

Chapter 4 Families and Households

Topic 7 Families and social policy

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 241

1. Any one of the following: restricting couples to one child (e.g. China); setting up infertility treatment centres, making divorce more difficult, lowering the legal age of marriage, making unmarried adults and childless couples pay extra income tax (e.g. communist Rumania); restricting access to abortion and contraception; keeping women out of the workforce, (e.g. Nazi Germany); the state intervening in cases of child abuse (e.g. Britain).
2. Social policies that reward irresponsible or anti-social behaviour.
3. Any two of the following: banning the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities; setting up the Child Support Agency to enforce maintenance payments by absent parents; introducing Parenting Orders for parents of truants and young offenders.
4. Any two of the following: longer maternity leave; Working Families Tax Credit; The New Deal; civil partnerships; giving unmarried couples the same adoption rights as married couples; outlawing discrimination on grounds of sexuality.
5. Policies are often based on assumptions about what the 'normal' family is like and in turn the effect of the policy is to reinforce that particular family type.
6. Because individualistic gender regimes are based on the belief that husbands and wives should be treated as separate, equal individuals. Wives are not assumed to be financially dependent on their husbands, so each partner has a separate entitlement to state benefits.
7. Policies where individuals and families are encouraged to use the market rather than the state to meet their needs, e.g. private pension provision and private care of the old.