

RESHAPING PARENTHOOD

An Introduction to Inclusive and Non-
Traditional Parenting



WHAT IS NON-TRADITIONAL AND INCLUSIVE PARENTING?



Definition: It is simply just parents or guardians that are not just biological mom and biological dad, may not be the same race, ethnicity, etc. as the children, and that may be queer.

Goals: To help acknowledge differing household make-ups and to support those involved in them.

WHAT MIGHT NONTRADITIONAL PARENTS/GUARDIANS LOOK LIKE?



Some more common make ups of non-traditional parents may look like having step-parents, multi-racial families, IVF families and adoptive parents

You may have even thought about things like living with extended family like grandparents or siblings or having parents with different sexualities (2 moms, 2 dads, etc.)

However, most people probably don't consider parents who are gender non-conforming/trans or who are nonmonogamous

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Stigma: Even today, there is still stigma that surrounds people who do not have traditional household make ups (personal research in 2024; Coulter-Thompson, 2023)

Discrimination: Families in nontraditional households still struggle with fighting for their rights as parents and face discrimination in places like childcare facilities (Davis et al., 2022).

The Children: Children face their own struggles when it comes to talking about their parents with others. Some even get harassed or bullied about their families differences.





WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE?

Become a safe space for nontraditional families
and be inclusive when talking about families.

Help educate the people and children in your life
that parents/guardians and families can look
different.

Stand up against discrimination and call out those
who try to perpetuate stigma

Family-Inclusive LANGUAGE

avoid	why?	instead
“parents” “mom” “dad” “mom and dad”	Not everyone accompanying a child is a parent. Grandparents, step-parents, and nannies may not identify as parents. Not all children have a mom and dad.	“grownup” “adult” “caregiver”
“son” “daughter”	The children in someone's care could be grandchildren, nieces, nephews, godchildren, etc. You may also not want to assume the gender of a child.	“children”
“extended family”	This term is usually meant to include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins but for folks of many cultures this isn't “extended” family- it's just family.	“family”
“family resemblance”	We're conditioned to look for similar features in family members so you may see resemblance where there is none. Many families include step-parents, adoptive parents, or parents who conceived with donated eggs or sperm. Inversely, don't assume that a child who doesn't look like their caregiver is adopted- many multi-racial children resemble one parent more than the other.	keep it to yourself
“members of a household”	Families don't always live together. For example, families with divorced parents or incarcerated parents.	“family members”

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BUT HOW..?

There are many ways to be inclusive to nontraditional guardians and families by just changing the language you use!

Accepting and acknowledging different names for parents/guardians can also be a great way to help (bonus parent instead of step, nontraditional names for parents, etc).

THANK
YOU

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