

TRAITS OF A HEALTHY FAMILY

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“Good families aren't born, they are made” Nick Stennett

Traits of Healthy Families (Curran, 1983)

1. Communicate and listen
2. Affirm and support one another
3. Teach respect for others
4. Develop a sense of trust
5. Have a sense of play and humor
6. Exhibit a sense of shared responsibility
7. Teach a sense of right and wrong
8. Have a strong sense of family in which rituals and traditions abound
9. Have a balance of interaction among the members
10. Have a shared religious core (spirituality, not necessarily denominational)
11. Respect the privacy of one another
12. Value service to others
13. Foster family table time and conversation
14. Share leisure time
15. Admit and seek help with problems (ego strength)

Other considerations:

Factors in Family Strength (Otto, 1962)

1. Nurture
2. Support
3. Parental discipline
4. Encouragement and growth of all family members
5. Spiritual well-being of all members
6. Good communication
7. Problem-solving skills
8. Meaningful participation of family members in activities outside the home

Characteristics of Productive Families (Gilmore, 1976).

1. Well-developed capacity for empathy and expression of affection
2. Free, open, easy and spontaneous communication
3. Participation in leisure time activities
4. Parents devoted to each other, not competitive
5. Have varied and broad interests - community, cultural, educational, etc.
6. Do not get over-involved in outside activities

7. Parents are well acquainted with their children's friends
8. Parents organize and supervise allowances
9. Parents do not require their children to earn their own spending money
10. Parents help their children acquire reading skills before they begin school
11. Parents encourage and foster an interest in esthetics and athletics
12. Parents readily help with homework
13. Parents consult frequently with their children's teachers and counselors
14. Parents encourage thinking about possible vocations even in elementary school

Family Strengths Research Project (Stinnett, 1979).

1. Appreciation for each other
2. Quality time
3. Communication
4. Commitment to family members
5. Religious orientation
6. Ability to deal with crises in an effective manner (coping/problem-solving skills)

Bipolar Dimensions of a Healthy Family (Barnhill, 1979)

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| Identity: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individuation versus Enmeshment 2. Mutuality versus Isolation |
| Change: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Flexibility versus Rigidity 4. Stability versus Disorganization |
| Information Processing | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Clear Perception versus Unclear Perception 6. Clear Communication versus Unclear Communication |
| Role Structure: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Role Reciprocity versus Role Conflict 8. Clear Generational Boundaries versus Diffuse Generational |
| Boundaries | |

Characteristics of Healthy Families (Lewis, 1979)

1. Strong marriage (shared power, intimacy & cooperation)
2. Democratic parental power
3. Family closeness (I versus we balance)
4. Communication (spontaneity & openness)
5. Effective problem-solving skills (negotiation & consensus)
6. Open sharing of feelings (warmth, humor & mutual concern)
7. Dealing with loss through appropriate grieving
8. Values and beliefs of basic goodness in humanity despite imperfection
9. Promotion of intimacy and autonomy

10. Values differences among family members (temperament, etc.)

Optimal Families (Beavers, 1982).

1. Open systems view of the world (at one with the environment and people)
2. Clear boundaries (distinct roles with assertiveness)
3. Contextual clarity (clear communication)
4. Equal power (parents are leaders not dictators)
5. Encouragement of autonomy
6. Joy and comfort in relating (humor, warmth & optimistic tone)
7. Skilled negotiation
8. Significant transcendent values (project hope and deal with loss)

Characteristics of Effective Families (Clark, 1987).

1. A Feeling of control over their lives
2. A frequent communication of high expectations to children
3. A family dream of success in the future
4. Hard work as viewed as a key to success
5. An active, not sedentary lifestyle
6. A total of 25-35 hours per week of home-centered learning
7. The family viewed as a mutual support system and problem-solving unit
8. Clearly understood household rules, consistently enforced
9. Frequent contact with teachers
10. Emphasis on spiritual growth (inner peace and love through service to others)

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