration is to keep culture, family and community intact among Africans living in America, and Africans living all over the world. The seven principles are integrated through seven values, which are also called Nguzo Saba. These seven principles were created by Maulana Karenga and act as foundation for African community (Karenga, 2012). The seven values are Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-determination), Ujima (Collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity) and Imani (Faith). The unity principle states that Africans should remain united, be it a family, a community or a nation. The self-determination principle states that Africans need to define themselves through what they do, they must create a name for themselves and stand up for their right and speak for themselves. The collective work and responsibility principle states that in order to build a strong African community, Africans need to stand up for each other and be like brothers

<https://assignbuster.com/family-support-in-the-community/>

and sisters and solve each other's problems. The cooperative economics principle states that Africans need to build their shops and businesses, so that they can build a profitable relationship with each other, and benefit from it. The purpose principle states that, in order to develop their community, Africans need to restore their traditions, to show the greatness of their people. The creativity principle shows that, Africans need to do as much as they can, to make their community look beautiful and show that Africans are taking good care of what they inherited. The faith principle states that, people need to believe in their community, family, friends, leaders and the purity of their struggle and victory (Karenga, 2012). There are seven basic principles of Kwanzaa; Mazao (The crops), Mkeka (the Mat), Kinara (the Candle Holder), Muhindi (the Corn), Mishumaa Saba (the Seven candles), Kikombe cha Umoja (the Unity Cup) and Zawadi (the Gifts). Mazao is used as a symbol for celebrating an African harvest, and rewarding the labour involved. Mkeka is used as a symbol which represents the history and traditions of Africans. Kinara is a symbol used for defining the future of African children. Mishumaa Saba is a symbol which is used for the seven principles, as discussed earlier. The seven principles are used by Africans in order to keep their life linked to their cultural heritage. Kikombe cha Umoja is a symbol which represents the unity of African community. Zawadi is a symbol which depicts love for children, and it shows persistent love for young ones. Apart from the above seven symbols, there are two additional symbols. The first one is Bendera, which means the flag. Bendera represents the flag of Kwanzaa which has three colors; black, red and green. Black color is for Africans, red colour is for their struggle throughout the history and green color is for the future hope, which Africans hold (Latino Arts and <https://assignbuster.com/family-support-in-the-community/>

Culture, 2007). Kwanzaa is celebrated in families, communities and students all over the world. Kwanzaa celebration brings students from different ethnic backgrounds together, to discover African culture and be aware of the values which is a true essence of African heritage. Students enjoy food, dance, performances and warm spirit of Africans, inspired by their gratified manner for what they possess. Thus, it provides a platform for individuals and students to reinforce the spiritual quality of one's heritage. Therefore, Kwanzaa celebration becomes an enjoyable event for all the members which either participate in the event or become audience. It contained an aura of freedom, gratification and love. Kwanzaa is celebrated with an idea of respecting the values of Kwanzaa and its practices. However, African community should not relate the principles of Kwanzaa with any other religion, because it would disrupt the original meaning of it. Africans choose beautiful and charily picked objects, in order to celebrate Kwanzaa with respect. They use fresh vegetables, fruits and other objects which represent the African culture (Karenga, 2012). Thus, Kwanzaa is a celebration which brings the African community together to celebrate their values, culture and traditions. References Karenga, M. (2012). The Official Kwanzaa Website. Retrieved November 24, 2012, from <http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/index.shtml> Lationo Art and Culture. (2007). Retrieved November 24, 2012, from [http://nalac.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=47&Itemid=70](http://nalac.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=47&Itemid=70)