

Family health: Roles and Responsibilities

Dr. Nawa Raj Subba



Roles of family and peer group in health

As there is a famous proverb, “The secret of health lies in the family”, a family can play various roles to uplift the health status of its members. The family role may be summarized as follows:

- Family as a teacher:
- Family as a health service provider:
- Family as a counselor:

Contd.

- Family as a motivator:
- Family as a monitor:
- Family as a trainer:
- Family as a controller:
- Family as a care taker:



Peer Group

- A **peer group** is both a social group and a primary group of people who have similar interests (homophily), age, background, or social status. The members of this group are likely to influence the person's beliefs and behaviour.^[1] Peer groups contain hierarchies and distinct patterns of behavior. Eighteen-year-olds are not in a peer group with 14 year olds even though they may be in school together, just as teachers do not share students as a peer group.

Source: Peer group . (n.d.). Dictionary.com. Retrieved October 25, 2012, from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/peer+group>



- During adolescence, peer groups tend to face dramatic changes. Adolescents tend to spend more time with their peers and have less adult supervision. Adolescents' communication shifts during this time as well. They prefer to talk about school and their careers with their parents, and they enjoy talking about sex and other interpersonal relationships with their peers.
- Source: [Steinberg, Laurence](#) (2010). *Adolescence*. New York: McGraw Hill. pp. 1–434. [ISBN 978-0-07-353203-5](#).



Peer group

- A group of friends or associates usually of similar background social status and age who are likely to influence a person's beliefs and behaviour
- Members of a particular peer group often have similar interests and backgrounds, bonded by the premise of sameness.
- Peer groups offer the chance to discuss interests that adults may not share with their children



Role of Peer group in health

- Serve as a source of health information
- Help to reduce mental stress and anxiety
- Help to be acquainted on physical and emotional changes
- Give support in acute as well as chronic illness
- Give support to during disability



Contd.

Though Peer group may have very positive roles on health but in many circumstances there may be very harmful consequences on health like - substance abuse, involvement in criminal activity and sexual abuse.



Responsibilities of family in health and disease:

- 1. Child rearing**
- 2. Socialization**
- 3. Personality formation**
- 4. Care of dependant adult:**
 - Care of sick and injured
 - Care of pregnant and childbirth
 - Care of aged and handicapped



Contd.

- 5. Stabilization of adult personality**
- 6. Familial susceptibility to diseases**
- 7. Broken homes**
- 8. Problem family**



References

- World Health Organization, website www.who.int.en
- United Nations Children's Fund, www.unicef.org
- United Nations Development Program, www.undp.org
- Ministry of Health Department of Health Services Annual Report, 2070/71
- Ministry of Health, www.mohp.gov.np
- Department of Health Services www.dohs.gov.np
- Wikipedia, www.en/Wikipedia.org
- Kishor A. (n.d.) Introduction to Family Health, National Medical College and Teaching Hospital, Birgunj, Nepal

