

who is in your family?

one dad



two mums



MUM and dad



co-parents

one mum



two dads



step-families



extended family



foster family



our families come in all different shapes and sizes.

These are just some of the family formations in our community. Australian children are being raised by mum and dad, by two mums or two dads, by one parent, step-parents, co-parents and grandparents, by aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, and in blended, extended, intergenerational, kinship, adoptive and foster families. Some children have a sperm or egg donor or a surrogate who helped to make them. Sometimes that person is known to the child, and might be part of their family.

In rainbow families, one or more parents or carers identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse, intersex or queer. Australian and international research shows that it is the quality of parenting relationships that determines children's wellbeing, not their family structure or the gender identity of their parents or carers.* It's love that makes a family.

*Dempsey, D. (2013) Same-Sex Parented Families in Australia, Child Family Community Australia Research Paper No. 18, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

People use different words to describe their family. At childcare, in kindergarten or at school, this poster can help start discussions about different families. Children can be asked, 'Who is in your family?' They can draw pictures of families, read books about different kinds of families and bring family photos to share. Community, health and family support services can put up the poster to show support for diverse families. Service providers can ask, 'Who is in your family?', and explain why this information is important to providing their service, and what they will do with the information.