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# 'Family' Picture Book

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## A Guide for Therapeutic Use

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# Ways to use the Family picture book

## **A Personalised Story**

The Family picture book is a unique and thoughtful gift for any family or child. Specifically though it can be given a narrative to help explain adoptive and foster families to very young children in an engaging and positive way. Images have been carefully selected to show subtle differences within the family groups and provoke discussion.

## **Under 3s**

A colourful picture book to enjoy with babies and toddlers. an introduction to counting 1–10 with the opportunity to add a personalised narrative to build an understanding of varied family types.

## **Under 5s**

An conversation starter for Pre–school and Key Stage One children. Encouraging inclusivity and acceptance of diversity in a simple way.

## **Additional Needs**

Accessible to children at home or in school (see our SENCO page) who find written word difficult to follow, this picture book begins conversations with children who would otherwise disengage with a word book.

## **Families**

This book provides a collection of visual prompts that allow parents or carers to explore the concept of what ‘family’ means in a less intense way than a scripted story book might do.

# Key Concepts

## Explaining Family Diversity

### What makes a family?

The book is specifically aimed at increasing acceptance and tolerance of non-conventional families. Social conditioning often accelerates children's prejudices. How can we as adults, help children preserve the naturally inquisitive but crucially tolerant attitudes to difference that they seem to be born with?



By the time children start going to nursery or pre-school settings we see them being influenced by a vast range of opinions and stereotypes through play, conversations, stories, music and their physical environment.

In considering what makes a family more than a group of friends or a formal care arrangement of some kind, children very often have a wonderfully inclusive and wide definition of the term family themselves. Importantly, as they grow up, influences from adults and peers begin to shape their understanding of words like 'Family' and the language that accompanies it (love, home, parent...etc) as well as the expectation of each role within it. We know that young children are much better at accepting people (or families) for who they are than some adults. However, at an older age they often need help to remember that these naturally tolerant and accepting attitudes they started life with are good, great in fact!

# Read Along Therapeutically

## Talking about the pictures

The 'Family' picture book is intended to be enjoyed together with an adult. To get the most from this book, the child can be encouraged to think aloud about what they see on the page.

Helpful Questions to ask...

### 1) Developing language skills and freedom of opinion

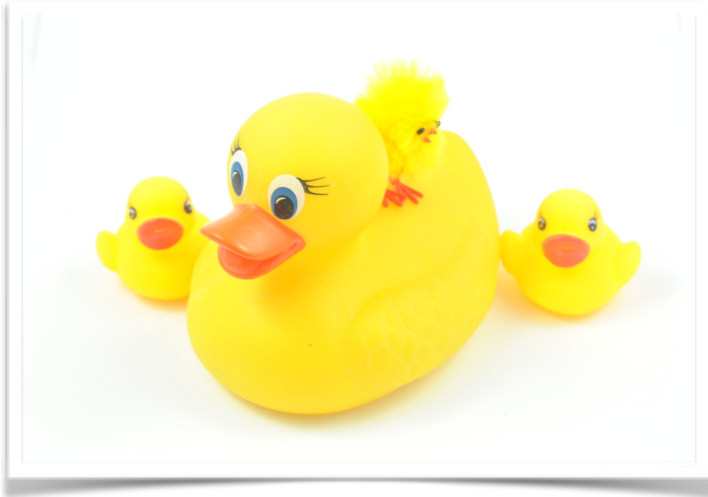
- Who is who in this picture?
- What do you think that character is feeling?
- What might they be saying to each other?
- Which one would you choose to be in this family?
- Where do they live?
- Are they different to other families? Do you think this is good or bad?

### 2) Developing an emotional and social vocabulary

- What is the best thing about your own family?
- Can you find some families at home? (this may be in the form of a collection of toys, some time to make their own drawings or perhaps some space for imaginary play)
- What story can you tell me about the family you have found? (encourage conversation about how the family was formed and what makes them a family, see 'Key Concepts')
- Do you know some real-life families that are different to yours?

# Adoptive & Foster Families

Acknowledging difference, promoting inclusivity.



Whilst the 'Family' picture book can be used by a vast range of audiences, some of the Little Green Pea resources are specifically designed to capture the attention of children with a present or past experience of the social care system.

All of the pictures in the book are specifically engineered so that they can be interpreted as a foster family, a temporary arrangement or a forever family and personalised according to the narrative the reader gives them.

It is important that the child is allowed space to offer their own opinion of what they see, and in doing so they may well offer an insight into what they are feeling about their own situation, thus giving the book a therapeutic use.

## 1) Questions to develop a sense of acceptable self-identity;

- Who may be part of this family but not in the picture?
- How do you think this family came together?
- Does anyone look like they are from a different family in this picture? Does it matter if they are not the same?

## 2) Questions that help develop an emotional vocabulary;

- What do you think this family feel about being different to the others? How would you feel in this family?
- Do you think this family is a ‘forever family’? (sensitive use of this question is of course crucial but can give a very helpful insight into the child’s anxieties or confidence in prospective or recent adoption)
- Which family was your favourite? Which looks the safest? Which is the most fun?
- What would you say to this family if you could talk to them? What would they say to you?

The Little Green Pea Books have been used as part of preparations for a move to Adoption from foster care as well as an educational tool for friends and family of children who are in or have recently left a care setting. For more books like this visit [www.littlegreenpea.co.uk](http://www.littlegreenpea.co.uk)



# Schools Use

Building empathy, promoting diversity.

## 1) In the Classroom (PSHE)

The Family book ( and others in the Little Green Pea collection) provide an engaging conversation starter to classroom discussion. Note that the images can be ‘read at several different levels. On the surface they are just number groups but on closer inspection the groups form families of a similar type or kind. **With further discussion children begin to identify that one or two of each group may not fully fit the ‘rule’ for the family group and are forced to consider whether this matters to them or changes the concept of family.**

Drawing on the deliberately varied composition of families in this book, children can be asked to consider all the questions listed above ( see: How to read along therapeutically) whilst making links to the following curriculum areas:

- **Healthy Relationships**
- **Diversity**
- **Ethnicity**
- **Types of Family**
- **Myself , Self-identity**
- **Growth and Growing up**
- **Emotional Intelligence and Empathy**

## 2) Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The Family Picture Book can be helpful with children who perhaps wouldn’t always follow a storyline or struggle with sequencing but enjoy the bright and unique visual representations of families.



**If you found this guide helpful visit [www.littlegreenpea.co.uk](http://www.littlegreenpea.co.uk) for more information on similar resources, guides and free downloads.**