

My Family

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself and Others – Myself
and my family – Relating to
others**



Photos

Invite the children to bring in a photo of their family at a special occasion.


Take time to allow each child to tell the child beside them about their photo first and then, if time allows, to tell the class.

Some general questions such as the following might be useful:

- Can you remember when this photo was taken? Was it a happy day? Why or why not?
- All of our family photos are different but each person in your own picture is important to you. They all look after you and mind you. Is there anyone else who minds you?
- Are your aunts and uncles and cousins in the picture? Who else is part of your family? Do you have a favourite cousin or aunt or uncle? Tell the child beside you about them and why you love them so much.
- Why is it important to be part of a family?

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- Do you help out in your family? What jobs do you do? How do you show love for your family?

Display

Display all the photos in the classroom under the heading 'We Love our Families'.

Story: The Christening

John was seven years old. He had one sister called Emily, aged four, and a new baby brother called Luke. There was a lot of excitement in the house because today was the day for Luke to be christened. The night before John had helped his mum unwrap a special parcel she had taken down from the attic. In it was a white crocheted blanket, carefully wrapped in tissue paper. John's mum told him that her grandmother, who died before John was born, had crocheted it about sixty years ago and that all of her family used it for their Christening ceremonies. 'Wow! Sixty years!' John exclaimed, 'It's an antique!' 'Well, not quite,' said his mum, 'but it's very precious to this family.'

Uncle Eamon and Auntie Clare would be arriving soon. They were going to be Luke's godparents. Mum explained to John that this was a very important job and that she knew that Eamon and Clare would play a special part in Luke's life from now on. 'Does that mean that they will prefer him to me?' John asked, looking disappointed. 'No, no not at all', Mum said, 'they still love all of us. You have your own godparents, don't you?' John said 'Oh, yes. Uncle Bill and Mary. I'm really looking forward to asking them to my First Holy Communion.'

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Just then, Dad walked in and asked John to help him move the kitchen table over to the wall to make more space for when all the relations would arrive for food after the ceremony. 'I love when we move the kitchen table,' John said, 'It means there's going to be a great family day.' 'There sure is,' said Dad, 'Now help me blow up these balloons.'

John and Emily helped blowing up the balloons while their mum dressed the baby all in white. 'Where will everyone sit?' asked John, 'We don't have enough chairs.' 'Don't worry,' said Dad, 'Some people can stand and eat at the counter-top and we'll take it in turns to sit. The important thing is that we're all together.' Suddenly John ran out of the room and came back in struggling to carry a large straight-backed chair. 'What are you doing?' asked Dad, 'I told you we didn't need more chairs.' 'But you forgot something important,' answered John, 'Granny just got her hip replaced. I want this chair for her.'

Dad gave John a big hug. 'You're such a kind boy,' he said, 'and you think of everything. I love Granny,' said John 'and I love all my family. This is such a special day.'

Having read the story ask questions similar to the following:

- What was the special occasion the family was getting ready for?
- How did they get the house ready?
- How did John help? Did Emily help at all? Did Luke? Why or why not?
- Do you like family occasions? Why or why not?
- Why did Dad give John a big hug? Did you ever think of something that everyone else in your family forgot?
- Do you have something special like the Christening blanket that was made by someone in your family? Talk about it.

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Caring for My Family – Charades

- Invite a child to come forward and, without speaking, to mime an activity they do to help care for their family at home – it could be rocking a baby, sweeping the floor, giving a hug, tidying up, etc.
- Whichever child guesses correctly has the next turn to mime.

Reflection

Invite the children to close their eyes and read the following reflection:

Imagine you are at home with your family. Say their names quietly in your head. Think of all the love you have for each one. Try to remember something kind one of your family members did for you recently. Thank God for that person. Now think of something nice you did for a member of your family. Thank God for all the love you share in your family. Now think of someone in your wider family, maybe your aunt, uncle, granny/grandad or cousin. Thank God for all your relations and all those who love you. Showing love in families is great. Thank you God for the gift of my family.