

# Child, Family & Society



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# Child, Family & Society

- Define what is a child
- Define what is parental responsibility
- Explore the role of the family society in caring for the child
- Explore societal expectations of how a child should be cared for

# What is a Child?



A child as everyone under 18 unless...

"under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

# What is a Child?

In England

– Anyone under 18 years of age

Even if,

- living independently
- in further education
- in hospital
- in custody

Department for Education, 2018a

# What is a Child?

**BUT...**

In the UK

Mental Capacity Act

applies to 16year olds

Gillick Competence

applies to young people  
under 16 deemed  
competent

This applies to consent and making decisions for themselves.

# What is a Child compared to an Adult?



- Growing
- Developing
- Dependant
- Socially
- Emotionally
- Physically
- Cognitively
- developing to independence

# Who is responsible for caring for the child?

- The parents
- The family
- The state



“Parental Responsibility”

# What is “parental responsibility”?

- provide a home for the child
- protect and maintain the child

Also responsible for:

- disciplining the child
- choosing and providing for the child's education
- agreeing to the child's medical treatment
- naming the child and agreeing to any change of name
- looking after the child's property

(Children Act 1989, 2004)

Parents have to ensure that their child is supported financially, whether they have parental responsibility or not.



# Parental Responsibility

## Who has parental responsibility?



### The Mother

A mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child from birth.

A father usually has parental responsibility if he's either:

- married to the child's mother
- listed on the birth certificate  
(after a certain date, depending on which part of the UK the child was born in)

# What is The Family?

## The family



# The Family – Some Definitions

A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together

The nuclear family

A couple and their dependent children, regarded as a basic social unit.

The extended family

A family which extends beyond the nuclear family to include grandparents and other relatives.

# Families are not uniform



# How does Parental Responsibility work for same sex parents?

## Civil partners

- Same-sex partners will both have parental responsibility if they were civil partners at the time of the treatment, e.g. donor insemination or fertility treatment.

## Non-civil partners

- For same-sex partners who are not civil partners, the 2nd parent can get parental responsibility by either:
- applying for parental responsibility if a parental agreement was made
- becoming a civil partner of the other parent and making a parental responsibility agreement or jointly registering the birth

# How does Parental Responsibility work when a child is fostered?

Foster carers never have parental responsibility for a fostered child.

“Delegated Authority” is the term used when the responsibility for making day to day decisions about children has been passed to foster carers.

Delegated Authority is specific to the child and the foster carer.

# How does Parental Responsibility work when child is adopted?

Legal adoption involves an “adoption order”.

This takes parental responsibility away from the child's birth parents and gives parental responsibility for the child to the adoptive parent(s).

# How does parental responsibility work for step-parents?

Parental responsibility for step-parents can be obtained by court order (local family court) if those with parental responsibility agree.

- More than 2 people can have parental responsibility for the same child.

The person applying for parental responsibility must be connected to the child, for example as their father, step-parent or 2nd female parent.



# When does parental responsibility end?

Parental responsibility comes to an end when the child attains the age of 18 years,

or earlier if a court order is made.

The Courts will make a decision based on what they consider to be in the child's "best interests".

# Who is involved in caring for the child?

- Parents
- Family – grandparents, aunts uncles
- Friends
- Childminders
- Nursery Workers
- Teachers - School
- Clubs and societies leaders
- Hospitals, health clinic staff

# What are the functions of the family?

- physical maintenance and care of family members;
- addition of new members through adoption or procreation;
- socialisation of children;
- social control of its members;
- production, consumption and distribution of goods and services;
- affective nurturance (love)

# What have we learned so far?

- Scenarios – in groups 10mins
- Feedback – 10mins



# FEEDBACK



**WHAT**  
*questions*  
DO YOU HAVE

# Comfort Break

