

READ

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Changing U.S. Families

Like most Americans, Ya-Wen Chen moved out of her parents' home when she was in her early twenties. Today, Ya-Wen is married with a family of her own. And now she and her family live with her mother. Ya-Wen's situation is becoming more common in the U.S. The number of homes that include children, parents, grandparents, and sometimes great-grandparents is increasing. By the year 2015, experts believe that the number of three- and four-generation households will continue to grow.



There are many benefits to living with a big family. Housing in some areas of the U.S. is hard to find and it can be expensive. Living together helps family members save money. Family members can help one another in other ways, too. "My mother takes care of my kids so I can go to school and get a degree," says Ya-Wen. "My mother and my children have a close relationship. That's very good for all of them. And when my mother needs to go to the doctor, I can take her. We take care of one another."

Families of new immigrants are the most likely to live together. In many cultures, a traditional family has four generations living under one roof. "My parents moved to the U.S. from China," explains Ya-Wen. "Back home, it wasn't unusual for a big family to live together."

However, living with a big family can be difficult. As Ya-Wen says, "There isn't much privacy. My mother and two daughters share the same bedroom. I know it is difficult for my mother when my daughters make a lot of noise. It's never quiet in a big family! And when my husband and I argue, my mother always knows!"

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

A Read the article again. What is the main idea of the article? Circle the letter.

- a. It is becoming more common for families in the U.S. to live together.
- b. Housing is expensive.
- c. Ya-Wen's family takes care of one another.

B Match the sentences with the same meaning.

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| 1. <u>d</u> In many cultures, a traditional family has four generations living under one roof. | a. We don't agree with each other and get angry. |
| 2. ____ There are benefits to living with a big family. | b. There are good things about living in a three- or four-generation household. |
| 3. ____ My husband and I argue. | c. There are few chances to be alone. |
| 4. ____ My mother and daughter share the same bedroom. | d. In the past, family members lived together in the same home. |
| 5. ____ There isn't much privacy. | e. They sleep in the same room. |

C Answer the questions with information from the article.

1. What are three benefits of families living together?

2. What are two ways that living together can be difficult?

D MAKE IT PERSONAL. Do you want to live in a three- or four-generation household? Explain why or why not.
