

It's Summer at Spring School!



Close Familial Relationships...by Hien Thi (Vi) Nguyen, Vietnam

Family plays a crucial role in building a strong society, and a family is created from a variety of factors such as marriage. A familial relationship is essential to connect members in a family like glue to stick everything together strongly and tightly. Close familial relationships help reduce the rate of divorce and increase the success of a family. There are several causes of close familial relationships, which are encouraged in order to build a happy family.

In order to get closer to other members in the family, individuals need to listen to each other intently to understand other's thoughts and feelings. In spite of the fact that all members are related by their familial genes, they don't always have the same personalities and viewpoints. Listening and sharing are the easiest ways to show people what they want and need. By the way, it can reduce stressful events in one's private life as well.

Additionally, resolving conflicts in a healthy way can produce close relationships in a family. When the conflicts occur among family members, each one needs to calm down and discuss their opinion objectively to avoid arguing negatively and breaking familial relationships. In "Building Strong Relationships", the writer suggests an efficient way to handle conflicts in a family is to use I instead of You to help the listener receive the messages comfortably. Your message are commands that might make other people lose their temper easily, and they will not listen anymore.

Besides listening well and positively resolving conflict, spending quality time together with family contributes to construct closer familial connections. During family gatherings, people can leave their stressful work behind to enjoy cozy time sharing their story and getting encouragement from each other. Despite busy lives, spending quality time with the family at least once a week is encouraged. As a result, relationships can be improved.

In conclusion, it is obvious that after working hard or worrying about life, family is the only thing people can rely on for warm hugs, delicious meals, or bonding family reunions. Close familial relationships not only give children the best environment in which to develop, but they also encourage the parent mentally.

A Big Earthquake...by Cheng-Han Chuang, Taiwan

An earthquake is a natural disaster in the world. There are many earthquakes each year. It is most dangerous because people die and houses fall down. Taiwan has had many earthquakes, and I experienced one of these. On September 21, 1999 at midnight when I was sleeping, the earthquake came. It shook very powerfully and a long time. A minute later, the power was off. My house was very dark. When I was nervous, my mom came into my room and hugged me. My father found a flashlight and brought it in. After my father came to my room, we left my apartment and walked down to the first floor.

In addition, there were many people who were very nervous and scared on the first floor. We turned on the radio and listened to the news. It said the earthquake that was in Nantou was a level seven. It said many people died and a lot of houses fell down. When we were very nervous the earthquake happened again. We stayed on the first floor until morning when the earthquake finally ended. In conclusion, an earthquake is the most dangerous disaster. It can kill people and destroy houses. This earthquake was the biggest and most terrible day in Taiwan. Many people will remember it in their lifetimes.

The Successful Moment . . .by Kanatip, Isarakul, Thailand

Have you ever had a successful moment in your life? In Thailand, most people want to succeed in everything they do. I am one of those people. I try to find something to improve myself. One of the best successful moments in my life was when I was a farmer growing a melon.

The idea to grow the melon fruit was born one day when I watched a TV show with my parents. A Japanese farmer grew a melon which looked delicious and expensive. It sparked my dream. After I watched the TV show, I decided to grow the melon and started to study the method for taking care of the plant. First of all, I bought melon seeds from the internet and made a trellis and a drip water system because it was the easiest way to grow the melon. One week later, I received the melon seeds, and planted them. Two weeks later, the melon grew, but it was lost because insects drilled in to the fruit. I thought it was very hard to do, but will try it again. The next week, while I was researching the method for protect it from the insects, my father came and said "If you want to protect it from the insects, you must make a net. After that, I made a net to cover my plant. Forty five days later, my plant which I selected gave me one of the most beautiful fruits in the refrigerator. In the evening, before my mom came home, I prepared the melon to welcome her. When she came home, I gave the melon to her. She said, "It was fragrant and sweet. " She liked it and I was happy.



In conclusion, the story when I was farmer growing a melon has a successful and unsuccessful at the same time. I think you should try to do something if you want to do it. Maybe sometime you will fail, but you did it. It makes an experience and sometimes makes you happy. If you do something successful, you will be happy.

Children of Single Parents . . .by Gabriel Mendoza, Peru

Through all the past years, the human population has grown fast and new families have been born. However, not all these families are happy, and the parents have ended up divorcing for many reasons; escaping from their responsibilities of being parents. Usually they do not think of their children when they make this decision. There are several effects of growing up in a single parent household.

First, children grow without a clear image of the missing parent because they do not have him/her near. According to www.ifstudies.org, the absence of a father not only affects his children's' happiness but also their mental health and social skills. Unfortunately, some children do not know how to face their lives, and one parent is not enough for them.

Another effect on these children is that they mature faster when compared to other children as a result of their quest to fill a hole in their lives. In these cases, not all the children are successful, making them a lot more vulnerable to any kind of bullying, and blinding their judgment in important decisions. Consequently, they can make really dangerous decisions, like suicide.

The last effect is related to those already mentioned. Sometimes these people feel that something is missing in their lives due to the absence of one of the parents. However, they have lived with a missing piece since the beginning, making it difficult to recognize it. In some cases, it makes them think deeply about their whole life and causes them to have their minds in the clouds.

It is true that not everyone is alike, but these problems can affect many, having a huge effect on their lives. A missing piece in a puzzle prevents us from finishing it, but there are other ways to complete it. Not everything is lost. Life continuous! This is the message I can give to others like me who know how life is in a single-parent household. Actually, I like my life how it is, and I would not change it even if I could.

Social Media and Making Friends . . .by Abdallah Bifomo, Rwanda

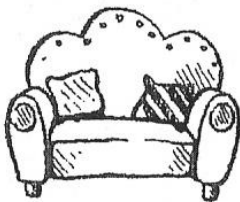
There are so many uses for social media. However, it has to be used in respect for people's personal lives. Social media is helpful in forming friendships for three main reasons, which are helping people meet virtually, improving society, and enhancing communication.

The first way social media benefits friendship is that it allows people to meet virtually. People are busy working during the week; they do not have enough time to meet for socialization. Living far away from my country, I am daily in touch with my childhood friends through social media by chatting.

In addition, social media improves society. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter allow people to express themselves, comment about various aspects of society, and make friends, which is one of the greatest benefits of social media. My friends and I have a chatting group where we usually meet to discuss certain important topics. This is beneficial for everyone because we can strengthen our relationships with each other.

The final aspect of friendship that social media enhances is communication. People can be offered the possibility of texting and making video calls with each other. This is especially beneficial for long distance friendships, but being able to communicate in a variety of ways strengthens any relationship.

Clearly, social media is one of the strengths of our society. Until recently, our friends were the people who lived closest to us. While there is no substitute for making new friends face-to-face, social media makes it easier than ever to connect with like-minded people.



My Favorite Room... Aisha Alghamodi, Libya

My favorite room is my living room because it is big. When you enter the room, there are three windows. There is a desk under the window. There is one sofa and there are three pillows on the sofa. There is a big, round coffee table in the middle of the room. There is a TV next to an arm chair. I have good times in my living room.

Here's What We Think

Making Alcohol illegal...by Alfredo Ramirez from Mexico

Alcohol can be a serious problem for a community. Fermentation is the process used to produce certain beverages like wine, beer, spirits and other drinks. Drinking these beverages can cause intoxication, and therefore, many countries restrict the age at which a person may consume it. Although some may disagree, alcohol should be illegal.

One reason why alcohol should be illegal is because it kills people. For some time there have been many deaths because of alcohol. The principal deaths are caused by people driving under the influence of alcohol which causes fatal accidents. For example, there was a case last December in Aurora, Colorado where a young woman who was drinking hit a man with her car causing his death. The young woman was sentenced to 12 years in prison. The bad and ignorant use of alcohol can cause the deaths of innocent people and ruin the drivers' lives as well.

Another thing to consider why alcohol should be illegal is the health of the people. Many people have had serious problems with health because of alcohol. People get different kinds of diseases like liver disease and cancer which are very dangerous for people. Many people have died because they got a disease because of alcohol, and those problems are increasing day by day.

Of course, some people will not agree with me. They say that alcohol can help to avoid stress, and it reduces emotional pain. However, that shows short sightedness. Alcohol is an addictive drink which can cause dependence. In this case, people with a lot of problems will want to remove them with alcohol, which really is not a true solution. Alcohol is indeed a drink that can take stress for a moment. However, it can cause even more long-term stress than people already had.

In conclusion, no matter how easy it may seem to let alcohol take problems away and make them happier, people should think about the disadvantages that come with alcohol. Clearly, alcohol should be illegal.



Legalizing Abortion...by Geumju (Luna) Kim, South Korea

Many women are afraid of walking at night time by themselves. In fact, many women also are afraid of working with men. A few years ago in South Korea, a young high school girl was walking home from school when suddenly, she was attacked. She was raped, and became pregnant. Should she have been allowed to get an abortion? According to Worldometers, "Every year in the world there are an estimated 40-50 million abortions. This corresponds to approximately 125,000 abortions per day." Even though there are many who disagree with abortion, people who are pregnant should have the right to a legal abortion.

One main reason why abortion should be legal is that women might find themselves accidentally pregnant. Usually, people want to have a baby when they get married. Many people like babies despite the fact that they are not married. However, if they are pregnant due to rape or a short fling the woman may not want the baby. Even if they have the baby, they might not want to care for the baby due to a traumatic rape. That situation could make them suffering and be constantly reminded of the rape. Besides, pregnant women may think it was their fault because some make them believe that the rape was a result of their clothing. This makes them feel guilty even though it is not their fault, and these feelings of guilt may come back whenever they see their baby.

Another thing to consider is that if they are not ready to be a mother, they should be allowed to have an abortion. It is especially difficult for a teenage single mother to care for a baby. New born babies need many supplies. For instance, babies need formula, diapers, a baby carriage, and baby bottles. How could a pregnant teen support a baby when she can get neither a full-time nor a part-time job. Also, she has to graduate from school. If she does not graduate, she will neither have money nor get a good job. Money is the most important requirement when taking care of a baby. If the mother does not have enough money, both the mother and baby suffer.

Of course, many people disagree with me. They say abortion kills babies. This shows a basic misunderstanding. The embryo is not human yet, and it does not feel pain, so abortion would be fine.

In brief, do not worry how others think about you due to the pregnancy. If the pregnancy is unwanted, have an abortion. You do not have to feel guilty because having the baby would cause more suffering for both mother and child.

School Bullies...by Yao Zheng, China

Bullying is a huge problem these days. This is bad behavior during which one or more people hurt others by physical violence or verbal abuse. It happens commonly in school. Millions of students experience school bullies. Even though people have started to focus on school bullies, it's not enough. School bullies should be stopped.

The most important reason why school bullies should be stopped is the impact on the victims. Victims can get mental or physical problems from bullying. For example, victims don't usually ask their parents or teachers for help. For a long time, they probably don't speak with others at all, and are scared to make friends. Physical problems are even worse. Some victims experience injuries to their brains, bones, or are disabled in other ways.



Another reason bullying must be stopped is that there are some impacts on bullies themselves. If no one can stop them when they are young, it's hard to stop them when they become adults. They will bring bullying behavior with them their whole lives, even into the work place. They might be criminals in the future or they may act violently toward their family members.

Some will say that bullies should not be stopped because it helps children to be stronger. However, bullying is not the correct way to help children be strong because it will make them behave violently.

In conclusion, students need a clean and peaceful environment, so they can study and grow up. Bullying should be banned.

More of What We Think

Studying Abroad...by Zamal Aldossari, Saudi Arabia

Some people have already tried studying abroad as students. It is a great experience to have because studying abroad not only teaches you a subject in school but also teaches you how to live your life. Everyone should pursue studying abroad to learn several things that they cannot learn in their own countries.

One reason why serious students should pursue studying abroad is to learn another language. It seems that it is a smart idea to learn another language because it helps you to get a new job faster than people who speak only one language. Moreover, it helps you when you want to travel to the country where the language you learned is spoken.

The second reason why people should pursue studying abroad is to get to know a different culture. Many people like to get to know different cultures to gain rich, new experiences and to identify better with people from those other areas of the world.

Of course, some people disagree with me. They might say that it is a bad experience to pursue studying abroad because the country where you are going to has its own culture and the people speak a different language so it will be difficult to acclimate to that other culture. However, it is a great experience and beneficial in your life. It helps people to be open-minded.

In conclusion, studying abroad would make the world better because more people would know many different languages and cultures. These beautiful cross-cultural experiences also enrich and broaden the lives of those who are willing to step outside their comfort zone. My advice is everyone should pursue studying abroad.



Study abroad can also get you wet in a water gun fight. Students have fun at the summer picnic in Clement Park.

Visiting Prison...by Xin Dai, China

Learning shouldn't just happen in school or with family. One special place where learning occurs is in prison. Here children can be taught many life lessons. In this environment there are many kinds of people who break the law and, if children see this, they will know what the consequences are. In China, there is a special organization that helps students to visit prisons. The goal is to deter bad behavior. When teenagers visit a prison, they see that in this place there is no freedom. All students should be required to visit a prison.

One reason why children should visit a prison is because people must know the social rules of the game. They must understand the consequences of illegal behavior. Chinese always say "people aren't God; everyone makes mistakes." However, if people do something illegal, they should be punished by law. There are many reasons why people are in prison. Some are drug dealers, others fight, some are involved in corruption, sexual assault, theft, and other crimes. During these visits to a prison, children can hear the inmates talk about their personal experiences. What they say shocks the children and makes them consider the consequences of these prisoners' actions.

Another reason is that children should know what it means if people lose their freedom. When they go to the prison, they see that prisoners have four big iron doors. When people go through one door to the next door, the next door will open but the first door will close. When all of the doors are closed, freedom is shut off. Inmates are like birds in a cage. Even if they had wings, they could not fly. Inmates whose lives are very boring have to do both simple work and study every day in prison. They lose relationships with family and friends.

Of course, some disagree with my opinion. They feel that seeing inmates is very dangerous, and children are afraid of this terrible environment. Parents don't want their children to lose their innocent hearts. However, I want to tell you why you are wrong. Teaching children early and visiting a prison to understand inmates' stories can alert them. Perhaps if they have a bit of fear when they are young, they will not suffer in prison later. The best education isn't always beautiful; children should know that society has a dark side.

In conclusion, while children are growing up, they face many difficult situations. Parents and society will give them many chances to change their behavior. In my opinion, parents believe that their children will be good children forever; they will become good persons. Please give them this opportunity to grow up. Our family and our society must be peaceful.

Embarrassing Situations

First Shopping Trip . . . by Yousef Alfehaid, Saudi Arabia

Have you ever had an embarrassing situation? Many of us have had an embarrassing time. I have had many embarrassing moments in the United States since I came here to study. One situation was after I found an apartment, and I went to Costco to buy some things. First, I took a shopping cart and I started shopping. I went to the vegetable section because I was looking for some vegetables, such as onions, tomatoes, and peppers. When I finished there, I went to another section. I took sugar, salt, chicken, water and oil

After I finished shopping, I went to the cashier who took the money from the customers. There was a long line of people. When my turn came, the cashier said, "Could you give me your membership card?" I did not understand what he said because my English was very bad. After that, he gave me another card to see it, and he asked: "Do you have a card like this?" The people who were behind me were laughing. I was very embarrassed!

By then, my shopping cart was loaded and ready to go, but the cashier took it and told me, "You cannot buy anything without the membership card." After that, I went to customer service, and I got a new membership card. While I was walking back to the cashier, I looked for my shopping cart, but I did not find it!! Someone who worked at Costco took it. After that, I went to take another shopping cart, and I started shopping again.

In conclusion, it was a long day for me, and I learned new rules about big stores. Also, I realized that I needed to learn more English. If you go to any store like Costco, you need to ask them who can buy things inside before you start shopping. I wish for you that you do not make my mistake because it was embarrassing!



Going to School in Pajamas . . . by Rie Hiraishi, Japan

Have you ever been to school in your pajamas? When I was an elementary school student, I was very embarrassed one day. The day before, there was a music recital in school, so I practiced my instrument after school. That night I couldn't sleep very well because I was nervous.

The next day, I overslept. I usually left home at 7:30, but that day I woke up at 7:20. I only brushed my teeth, and I hurried to leave home. My house was just fifteen minutes from school. My school bell rang while I was running. Before the music recital started, I arrived at school. I was ready for the music recital when my friend looked at me and asked, "Are those pajamas?" I had forgotten to change my clothing. My friend laughed at me. I was embarrassed and my cheeks were red. I spent all day at school in pajamas because I didn't have other clothes with me.

In conclusion, I was really embarrassed. I am still embarrassed to think that I was wearing pajamas in front of everyone at the recital. I learned to go to bed and wake up early! From that day, I have gone to bed early, so I am careful not to oversleep.



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Spring Welcomes Students from Yokohama, Japan

Spring International welcomes thirty-two students and three teachers from Sogakukan High School in Yokohama, Japan, for a twelve-day program of American cultural experiences, touring and language study. This is Spring's third year working with MEM Travel and its first year offering the program in Littleton. The students, who arrived July 13, are all staying with American hosts. One of their favorite days included a chance to visit Spring International module classes: Idioms, Conversation and Pronunciation. This was the first time for many of the Sogakukan students to meet and talk with young people from other countries. They also enjoyed a scavenger hunt around downtown Littleton ending at the Inside Scoop for ice cream. Jeanne Hind is coordinator of the program.



We're finally here! Arrival by bus at Spring International in Littleton



Meeting my home stay family



Good morning, teacher! We're studying English in America!

Sayonara! Come back
to visit us again.



Practicing our conversation with Spring International intensive program students