

# West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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From the Selected Works of Katherine Norris

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## Getting to know you.pdf

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Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/katherine-norris/6/>

# Getting to Know You, and You, and You

Young children are often eager to share information about their families with their teachers and with each other. This activity allows children to do just that.

The first time I worked with children to create a classroom family album, the group was not racially or culturally diverse. But once the book came together, we realized that our families were diverse. Most of the children knew that some families included mothers and fathers and some had just mothers living in the home. Some even understood that grandmothers can lead a family. But for many children, it was the first time they realized that a single father can lead a family or that an Asian child can have white parents.

When doing this activity with preschoolers, teachers can create a scrapbook page about their own family to include in the book. This is a great way for children and families to learn more about their teachers.

## Family Scrapbook Activity Plan

**Why do this activity?** To help children learn about their teachers and classmates, to appreciate differences, and to respect all families. Teachers can learn more about the children and welcome their families to the program.

**What can children learn?** Each classmate is a member of a family. All families have similarities and differences, but not all families are the same. A common thread among all families is that family members love and care for each other.

**Vocabulary words:** *family, same, different, respect, scrapbook, culture, language, tradition*

**Materials:**

Individual family photos (2 to 3 per child)  
Colored construction paper (8½" x 11") or  
scrapbook paper (12" x 12")  
Glue sticks  
Crayons  
Markers  
Yarn (to tie pages together)  
Scissors  
Old magazines (to cut out pictures to decorate pages)  
Hole punch  
Optional: blank scrapbook, decorative stickers, and page protectors

### Prepare for the activity

1. Purchase or gather the materials listed above.
2. Write a letter to families about the project and ask them to provide two or three family photographs. Include a due date.
3. Set up tables with materials.
4. Read a book at class meeting about families (see "Children's Books about Families"). Then, lead a discussion with the children about their families. Ask questions like, "What is a family?" "Who is in your family?" "Who lives in your home?"
5. Ask children to share and talk about their family photos. Discuss similarities and differences between families. For example, some children have no brothers or sisters, while other children might have one, two, three, or more.





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6. Show the children an example of a family scrapbook. Then explain that they will be creating a classroom scrapbook about their own families.

### Lead small groups

1. Give 3 or 4 children each a blank scrapbook page or piece of construction paper and their family photos.
2. Have children create their scrapbook page. They will glue on the photos and decorate the page. Invite children to dictate a sentence about their family. Write their words on the scrapbook page.
3. Leave completed pages out to dry.

### Respond to individuals

1. Help children with coloring, decorating, cutting, pasting, or writing, as needed.
2. Invite a native speaker, such as another staff member or an older child, to support dual language learners.

### Follow up after the activity

1. Have each child share his or her scrapbook page at the next class meeting. Invite children to ask questions or share thoughts about their friends' families.
2. Collect and place the pages in a scrapbook, or punch three holes in each page and tie them together with yarn. Laminate the cover to make it sturdy.
3. Read the scrapbook with the class. Invite the children to share their stories, ask questions, and discuss the photos.

### Involve families

Send the scrapbook home with individual children so they can show it to their families. After all the children have had a turn, place it in the library where they can find and revisit the photos again and again.

## Children's books about families

*Families*, by Rena D. Grossman. 2009. Long Island City, NY: Star Bright Books. (Babies Everywhere series)

*Families*, by Ann Morris. 2000. New York: HarperCollins.

*The Family Book*, by Todd Parr. 2003. New York: Little, Brown.

*Global Babies*, by Maya Ajmera. 2007. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

*I Love Saturdays y domingos*, by Alma Flor Ada. Illus. by Elivia Savadier. 2004. New York: Atheneum.

*In Our Mothers' House*, by Patricia Polacco. 2009. New York: Philomel.

*My Grandma/Mi abuelita*, by Ginger Foglesong Guy. Illus. by Viva Escriva. 2007. New York: Rayo.

*Un sillón para siempre*, by Vera B. Williams. 2009. New York: Greenwillow. (Available in English as *A Chair for Always*.)

*And Tango Makes Three*, by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell. 2005. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing.

For more suggestions, go to <http://tyc.naeyc.org/articles/pdf/Childrensbooksaboutfamilies.pdf>.

Download a blank planning form from [naeyc.org/tyc](http://naeyc.org/tyc).

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