



BOSTON  
CHILDREN'S  
MUSEUM

# All About Me: Family

*Children explore different aspects of families and relationships.*

## START

- The goal of this activity is for children to explore the idea of family—who their family is, what they do together, what they do for each other, and what family means—through creating family books and imaginary play.
- Set up the table with the writing utensils and paper. Create a group of puppets and toys on the table; place a few in a designated area on the floor as well.
- Introduce the activity by asking Who would like to make a book about your family? or Who would like to play with some of these puppets and toys?
- For younger children, you can use the puppets to welcome them to the activity.

## NEXT STEPS

- For younger children, use the puppets to talk about family. The children can say things such as Hi! My name's Shelley and I have a big brother Fred (nods his head "Hello") and a puppy—Dido. (Bring a stuffed animal dog—Woof, Woof). Do you have a big brother or sister? Encourage the adults to jump in with either the puppets or toy setups of their families. Encourage them to act out the things that they do as a family—go for car rides (using the blocks), go swimming, eat pizza.
- For older children, ask if they'd like to make a book about their family. Let them pick out their paper and fold it in half to create the book. If they'd like more pages, an adult can staple the binding for them. Suggest that they could draw a picture of their family, their home, their car, or their pet. If they would like to create captions, have their adult or you do the writing or help them to write.
- All of the children are welcome to play with the toys and puppets. Encourage them to create real or pretend family scenarios, such as family groups with the plastic animals or dollhouse people. Suggest that the children "visit" back and forth with each other's family groups or have a picnic together.

## MATERIALS

- \* 8½ x 11" colored paper
- \* Writing utensils: crayons, markers
- \* Stapler
- \* Assorted toys for family group play: sorting bears, puppets, dollhouse dolls, small stuffed or plastic animals
- \* Family-group props: small blocks, dollhouse furniture, small boxes
- \* Puppets

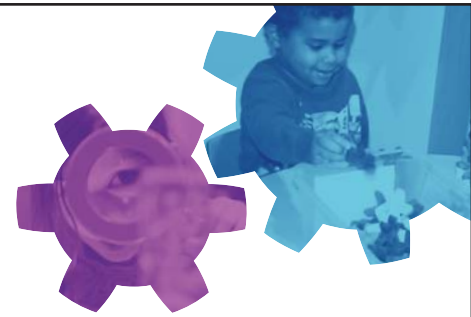
## Learning Guideline:

Social/Emotional:  
Describe members of their family and discuss what parents do for their children to keep them safe and healthy.

## Tip Sheets:

Be Healthy, Write

*(continued on side 2)*



(continued from side 1)

### FINISH UP

- Have the children tell you about their books. Ask questions such as How many siblings do you have? What's your kitty's name? Can you tell me about this picture?
- Notice which children have used the toys or puppets. Engage them in conversation about their stories and setups. You can ask questions such as Are all of these babies napping? Is this the park over here? Will the grandfather take them to play here later?
- Instruct the children to put their crayons and markers back when they are finished with their books.
- Although most of the setups should be cleaned up, one or two of them can be left out to encourage other children to play.

### EXPAND YOUR ACTIVITY

- Have a Circle Time in which the children sit together and take turns "reading" their books aloud. Encourage the other children to ask questions such as How many gerbils do you have? Do they ever run away?
- Have a few of the children plan and give a puppet show for the other visitors. They should be encouraged to have a family theme, and an adult can help with ideas. Suggestions for topics could include the following: When a new baby comes home, When we got lost in the woods.

### TAKE IT HOME

- Go to your local library and find books about different kinds of families to read together. Ask questions such as What does our family do, and how are we similar to that family? How are we different? What do you think it would be like to live by the ocean? In a city?
- Increase your child's understanding and appreciation of her or his own roots by visiting with older family members and listening to their stories. Encourage your child to ask lots of questions about the things that interest them. This will help your child to build deep personal connections with the speaker and their own history.

### BOOKS

- *Jonathan and His Mommy* by Irene Smalls
- *Daddy Makes the Best Spaghetti* by Anna Grossnickle Hines
- *Who's in a Family?* by Robert Skutch

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