

MY GROWN-UPS GUIDE FOR GROWN-UPS

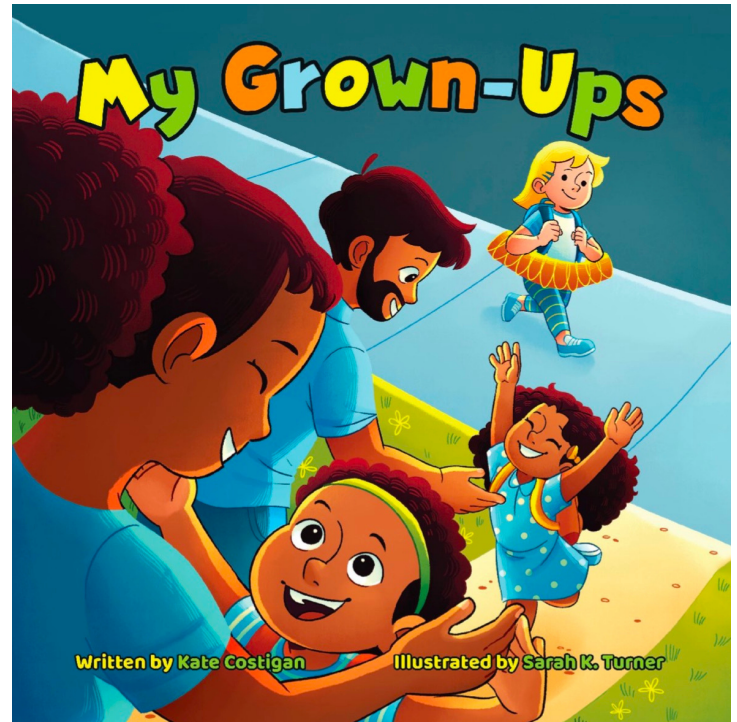


The following guide is a partner guide to the book "My Grown-Ups" by Kate Costigan. It contains resources and discussion points for both kids and Grown-Ups learning about all the different ways a family can look.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

In the US, 35% of children don't live with two married parents, the US accounts for the largest number of children who live in single-parent households, about 200,000 children are being raised by a same-sex couple, and the number of children being raised by grandparents has steadily increased. (Source: Insider).

By saying "your Grown-ups" instead of "your mom and dad" or "your parents", you make kids with families and experiences outside of "the norm" feel like they belong.



HOW TO HELP CHILDREN UNDERSTAND DIVERSE FAMILIES

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Young children generally don't need or want long, complex answers. Something like, "Cody lives with his grandmother. His grandmother is his family," or "Malia has two mommies. They are her family," are sufficient. Preschool children are concrete thinkers and not ready for a philosophical discussion.

CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Children's growing awareness of diverse family structures provides rich opportunities to celebrate family diversity and engage them in conversation about who is in THEIR family, who lives in THEIR house and more importantly, who takes care of them. Point out the wonderful, interesting diversity of families, which might include blended families, foster families, LGBTQ families, multi-generational families, and many others.

DEFINE WHAT MAKES A FAMILY

Children tend to thrive when they come to understand there are varying family structures and that all families are wonderful, so long as the people in them love and care about each other. This repeated message helps children feel secure, even if their family configuration changes through death, separation, or other life events.

(Source: BrightHorizons)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Early Childhood Education Resources for Teachers](#)

[Lesson Plan: What is a Family?](#)
[PBS Shows with Different Families](#)

[Supporting Children with Special Needs Siblings](#)