Reading

1 What do you think a 'framily' is? Read the text quickly and check your ideas.

2 Read the text again and decide if each sentence is true (T) or false (F).

1 It is unusual for people to socialise with friends and family at the same time.
2 British people are getting married later these days.
3 Annie is in very close contact with her friends.
4 Sheila doesn't get on with her mother-in-law
5 According to the research, a quarter of British adults spend more time with friends than with family.
6 Nearly 70% of British adults have a best friend who is also a relative.

OUR SOCIETY

The British are playing happy 'families'



'You can choose your friends, but you can't choose your family,' the saying goes. Well, it seems that now you can, almost. In Britain, young people are increasingly combining the two and creating a 'framily', a mixture of friends and family.

In the past people usually kept friends and family apart. Just twenty-five years ago, according to research, 50% of people never mixed friends and family together, but that figure has fallen to 15%. Now we think nothing of arranging evenings out with our sister, our best friend and a couple of workmates.

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This new 'framily' structure is more common amongst the younger generation, who are starting their own families later and later. On average, women get married at 29 and men at 31 nowadays, compared with 23 and 25 in the 1960s. They also often live further away from their relatives, but still need and want a similar kind of support.

Annie, 26, says, 'I have lots of friends and acquaintances, but I have three good friends who I consider to be like my family. We meet up at least once a week, and I will talk to them on the phone almost every day.'

Jon, 22, says, 'When I moved to London my step-brother, Archie, was already living here. He introduced me to his friends and now they're all like family.'

And, Sheila, 29, made a new friend quite unexpectedly. 'When Steve and I decided to get married, I was quite worried about meeting his mother. But we got on really well, and now my mother-in-law is my new best friend!'

According to research, six in ten adults consider their parent to be a friend. One in four spends more time with friends than relatives, and 67% consider their best friend to be like a member of the family.

The study of 1,000 adults said the average 'framily' contains between five and twenty people.

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