

# Family and Life Stages



## Discuss in pairs

1. The pros and cons of each life stage: childhood, teenage years, young adulthood, middle age, retirement age. (E.g., childhood is carefree, adulthood offers freedom, old age brings wisdom...)
2. Discuss what you think is the best or ideal age for the following life events. Explain your answers.  
→ start dating, move out of your parents' home, finish university/start your career, get married, have children, retire.
3. What are some of the most common conflicts between parents and their children?  
What do you think are the best ways to deal with a problematic child?  
How strict were your parents and what punishment did they use when you broke their rules? Would you raise your children differently than your parents raised you? If so, how?
4. What are some of the most common reasons for disagreements between partners?  
Why do you think so many marriages end in divorce?
5. What are some personality adjectives that you associate with elderly people?  
What are the biggest challenges of getting older?

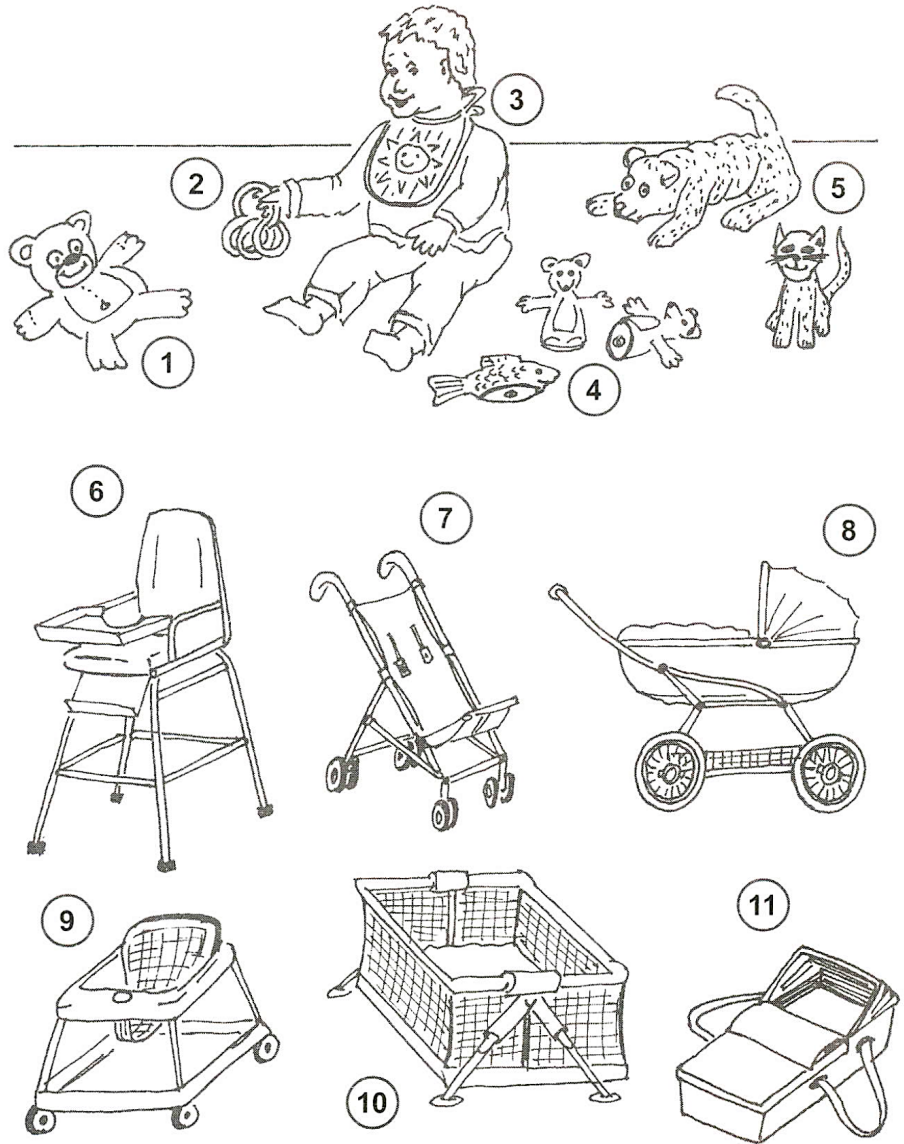
# BABIES

**1** Here are some pictures that have to do with children. Say what the things are and what they are used for.

**2** In America and Britain, many families use babysitting agencies to find someone to look after their child when they have to go out. How do you feel about this? Could you trust a complete stranger with your child? If not, what are some other ways to find babysitters?

**3** You are going to leave your baby alone for the first time. Your friend has agreed to babysit for you. In small groups, write a short note thanking your friend for their help and explaining exactly what they should do.

**4** Imagine that you are visiting a friend who has just had a baby. She is a proud mother. You have no experience with newborns. What can you say? Look at the phrases in the box below.



## Babies

### Talking to or about babies

Was he / she early / late / premature / overdue?

What an adorable baby!

Can I hold him / her?

Does she sleep through the night yet?

His eyes are just like his father's.

She has her father's eyes.

She really takes after her father.

That's a good boy / girl...

### Nursery

changing table / mat / pad  
to breast-feed

to bottle-feed / the baby is on formula (US)

to change, wash and iron the nappies

(disposable / cloth) nappies (GB) / diapers (US)

to cry / howl / scream

to hug

to rock the baby

to burp the baby

to take a child on your lap

to take a child in your arms

to pamper a child

to spoil a child

dummy (GB) / pacifier (US)

toddler

infant

kid

crèche (GB) / nursery school (US)

babysitter

au-pair / nanny

play groups / schools / schemes

day nursery / day care / kindergarten

cradle

rattle

bib

cot (GB) / crib (US)

high chair

baby-bouncer

baby-walker

baby-carrier / baby-backpack

pram / baby carriage (US) /

buggy (US)

playpen

pushchair (GB) / stroller (US)

carry-cot

toy chest

teddy bear

stuffed / fluffy animals / soft toys

squeaky toys

potty

to toilet-train

maternity leave / baby break

dependents



## HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL DEFENDS FREE CONDOM PROGRAM

## INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY RANKS HIGH AMONG PARENTS' CONCERNS


## CRIME AND VIOLENCE ON THE RISE AMONG TEENAGERS

## SPANKING YOUR CHILD MAY MAKE HIM EVEN NAUGHTIER

**1** What kind of a child were you when you were growing up – well-behaved or naughty? Illustrate your answer with examples.

What was the worst trouble you ever got into when you were younger? What was your punishment? Did you “learn your lesson”?

**2** On the left are the headlines to some newspaper articles dealing with some youth issues. Write three short paragraphs to tell the story for each headline. Can you spot the US headline and make it British?

**3**  You are going to listen to a dialogue between a father and a son. Here are some questions for you to answer.

- What is the problem?
- Which subjects did Mark fail?
- Which names of schools and universities come up in the dialogue?
- What are they like?

**4** In groups of two or three act out an argument between parents and a teenager who is having one of the problems you wrote about. Do young people face similar problems in your country? What other problems do they face?

### Youth

adolescent  
teenager  
youngster  
brat  
to bring up / raise  
to behave yourself  
to indulge / pamper  
to spoil  
to talk back  
to scold / tell off  
to spank / slap  
to punish  
to get the cane / stick / strap  
corporal punishment  
detention  
borstal / reform school  
child abuse  
to beat a child  
to be grounded / gated  
to rebel  
to show off  
to play truant / cut class (US)

generation gap  
rebellion  
**Talking about children**  
going through puberty / adolescence  
obedient × disobedient  
polite × rude  
well brought-up  
naughty  
stubborn  
selfish  
greedy  
cheeky (GB) / to be/get smart (US)  
independent  
impressionable  
easily led  
a show-off

**Parents often say**  
Wait till Daddy / your father gets home...  
What are you up to?  
It's just a phase.

Possible problems and issues  
peer pressure  
bad company  
counterculture  
TV violence  
addiction  
lack of physical exercise  
couch potato  
“copycat” crime  
shoplifting  
pornography  
alternative lifestyles  
miscarriage  
protection / contraception  
pregnant / expecting  
pregnancy  
family planning clinic  
to have / get an abortion  
to terminate the pregnancy  
drinking age  
voting age  
(legal) age of consent

# MARRIED LIFE

**1** English often uses different words to express the same or similar ideas. Sometimes the difference is as simple as using a different preposition or verb with a noun. At other times, there are slight changes in the meaning. Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with the correct word, then write new sentences correctly using the other words.

- Mary knew that Mike was \_\_\_\_\_ on her. She regarded \_\_\_\_\_ as the limit.
  - having extramarital relationships
  - cheating
  - being unfaithful
  - committing adultery
- As a poor family, they had many \_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_ was never enough to ease the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - money problems
  - family allowance
  - economic pressure
  - weekly budget
- When Jane got pregnant, she had to decide whether to have the baby and \_\_\_\_\_ or have \_\_\_\_\_.
  - miscarriage
  - a pregnancy
  - some contraception
  - an abortion
  - adopt it out
- Their marital problems were so bad that they had to get some \_\_\_\_\_. When that failed they agreed to get \_\_\_\_\_.
  - marriage counsellor
  - marriage guidance
  - separation
  - divorced
  - incompatible
- Mark always said that he shouldn't have to help with the chores because he was the \_\_\_\_\_. His wife found that a bit \_\_\_\_\_.
  - feminist
  - homemaker
  - breadwinner
  - sexist

**2** Finish the statement below. What would she say if she were a man? What is the other side of the coin? Can you say something positive about marriage?



**3** The following is a soap opera outline. In small groups tell the story and try to act out some scenes.

- 1960** John and Sue got married.
- 1962** Steven was born.
- 1963** Sylvie and Fiona (twins) were born.
- 1968** John often went out with his secretary. Sue found out. Ended.
- 1971** John met Anna. Sue found out. "Trial" separation. John and Anna set up house. John paid alimony. Sue looked after three children.
- 1973** Divorce. John and Anna couldn't have children.
- 1975** Adopted two.

## Married Life

### Some positive aspects of marriage

to set up home  
emotional warmth and security  
love and happiness  
longevity of relationship  
tolerance of foibles  
stability for children  
tax deductions / less taxes to pay

### Marital problems

to get regular marriage guidance  
marriage counselling service / counsellor  
entrenched attitudes  
incompatibility  
nagging  
spouse  
infidelity / unfaithfulness  
extramarital relationships / adultery

jealousy  
wife beater × hen-pecked husband  
to cheat on sb  
lover / mistress  
to have a drinking problem  
gambling  
skeleton in the cupboard (GB) / closet (US)  
to get a divorce  
separation  
alimony  
custody  
visiting rights  
stepfather  
stepmother  
stepbrother × half-brother  
sole provider / single parent  
sexism  
housewife / homemaker / stay-at-home mother

househusband  
breadwinner  
chores / housework  
stereotypes / roles  
routine / rut

### Social policies

money problems  
to be under severe economic pressure  
budget  
to receive child support / child benefits  
family allowance

### Adoption

guardian  
foster parents  
to foster sb  
to adopt sb (out)  
adoption agency  
orphan  
orphanage  
children's home / youth home



# OLD AGE AND RETIREMENT

**1** Discuss these questions with a partner.

Are there any elderly people in your family?  
 Are they energetic or tired of life, or...  
 What kinds of problems do they face?  
 What options are there to help them with these problems?  
 What are some advantages of being older?

**2** Now read the diary entry and fill in the gaps using the words below.

- arthritis
- senile
- widow's pension
- nursing home
- home help
- meals on wheels
- hard of hearing
- live-in nurse
- granny flat

Dear Diary,

Mum and Dad were fighting again today. It's about Grandma. She's getting really old and she can't take care of herself anymore. She lives in a little **1** \_\_\_\_\_ across town, and has her meals delivered by **2** \_\_\_\_\_, but her **3** \_\_\_\_\_ has been getting worse and worse and she just can't look after the place anymore. She is also getting a little bit **4** \_\_\_\_\_, and she's so **5** \_\_\_\_\_ that you have to shout everything in her ear for her to hear it. All she has to live on is her **6** \_\_\_\_\_, so she doesn't have enough money to hire a **7** \_\_\_\_\_ or any kind of **8** \_\_\_\_\_, and Mum doesn't even want to talk about sending her to a **9** \_\_\_\_\_. She wants her to come and live with us, but Dad is against it. He says the place is too small, and that she should go to Mum's sister's house, but I know that the real reason is that they don't really get on very well. I hope they work it out soon. I hate it when they argue.



**3** With a partner act out a discussion between the writer's parents. Try to come to some kind of agreement.

## Old Age and Retirement

### Disagreeing

I don't agree with you.  
 I respect your opinion, but I think...  
 That's ridiculous.  
 You can't be serious.  
 Yes, that's true but my feeling is that...  
 I hate to disagree with you but I believe...

### Expressing and receiving sympathy

Please accept my deepest sympathy.  
 My condolences (on your loss).  
 I'm really sorry to hear about...  
 Too bad that... (US) / Shame about (GB)

Thank you for your sympathy / concern / great support.

I'll call you if I need you, thanks.

### Positive aspects of being old

joys of grandparenthood  
 senior citizen clubs  
 bowling clubs  
 going on coach tours  
 going on a cruise  
 state × private pension  
 superannuation  
 widow's pension

### What can be done

to take early retirement  
 (frail) elderly  
 OAP (old age pensioners)  
 meals on wheels

old people's / folks' homes  
 nursing homes  
 telegram from the Queen  
 granny flat (GB)  
 home help

### Being old and ill

ageism  
 confusion  
 senile  
 hard of hearing / deaf  
 arthritis  
 rheumatism  
 euthanasia  
 to die of (e.g., cancer)  
 to die of old age  
 no longer with us  
 passed away / passed on  
 to commit suicide  
 life-support systems  
 to carry out an autopsy on sb

to hold the inquest on sb's death  
 post mortem

### Funeral

death notice  
 hearse  
 grave  
 undertaker  
 obituary  
 tombstone / gravestone  
 wreath  
 to leave / bequeath st to sb  
 to inherit  
 inheritance  
 to be cremated / buried  
 to be in mourning  
 cemetery / graveyard / churchyard  
 garden of remembrance

# Personal timeline: My key milestones

Create a personal timeline to reflect on your past achievements (e.g., first job, graduation, moving to a new place...), and add your future dreams or goals (e.g., career aspirations, personal growth, places you want to visit...)

For each milestone, include a short description of:

- What made it special or memorable? / Why is this a future dream or goal of yours?
- What did you learn from the experience? / How will this change your life when it happens?

Here's an example of a child's personal timeline:

