

How Sharing Family Stories Can Strengthen Relationships



How many family stories do you know? There may be stories of migration or comedies about great-grandma or uncle so-and-so that have been passed down. Family members may have survived natural disasters, served in the armed forces, or had a successful business. These shared stories can be influential in developing family and individual identity because stories are important for understanding the world. Sharing family stories is also a powerful way to strengthen and unite family members. Family stories that show examples of overcoming challenges can help younger generations find the strength to overcome their own struggles.

Research shows that when children know more about their family, they are more resilient, have higher self-esteem, better self-control, lower anxiety levels, fewer behavioral problems, and are more prepared to make good decisions when facing challenges. Family events such as holiday gatherings, mealtimes, and vacations are good times to share family

stories. Sharing different people's perspectives of a story is also enjoyable as families gather and reminisce. Keeping a record of the stories is essential, but it doesn't have to be elaborate. It has been shown that writing them down or typing and printing them is more meaningful and preserves them better than digital recordings since formats and equipment change frequently. If preserved in a way that can be replayed, video and voice recordings can be fun for future generations.

Stories of both triumph and failure teach essential life lessons. Humorous anecdotes that include misunderstandings or coincidences, or just using humor to make life more enjoyable, also teach valuable skills. As you plan summer reunions and family time, be intentional about sharing family stories. Ideas include: playing ancestor bingo, visiting a place of significance to your family, celebrating birthdays for deceased family members, playing games family members enjoyed, and making a favorite family recipe book. Other ideas include showing photos of what family members looked like in their youth and determining who looks alike now, creating a family history time capsule, and doing family service projects.

Remember – the family activities and traditions you create now become family stories for future generations. For more information on making family stories powerful, visit: [How Family Stories Can Strengthen and Unite](#). To see article references, [click here](#).