

Chapter 4 Families and households

Topic 2 Childhood

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Activity: Media

The accordion family

Learning objectives

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- Define the term 'boomerang children'.
- Identify the key features of the 'accordion family'.
- Analyse the impact of the accordion family on family life and society.
- Consider the impact of the accordion family on our notions of childhood and adulthood.

A. Look back at your answers to the Getting Started activity at the beginning of the topic. From your answers what age do you consider a person moves from childhood to adulthood. Give reasons for your answer.

B. Now watch the clip and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwMxOsD2Dhg> – Accordion families

1. What are boomerang children?
2. How common does this appear to be from the view of the Schaffer daughters in the clip?
3. What views do the two daughters have about living back at home?
4. What used to be 'normal' according to Katherine Newman?
5. What is an accordion family?
6. How were accordion families formed in the past?
7. What does Japan call its boomerang children?
8. Why are boomerang children seen as such a problem in Japan?
9. Why do accordion families lead to a fall in birth rates?
10. Why is there a large number of accordion families in Spain?
11. What is the attitude to boomerang boys in Italy?
12. What does Katherine Newman say is the impact of the accordion family on parents?

C. Write a summary paragraph on what the existence of accordion families might mean for the future of childhood and adulthood.