

IT TAKES ALL SORTS

For questions 1-10 choose the people A-E. The people may be chosen more than once.

Which of the people:

...has family members they are not biologically related to? 1 2 3

...talks about disadvantages of their family? 4 5

...lives in different places at different times? 6

...says their life is simpler than it seems? 7

...has moved to another country with their family? 8

...doesn't know their biological parents? 9

...takes part in a group activity with their family? 10

What's your family like? We ask each other this question because we know that families come in all shapes and sizes. Jay Pearson, our reporter, interviewed five teenagers and asked them to tell him about their different families.

A

The winters are cold in Canada, but Joshua Palmer likes it that way. Josh and his brothers (all seven of them!) have their own ice hockey team and they practise every evening. It's great fun, but it's not always easy being in a large family. 'Of course, we help one another with problems,' Joshua says, 'and my older brothers help me with my homework sometimes. The best thing is that there is always somebody there to play with or to go out with. The worst thing is that I share a room with Tom. He's the youngest. He is always playing music when I'm studying and it really annoys me.'

B

Julia Botha is from South Africa and she's an only child. Her family is living in London at the moment because of her father's job. I asked her what she thinks about not having any brothers or sisters. 'Well, it's good from one point of view. I have my own room and I usually get whatever I want, although I'm not spoilt. On the other hand, it's quite lonely. There are lots of times when I don't have anyone to play with, so I spend my free time on my computer. I keep in touch with friends back home by email. My friends are always complaining about their younger brother or younger sister, but I think it's good to have someone who loves you like that.'

C

Scott White lives with his father in New York in the USA. Scott's parents are divorced and his mother has remarried. Scott says that he gets on really well with his stepbrother and stepsister. 'Mum and Dad are still friends, which is great. I live most of the year here with my dad and spend every summer with Mum in Chicago. It's a bit like having two families. I've got a stepbrother, David, and a stepsister, Janice. I love it, because I do not have any real brothers or sisters. Now, I've got people my age who I know care about me.'

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D

Being adopted is difficult for many children. Elizabeth McCloud thinks she's very lucky. She has a loving family who treat her and her brother and sister all the same. 'Sometimes I wonder about my real family, but not often. This is my family and I don't want to live anywhere else. I love my parents and my brother and sister. People ask me questions about being adopted, but it's just the way our family is. I know they all love me and I love them.'

E

'I've got a brother, a stepsister, and a half brother,' says Matt Connor of Australia. 'It sounds strange and a bit complicated, but it isn't really. My brother is a year older than me. He and I are from Dad's first marriage. After my mum and dad got divorced, Dad married Tina. She's got a daughter, Lizzie, who's our stepsister. After a couple of years, Gavin was born. He and I have got the same biological father, but different mothers, so we're half brothers. Nobody really cares. We're all just kids together in one big family.'

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