

January - Family

"It is not good for man to be alone." Genesis 2:18 NIV

The celebrations of faith and family during Kwanza, Hanukkah, and Christmas are over, yet attention to family is just as important in January as it was in December. Since the family of the 1950's is no longer the norm, we as a church need to ask what it means to be 'family,' how we support families, and how we reclaim its importance.

Today's families are led by traditional parents, single parents, gay couples, blended or step families, or by a group that is unrelated. Even though they may look different, each group is made of people who support and love each other in all of life's situations. Without family, people are often set adrift with no direction or support which tends to make them less healthy. Positive relationships provide unconditional love and encouragement which fosters self-esteem, positive attitudes, and better health habits. They ground a person and provide building blocks for other relationships.

How does one build and nurture positive families? Be interested in each other's activities. Attend and support each other's interests and events. Plan outings for the family and offer positive, bonding experiences. Listen to each other and learn to 'agree to disagree' as families also need to understand and deal with conflict.

All families have highs and lows so it is important to teach children how to handle disappointment and adversity as well as how to celebrate the joys and wonders of family life. Embrace all family life whether it consists of a biological, church, neighborhood, college, or other supportive 'family.' Each setting is important to your spiritual, mental, and physical health.

(Source: Focus on the Family www.focusonthefamily.com/)

www.familyeducation.com/home/ - Family Education Network provides activities for children ages 0-18, advice for parents, and information on current family issues