

## Family Snapshots

This activity is designed to help families appreciate the many qualities that define and shape the millions of families in USA and form a point of reference for perceiving families who reside in the 191 independent nations of the world, (excluding Switzerland, the Vatican, East Timor or the territories of Puerto Rico, Taiwan and Macao.) It provides a tool for sharing observations and insights about families we've seen in our local, national and global communities. Families and small groups of all ages may be drawn into this conversational game as they draw from their own life experiences and increase their own knowledge and understanding about families today.

Notes for the leader along with any needed preparations and supplies are outlined below.

### Supplies:

- Family photo frame (PDF file)
- Recent family photos or the equipment to take Polaroid or digital pictures
- Family?!! Game board (PDF file)
- Conversation Cards (PDF file)
- Game Play sheet (PDF file)
- Ephesians 3 reference sheet (PDF file)
- Romans 3 reference sheet (PDF file)
- Scissors
- Tape

\*\* Optional: Magnetic tape

### Leader's Notes:

If this activity is offered within a congregational event, you may wish to invite families to bring a recent photo or plan to take Polaroid or digital portraits of your participants. Make enough copies of the Family Photo frame to accommodate the number of families you're anticipating. Cut around the frame or provide scissors for family members to do so. Make a sample of the frame for easy reference as you encourage them to center their pictures and secure them with tape. You may wish to provide magnetic tape for refrigerator display.

Family Snapshots is designed to engage one family or 4-6 players. Please adapt your provisions and preparations accordingly. Plan to include one game board and Game Play sheet along with 2 copies of each Conversation Card in each game packet. Separate the cards and place all the game pieces in a re-closable plastic bag. Scan the Game Play sheet to become familiar with the simple process. Essentially,

it provides a framework for participants to share verbal and word “snapshots” or observations they’ve made that characterize the categories identified on the conversation cards. The topics of joy and challenge may be expanded to include health issues, family transitions or special celebrations, e.g. a first day of school and other special or specific events.

Display copies of the Ephesians 3 and Romans 3 handouts for easy reference.

**Activity:**

Use the following guidelines to facilitate this activity.

- Hold up a family photo frame as you stress the importance of observing families with an open mind or “frame.” Point out that stereotyping families in any way compromises their freedom and ability to claim and celebrate their own identities. Encourage them to pause and reflect on the effect such an act has or would have on their family life and growth.
- Distribute family photo frames. Invite individuals and families to position their family photos in the frames to celebrate the relationships and family life they share.
- If current photos are not available, you may wish to take a quick portrait with a Polaroid or digital camera. Gather the necessary equipment to process them for immediate reference. Encourage families to reflect upon their family identity and life together as they view their own family portraits.
- You may use the categories identified on the Family Snapshot conversations cards to guide families or small groups in interpreting their own family response.
- Refer to the Ephesians 3 handout and highlight the first verse or sentence. Introduce the game as an opportunity to share verbal or word snapshots or observations they have made that characterize each category identified on the conversation cards.
- If necessary, organize families or individuals into groups of 4-6 for game play. Distribute the game packets and point out the Game Play sheet. Review it together and then demonstrate how a card may actually prompt one to respond. Each game play may be limited to just one response or include all participants. The latter may be more effective with younger children as they dialogue with parents on each topic. Encourage each player to take at least one turn.
- Bring closure to this activity by referring to the Romans 3 handout. Note the message it conveys. We

all share a vulnerability to life circumstances and an ultimate dependence on a being greater than ourselves who gives us life and breathe regardless of the religion we regard. Every family experiences their own version of joy and challenge in their lives. No one is immune to pain and loss.

- Point out that local, national and global families share many differences and commonalities; but, the love of God provides a depth of community and compassion that inspires us to honor, respect and share God's love and grace with one another. And so, we are sent to nurture individual integrity and a quality of community that reflects God's best for each home and family.