

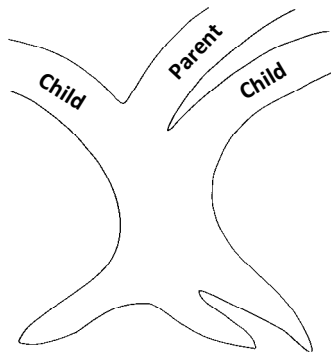
## Creating a Family Tree

Strong families see themselves as a worthy group and are proud of themselves. Strong families treasure and honor each family member.

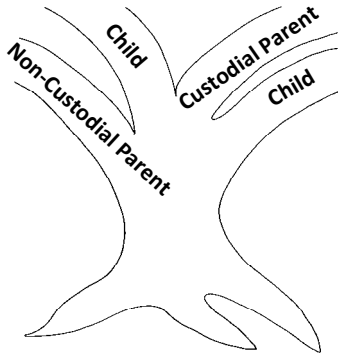
To help your preschooler develop a sense of family history and belonging, create a family tree. A **family tree** is a chart representing family relationships in a conventional tree structure. Young children need to feel the security of having an understanding of who

they are and where they came from. Knowing about family members helps a person appreciate others as well as realize their own uniqueness.

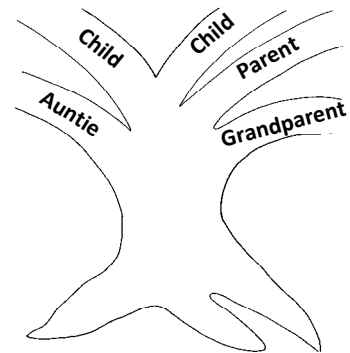
Different families have different family trees, depending on who is living in your household and who is providing care for your child. The following gives a few examples of likely family trees for a two-child family. Your situation may differ from the examples.



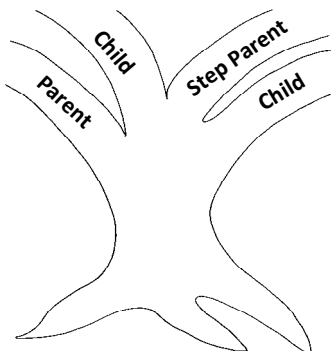
Single-Parent Family



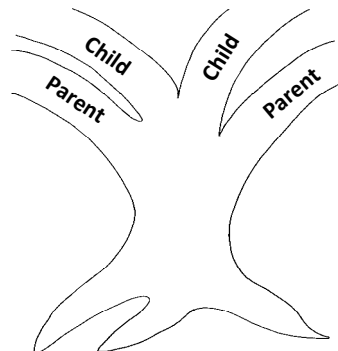
Single-Parent Family



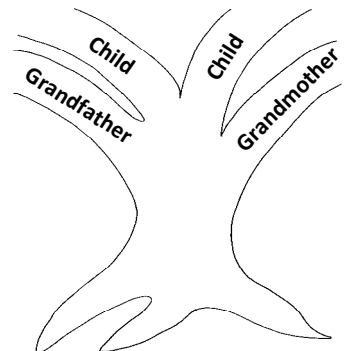
Multi-Generational Family



Blended Family



Traditional Family



Grandparent Family

On a large sheet of paper, draw your own family tree. Put both your child's name and your family name at the top of the page.

1. Put names and/or pictures of each person on the branches of the tree.
2. Select leaves that represent the characteristics of each person. Talk with your child about the strengths of each person on the family tree. Ask what they like about that person. Be sure to ask your child to think about his/her characteristics, too. Pick leaves with the characteristics your child mentions or write down the characteristics on the blank leaves. Glue the leaves for each person onto their branch of the tree.
3. Next, talk with your child about what makes you proud to be a member of this family. Ask, "What makes our family special?" Write your family characteristics onto the trunk of the tree. Some families have mentioned these characteristics:

- Work well together
- Show appreciation for each other
- Give to community
- Have fun together

4. You will want to put family names/pictures of grandparents or even great-grandparents at the roots of the tree. Talk with your child about the people who came before. What are/were some of their characteristics? Each grandparent has two parents, and each of them has two parents. Roots go deeper and spread out as you include more family members.

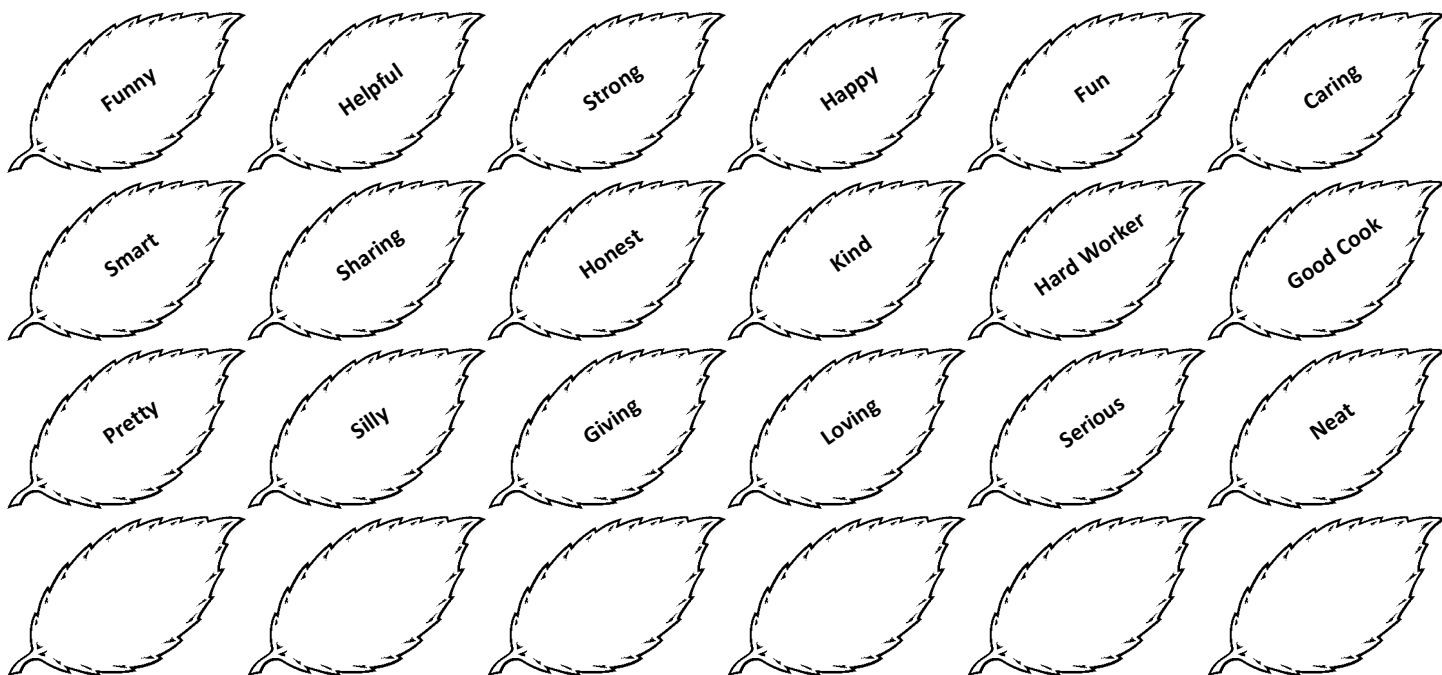
Creating a family tree teaches your child about family:

- Who makes up your family?
- What are the strengths and characteristics of each family member?
- How your child fits into the family?

Learning about family enhances your child's self-esteem. Children with a strong sense of family are more self-assured and have a deeper appreciation and respect for individuality and diversity.

**References:**

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 Molgaard, V., Kumpfer, K., & Fleming, E. (2006). *Strengthening families program*. Iowa State University, University Extension.  
 Thomason, D. (2009). *Strong families build strong communities: Family history*. Retrieved from Clemson University website at [http://www.clemson.edu/fyd/bfs\\_strengths.htm](http://www.clemson.edu/fyd/bfs_strengths.htm)



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