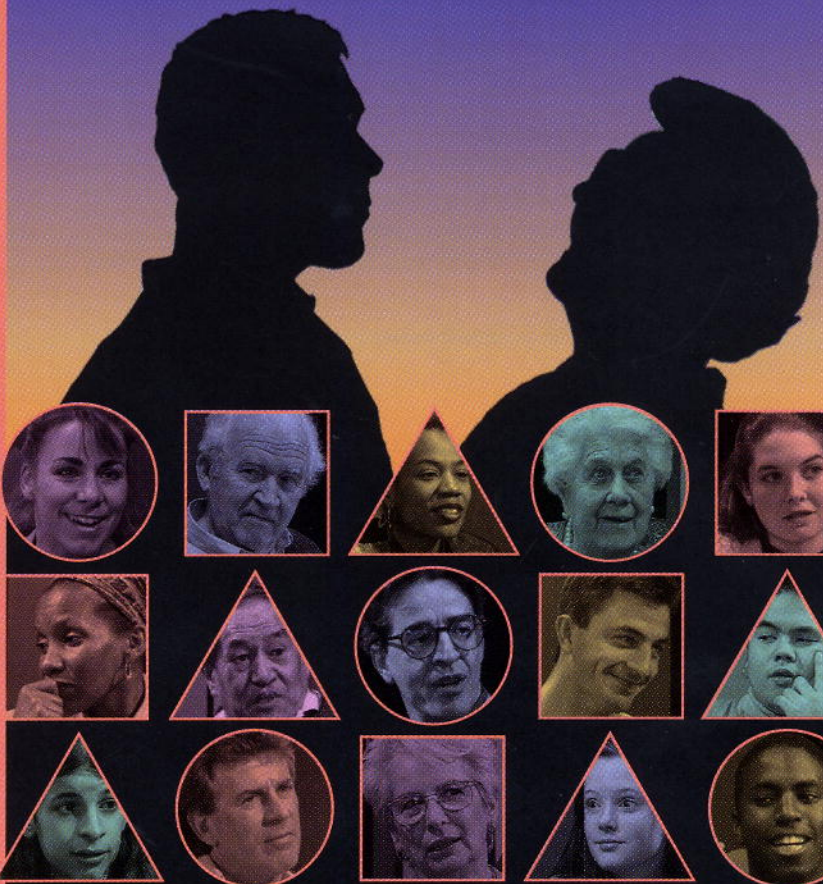


A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE



# Multiple Choices

Volume  
**4**

# Multiple Choices

Spanning the generations...  
a lively exchange of ideas



VHS

9195 096

Volume **4**

- **FAMILIES**
- **BLENDING**
- **POWER LINES**



ISSUE What is a family?

## KEY CONCEPTS

- Family members
- Extended family
- Functional/dysfunctional families
- Ideal family

## QUOTES TO USE AS DISCUSSION STARTERS

- "There is no such thing as a functional family."
- "To you a family is unconditional love."

## PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

■ Brainstorm phrases to finish the following sentence:  
People are a family because...

## POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1 Play a word-association game. List the following words and ask the group to write down the first word they think of when they see the word on the list. Try to discover why they made some of the associations.

- Functional family
- Dysfunctional family
- Sibling
- Grandparent
- Family

2 Role-play the following scenario:

You are a 16-year-old girl who has been invited to sleep over at her best friend's house. Your friend explains that her parents are divorced and she lives with her mother and her partner. Your friend explains that her mother's partner is another woman and in effect, she lives with two mothers. At first you are uncomfortable with the news until you begin asking questions.

3 The 1950s image of the average nuclear family — a mother, a father, 2.2 children and a family pet — has changed over the decades. Many people feel that today, there is no average nuclear family configuration. Have each person describe the configuration of their nuclear family. Tabulate, graph and discuss the results of the survey. Based on the class survey, are there any implications for advertisers of household products? Why do advertisers still seem to represent the 1950s image of the average family?



## PULL OUT FOR MORE INFORMATION

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36 minutes 18 seconds  
Order number: 9195 096



## BLENDING (starts at 11:43)

### ISSUE Stepfamilies

#### KEY CONCEPTS

Biological parent

Stepparent

Siblings

#### QUOTES TO USE AS DISCUSSION STARTERS

- "You can't pick your family."
- "My mom never expected me to call my stepfather 'Dad,' but sometimes by accident, instead of calling him his name, I'll say 'Dad,' because sometimes he acts like my father."



#### PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

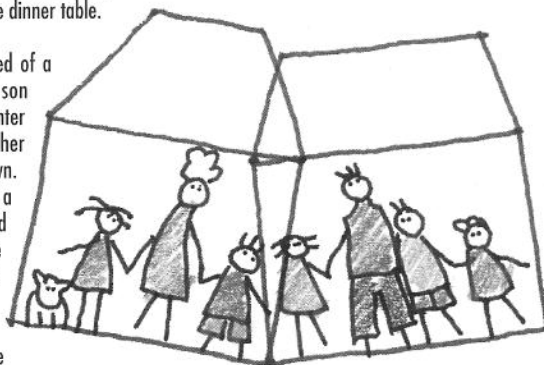
■ Have the audience list examples from children's literature (eg. *Cinderella*, *Hansel and Gretel*) that deal with stepmothers or stepfathers. How are these stepparents portrayed in the stories?

#### POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

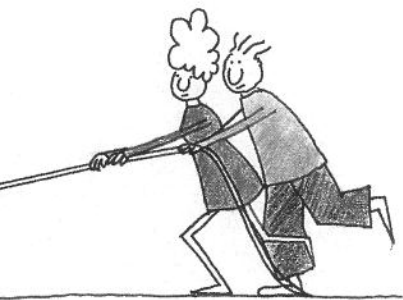
1 Survey the group to see what mechanism/techniques their families use to make decisions concerning:

- where to live;
- what type of car to buy for the family;
- what movie to see;
- where to go on vacation;
- who does what chores around the house;
- who sits where around the dinner table.

2 Family "A" is composed of a mother, her 10-year-old son and her 13-year-old daughter who live together. The father lives by himself across town. Family "B" is composed of a father and his 15-year-old son who live together; the mother and 7-year-old daughter live a few streets away. The mother from family "A" and the father from family "B" have decided to marry



and set up a new family which will comprise: the mother, the father, the 10- and 15-year-old sons and the 13-year-old daughter. List things that the new "family" could do before they actually move in together in order to develop a level of comfort with each other. What living arrangement issues should be discussed before they move in together?



**ISSUES** Discipline  
Parental authority

**KEY CONCEPTS**  
Discipline and friendship  
Parental control  
Children's rights

**QUOTES TO USE AS  
DISCUSSION STARTERS**

- "Youth aren't being respected."
- "Our role models seem inadequate."

### PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

■ Ask each person to position themselves within their family structure and to define their role within that family structure.

### POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

**1** Define situations in which a parent may have to discipline a child. Include the age of the child and detail the reason(s) for the need to discipline the child. Discuss what type of discipline the child would receive.

**2** Role-play the following scenario:

Your parents have always had rules about your comings and goings (i.e. times when you had to be home, times when you could be at friends' houses, times when you had to call in and say where you were and with whom). You are now 15 years old and feel that you should have a say in deciding what times, constraints and freedoms apply to you. But you are afraid that your parents will disagree and will still want to impose their own limits without input from you. Have this discussion with your parents.

**3** Role-play the following scenario:

*Ma, Mom, Mommy, Mother, Mum, Mummy, Mumsie, Mama, Old Lady. Pops, Dad, Pa, Daddy, Father, Papa, Pop, Poppy, Old Man.* These terms, and/or labels help define the nature of the relationship between parent and child across the life cycle. The same thing can be said about names for grandparents. Survey the group and list all of the names used for parents and grandparents. What are the connotations, implicit, and explicit meanings for each of these names? When listing terms that are not in English, ask if this is a formal or informal term and when it would be used. Are any of these non-English terms similar?

### DISCUSSION LEADER



Cheryl Kies is a counsellor at John Abbott College in Montreal. She has worked as a community organizer and teacher with kids of all ages and their families, in a variety of multi-ethnic, urban settings. Her career, which began in a Chicago ghetto social service center, has also included working with Italian and Hispanic gangs in Brooklyn, the homeless in Paris, addicted teenagers in rural Quebec, and CEGEP students and staff from Montreal's West Island. Cheryl has also acted as the discussion leader in the National Film Board's video series, **Listen to Us**.

In all of these settings, Cheryl's warm approach combined with her keen perception has allowed her to make great strides in dealing with many different families.

USER  
GUIDE

## NOTES TO TEACHERS AND DISCUSSION GROUP LEADERS

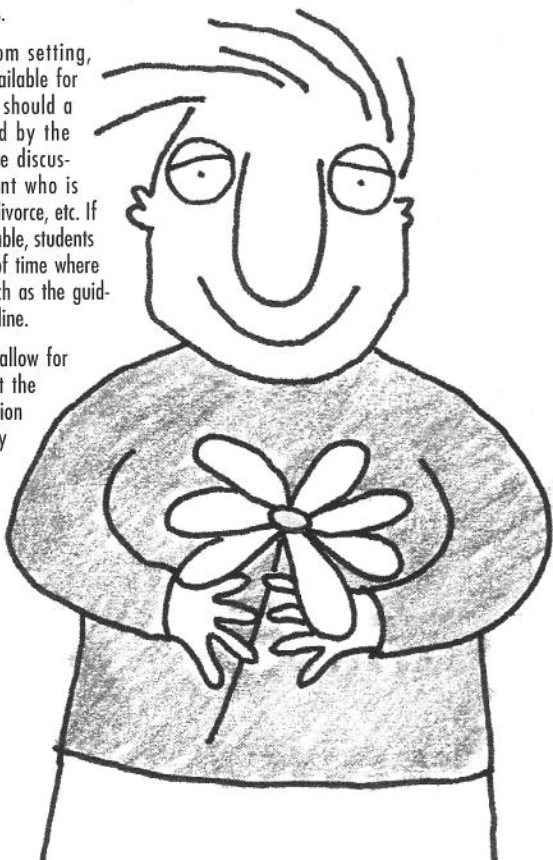
**Multiple Choices** sets a standard for a positive discussion process. It is hoped that your viewers will emulate the participants in the on-screen discussions.

This series deals with some very personal and sometimes difficult issues — marriage, family, divorce, sex, religion, love, parenting, and values. We suggest that each person who participates in the post-viewing group discussions and activities should agree to the following ground rules, so that everyone feels safe to say what he or she truly thinks and feels.

- 1 Confidentiality: Everyone must agree to treat what is said with respect and to avoid gossip.
- 2 Respect for ideas: No attacks. No blame. Everyone should agree that this is a forum in which it is all right to take a chance and say what he or she really thinks.

If used in a classroom setting, teachers should be available for post-viewing support should a student be distressed by the nature of some of the discussions, i.e. any student who is experiencing a family divorce, etc. If the teacher is not available, students should be told ahead of time where they can find help, such as the guidance office or local hot line.

Group leaders should allow for decompression time at the end of each class/session in order to relieve any anxiety or discomfort and to provide closure for the participants.



# Multiple Choices

What does 82-year-old Doris have to say about love, sex and marriage to 17-year-old Russell? For that matter, can Ruby, who has chosen not to have children, understand Anita, who at 21 already had two kids? And does Tasli, a Muslim teenager who looks forward to meeting the man she will marry at 18, have anything in common with Erika, a lesbian in her late thirties who is trying to have a baby through artificial insemination?

**MULTIPLE CHOICES** opens the lines of communication between the sexes, across the generations, and from culture to culture. From blushing shyness to forceful candour, the 30 participants, spanning three generations and a myriad of backgrounds, debate their opinions regarding love, marriage, divorce, relationships, sex, community, family, parenting, religion, and values — all the hot issues of the nineties.

Despite the controversial terrain, the participants display humour, tolerance, and a willingness to listen and learn. At a time when Canadian families and values are the focus of political debate and social upheaval, **MULTIPLE CHOICES** offers a lively and provocative forum for understanding and the exchange of ideas.

Packaged on five videocassettes, containing two or three segments each, **MULTIPLE CHOICES** is ideal for classroom, group or home discussion.

*Note: The volumes in this series may be used in any order. The volume numbers assigned are for reference only.*

## **FAMILIES (10:41)**

The mythic family of mom at home, dad at work, two kids and a dog living in the suburbs was just that: a myth. The reality was, and is, far more complex and diverse. Today we still try to live up to that myth while our lives consist of a host of contradictions and alternatives — blended families, gay families, single parents, divorce. Asking questions about family can strike a chord. Things heat up when the participants talk about what family means to them.

## **BLENDING (9:16)**

The participants discuss the particular issues that arise when two families come together: finding your place in a new family, learning the new rules, coping with the loss of the old family — a far cry from the Brady Bunch.

## **POWER LINES (14:25)**

Can we be friends with our parents? The participants — adults and teenagers — confront each other about parental power and children's rights. James says to his son, "If you know more than mommy and daddy, here's your suitcase." Sara replies, "That sounds like hell to me." Erin says, "That's not respecting children's rights!" The perennial tug-of-war continues.

**Director: Alison Burns**  
**Producer: Sally Bochner**

**36 minutes 18 seconds**

**Order number: 9195 096 (Volume 4)**

**Series order number: 193C 9195 098 (5-volume set)**

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