

ONLY CHILD— Lonely Child?

1 FOCUS ON THE TOPIC

1. Read the title of the unit. What is an *only child*? What does the title mean?
2. In your country, how many children do *most* families have?
3. How many students in the class are only children? How many students have one brother or sister? Two? Three or more?

GO TO MyEnglishLab TO CHECK WHAT YOU KNOW.

Jules: We also know that friends are very important to only children. Many of us move to neighborhoods with lots of young families, so our children can make a lot of friends.

Lisa: We also want to share information from the latest studies about one-child families. Here's some very interesting information: Only 3 percent of the American _____ say that a one-child family is the best family size. But recently, *Time Magazine* said that one-third (33 percent) of young Americans plan to _____ just one _____ after they _____.

4. (population / personal)
5. (have / make)
6. (child / money)
7. (get married / take care of)


Jules: Why is this? Of course, every family is different, so this is a very _____ decision for every couple. But life in most American cities today is expensive. It costs between \$286,000 and \$324,000 to _____ a child to age 18 in the U.S.—and that's before paying for college! Many parents today don't _____ enough _____ at their jobs, so they _____ to have a big family.

8. (personal / population)
9. (raise / have)
10. (have / make)
11. (children / money)
12. (can't afford / make money)

Lisa: That's one reason that many Americans today are _____ the _____ decision to have just one child and to give their child the best life possible!

13. (having / making)
14. (time / responsible)

Lisa Conner Jules Conner
Bloggers, *Our Only Child*


2  Now listen to the conversation and check your answers. Then read the conversation aloud with a partner.

3 Match the vocabulary on the left with the correct definition on the right. Write the letter of the correct definition on the line.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. can't afford | a. brother or sister |
| ___ 2. get married | b. decide; choose |
| ___ 3. have a child | c. do everything that someone needs; watch over |
| ___ 4. lonely | d. have a husband or wife; marry (someone) |
| ___ 5. make a decision | e. right or correct for a certain situation |
| ___ 6. make money | f. bring up a child; give a child a home, food, clothing, and education until the age of 18 |
| ___ 7. personal | g. don't have enough money (to do something) |
| ___ 8. population | h. give birth to a baby |
| ___ 9. raise | i. individual; different for every person |
| ___ 10. responsible | j. sad because you are alone |
| ___ 11. sibling | k. earn money from your job |
| ___ 12. take care of | l. the number of people in a city, country, the world |

 **GO TO** MyEnglishLab **FOR MORE VOCABULARY PRACTICE.**

PREVIEW

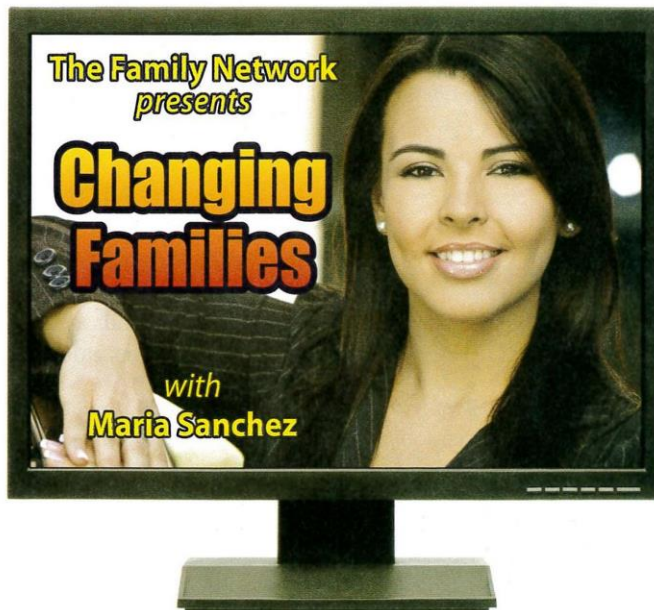
 Listen to the beginning of *Changing Families*, a TV talk show. Then answer the questions. The host, Maria Sanchez, is going to talk to two families.

1. Maria is probably going to ask the parents, “Why did you decide to ____?”



- a. have children
- b. have only one child

2. What are Maria and the families going to talk about? Check (✓) your ideas.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> teachers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> culture | <input type="checkbox"/> grandparents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> money | <input type="checkbox"/> friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> age | <input type="checkbox"/> feelings |




MAIN IDEAS

- 1  Listen to the complete interview. Now look at your answers in Preview on page 167. Were any of your answers correct? Did they help you to understand the interview?
- 2  Listen to the interview again. Complete the sentences with the words and phrases from the box. You will not use all of the words and phrases.

a good life	a lot of money	difficult	lonely
a happy child	busy	easy	siblings

1. Today, many people don't believe that only children are _____.
2. For Marion and Mark, raising a young child is _____.
3. Marion and Mark think Tonia is _____.
4. Tom and Jenna can afford to give one child _____.
5. Jay is usually _____ with his friends, sports, and music.

DETAILS

 Listen again. Write **T** (true) or **F** (false). Correct the false information.

- ___ 1. There are more only children in big cities.
- ___ 2. Marion had a baby when she was 36.
- ___ 3. Marion and Mark can't take care of Tonia.
- ___ 4. Tonia spends time with her parents and friends.
- ___ 5. Tonia is a very popular child.
- ___ 6. Maria read that only children are more interesting than children with siblings.
- ___ 7. In 2050, there are going to be 90 million people in the world.
- ___ 8. Jenna and Tom made a difficult decision.
- ___ 9. School, music, and traveling are important to Jenna and Tom.
- ___ 10. Sometimes Jay is lonely.


 **GO TO MyEnglishLab FOR MORE LISTENING PRACTICE.**

MAKE INFERENCES

MAKING INFERENCES BASED ON WORD CHOICES

An inference is a guess about something that is not directly stated. To make an inference, use information that you understand from what you hear.

We can usually understand what people mean or how they feel even if they don't explain everything directly. Their *word choices* often help us to *infer* their meaning or feeling.

 Listen to the example.

Example

1. What can we infer/understand about Mark?
 - a. After Tonia was born, he and Marion thought about having another child.
 - b. After Tonia was born, he and Marion never thought about having another child.


(continued on next page)

2. Which word(s) helped you to understand this? _____

The correct answers are: 1. a, 2. decided

Explanation

Mark said, “**At some point, we just decided** that we couldn’t take care of Tonia *and* a new baby.” The word *decided* helps us to understand that he and Marion **thought about and discussed** having another baby (but then they decided not to have one).

 Listen to the excerpts from the TV talk show. Circle the correct answer to complete each sentence.

Excerpt One

1. What can we infer about Marion and Mark?
 - a. They feel too old to raise a second child.
 - b. They want to raise another young child.
2. Which word(s) helped you to understand this? _____

Excerpt Two

1. What does Maria want people to understand?
 - a. There is new information about only children that many people don’t know.
 - b. People already know everything about only children.
2. Which word(s) helped you to understand this? _____

Excerpt Three


1. What does Jenna want to explain?
 - a. Money is more important to them now than in the past.
 - b. Their son needs a lot of expensive things.
2. Which word(s) helped you to understand this? _____

4. How does Tonia feel about her parents' decision? She ____.
- a. understands it and agrees with it
 - b. understands it but isn't happy about it
 - c. doesn't understand it
5. Jay and Tonia have ____ feelings about being only children.
- a. unusual
 - b. the same
 - c. different
6. When Jay spends time with his parents, he feels ____.
- a. different
 - b. special
 - c. uncomfortable
7. Jay and his parents enjoy ____.
- a. traveling
 - b. living in Asia
 - c. staying home
8. Many of Jay's friends don't like to ____.
- a. do things alone
 - b. spend time with their parents
 - c. cry like a baby




Jay

Questions for Only Children	Tonia	Jay
1. Age?	8	12
2. Feelings about being an only child?	She _____.	

 Listen to the beginning of the excerpt. What is Tonia's answer to question 2? Write her answer under her name in the chart.

Example

The correct answer is: **She hates it.**

 Listen to the rest of the interview. In the chart, write four questions that Maria asks. Then fill in Tonia's and Jay's answers. Compare your chart with a partner's. What did your partner write in the chart? When you finish, compare all the charts with the class.

Questions for Only Children	Tonia	Jay
1. Age?	8	12
2. Feelings about being an only child?	she hates it.	He _____.
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

 **GO TO MyEnglishLab FOR MORE SKILL PRACTICE.**

3 FOCUS ON SPEAKING

VOCABULARY

REVIEW

Work in pairs. Student A, read your sentence aloud. Student B, read your sentence aloud and fill in the blank with the correct word from the box.

decision	lonely	raise	tired
had fun	personal	took care of	

A: Did both of your parents work when you were a child?

B: Yes, but my grandmother lived with us. She helped my parents to

_____ raise _____ me.
1.

A: Really? That's unusual in the U.S.

B: I know, but my parents are both doctors. They worked a lot, and when they came home, they were really _____.
2.

A: Sure . . .

B: So my grandmother _____ me during the week.
3.

A: Did you like that?

B: Yes, I loved it. She always had a lot of time to play with me, and we always _____ together. I was never _____.
4. 5.

A: That's great.

B: Yeah, and we also talked a lot about so many things. My grandmother always helped me if I had a _____ problem, and she taught me how to make the best _____.
6. 7.

A: You were lucky!

B: Yeah, I agree.

Now switch roles.

can't afford	have	opportunities
got married	make a lot of money	take care of

B: Did I tell you the news about my brother and sister-in-law¹?

A: No. What's happening with them?

B: Well, you know that they _____ a year ago, right?
7.

A: Yeah . . .

B: Well, now they're going to _____ a baby!
8.

A: That's great!

B: I know. I can't believe it!

A: It's very exciting. Is Joan going to stop working after she has the baby?

B: I think she's going to stay home for three months and then she's going to go back to work. They _____ to live on just one salary.
9.

A: Really? Doesn't your brother have a good job?

B: Well, he loves his job, and he has a lot of _____ to travel, but
10.
unfortunately, he doesn't _____!
11.

A: Oh, so I guess they're going to get a babysitter.

B: Yeah, and my mother is going to help them to _____ the baby, too.
12.

A: That's nice.

¹ **sister-in law:** your brother's wife or your spouse's sister

EXPAND

1 This is a page from the Conners' blog, "Our Only Child." Read Columns A and B.

The image shows a digital document with two columns, A and B, each enclosed in a rounded rectangular frame. Column A has a blue border and a blue circle with the letter 'A' at the top. Column B has a red border and a red circle with the letter 'B' at the top. The text in column A discusses common perceptions of only children as selfish and spoiled, and how they struggle to interact with other children. The text in column B provides a counterpoint, stating that only children are often happy, independent, and have close friends due to the attention they receive from their parents.

A

Some people think that only children have a lot of problems.

They say:

"Problem" #1:

Only children are selfish.

Only children get all of their parents' attention, so they think they are the most important people in the world. They never think about other people. These children are **selfish**. This means _____.

"Problem" #2:

Only children are spoiled.

Parents of only children are sad that their child has no siblings. They think that toys, money, and other things can make their child feel happy. But the child keeps asking for more and more. These children are **spoiled**. This means _____.

"Problem" #3:

Only children don't get along well with other children.

Only children live with adults, so they don't learn how to act like children. They act like "little adults." They don't learn how to play with other children, and they don't feel comfortable with them. Only children **don't get along well with other children**. This means _____.

B

Parents of only children know this is not true!

We say:

_____ We and our children are happy with our families. We don't need to buy our children lots of toys to make them happy. But our children spend more time playing by themselves, so they learn how to be alone. They are more **independent** than children with siblings. This means _____.

Our children are usually more mature than other children their age, but we know that it's very important for them to have friends. We make sure that our children always have friends to play with. Our children are usually very popular with other children. They have many close friends. This means _____.

_____ We give our children a lot of attention. This makes our children feel good about themselves. They also care about other people. Our children are usually **self-confident**, not selfish. This means _____.

- 2** Match the vocabulary **in bold** with the correct definitions below. Write the letter of the correct definition in the blank at the end of each paragraph. Then, check your answers with a partner.

Definitions:

- a. they have a lot of very good friends
- b. they can do many things without help
- c. they think only about themselves
- d. they believe they are good people, with good abilities
- e. they have problems with other children
- f. they are never satisfied. They always want more and more things

- 3** Work with a partner. Match the problem in Column A with the best response by the “Our Only Child” bloggers in Column B. Write the number of the problem on the line in front of the best response.

- 4** Change partners. Take turns reading the problems and responses aloud with your new partner. Student A, read one problem. Then Student B, read the correct response. Check with your teacher if you have different responses to the problems.

CREATE

Work with a small group of students. Talk about each idea in the blog post. Which ideas do you think are true? Why? Use the vocabulary from Review and Expand.

Example

Only children are selfish. / Only children are self-confident.

STUDENT A: I think most only children are selfish. It’s natural. Only children spend a lot of time alone. They don’t learn how to think about other people’s feelings. That’s why they are selfish.

STUDENT B: I’m not sure about that. In my opinion, . . .

STUDENT C: I . . . because . . .

- 1. Only children are spoiled. / Only children are independent.
- 2. Only children don’t act like children. / Only children are mature.
- 3. Only children don’t get along well with other children. / Only children have many close friends.

 **GO TO MyEnglishLab FOR MORE VOCABULARY PRACTICE.**

GRAMMAR

- 1** Read Maria's sentences. Look at the underlined verbs. Then answer the questions.

MARIA: Today we're going to talk about only children.

MARIA: Next, I'm going to talk to the kids.

1. How many parts does each verb have?
2. What is the first part?
3. What is the second part? Does it change?
4. What's the form of the last part?

THE FUTURE WITH **BE GOING TO**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Use be + going to + the base form of the verb to talk about an action in the future.</p> <p>NOTE: Use contractions in speaking and in informal writing.</p> | <p>I am going to have lunch later.
He is going to visit friends tonight.</p> <p>I'm going to have lunch later.
He's going to visit friends tonight.</p> |
| <p>2. To make a negative sentence, put not before going to.</p> <p>NOTE: You can also use the negative contractions <i>isn't</i> and <i>aren't</i>.</p> | <p>I'm not going to travel next week.
She's not going to have a big family.</p> <p>He isn't going to get married soon.
We aren't going to have a big family.</p> |
| <p>3. To make questions, put a form of be before the subject.</p> | <p>Are you going to visit us soon?
Where is he going to go next year?</p> |
| <p>4. To answer yes/no questions, you can use a short form:</p> <p><i>Yes + subject + be</i>
<i>No + subject + be + not</i></p> <p>NOTE: You can also use the negative contractions <i>isn't</i> and <i>aren't</i>.</p> | <p>Yes, I am / he is / you are / we are / they are.
No, I'm not / he's not / you're not / we're not / they're not.</p> <p>No, he isn't. / No, they aren't.</p> |
| <p>5. You can use these future time expressions with be going to:</p> <p>later / tonight / tomorrow / soon
in two days / in a week / in a month / in a year
this Tuesday / week / month / year
next Monday / week / month / year</p> | <p>I'm going to move to a different city next year.
We're going to have dinner together this week.</p> |

2 Tonia is talking about her plans for the future. Complete the conversation with the correct forms of **be going to**. Then read the conversation aloud with a partner.

MARIA: I know you don't like being an only child. So, _____ you _____^{1.} have a big family when you grow up?

TONIA: Yes, definitely! I _____^{2.} have four or five kids! Maybe six!

MARIA: Well, then your children _____^{3.} be lonely!

TONIA: Right. They _____^{4.} have a lot of brothers and sisters to play with.

MARIA: But, you know, raising so many kids is very expensive!

TONIA: Well, I _____^{5.} work hard and save a lot of money. I _____^{6.} be rich!

MARIA: You _____^{7.} be rich? That's amazing!

3 Work with a small group of students.

1. On a small piece of paper, write a question using **be going to** and a phrase from columns A and B. Put all questions in a paper bag. Give your bag to another group.
2. Take turns. Choose a question from the bag. Read it aloud. The next student has to answer it using **be going to**. Ask and answer all the questions in the bag.

A	B
go shopping	this year
take a vacation	next week
move to a different city/country	in a month
move to the countryside	soon
see a movie	tonight
study another language	tomorrow
buy a car	in ____ years
have a big family	this weekend
get a new job	in the future


Examples

Are you going to move to a different city this year?

Are you going to see a movie tonight?

PRONUNCIATION

PRONOUNCING GOING TO

 Native speakers pronounce *going to* in two ways. Listen to the sentences. How is *going to* pronounced?

A: I'm going to take a vacation next month. (pronounced /gówɪŋtə/)

B: I'm going to see you later! (pronounced /gəʊnə/)

- In formal or careful (slow) speech, use the full form: *going to* /gówɪŋtə/
In today's lecture, I'm going to speak about only children.

- In informal or fast speech, use the reduced (short) form: *gonna* /gəʊnə/
I'm gonna ask my mom if you can come for dinner.

NOTE: 1. We do not write *gonna* in formal (academic or business) English. *Gonna* is written only in very informal writing, such as text messages (SMS).


2. Pronounce *gonna* only when it means "future," and there is another verb. When *going* is the only verb in the sentence, you cannot use the reduced form.

Example

a. I'm *going to* see you later! ("gonna" is OK here.)

b. I'm *going to* class now. ("gonna" is impossible here. You must pronounce it /gówɪŋtə/.)

3. You can use /gówɪŋtə/ (the careful pronunciation) when you speak if it's more comfortable for you.

- 1  Listen to the sentences. Is **going to** pronounced in the full form or the reduced form (**gonna**)? Circle the correct answer. First, listen to the examples.

Examples

But my mom said, “_____ have another child.”

- a. I am not going to
b. I’m not gonna

Today, _____ talk about only children.

- a. we are going to
 b. we’re gonna

1. Today, _____ meet two families with only children.

- a. we are going to
b. we’re gonna

2. First, _____ talk with Marion and Mark Carter.

- a. we are going to
b. we’re gonna

3. OK, next, _____ talk to the kids!

- a. I am going to
b. I’m gonna

4. _____ speak to Marion and Mark’s daughter, Tonia.

- a. I’m going to
b. I’m gonna

5. And this winter, _____ go skiing in Europe.

- a. we are going to
b. we’re gonna

- 2 Match the phrases in column A and column B to make true sentences about you and the people in your family. (You don’t have to use all the phrases in column B.) With a partner, take turns saying your sentences aloud. You can use **going to** or **gonna**. Then share some of your sentences with the class.

(continued on next page)

Example

STUDENT 1: "I'm not *going to* have a big family."

STUDENT 2: "I'm *gonna* travel this year."

A

B

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| ___ 1. I'm (not) going to | a. travel this year. |
| ___ 2. My (wife/husband/best friend) is probably (not) going to | b. have just one child. |
| ___ 3. My (mother/father) is probably (not) going to | c. have a big family. |
| ___ 4. My (brother/sister/cousin) is probably (not) going to | d. take a vacation this year. |
| ___ 5. My parents are (not) going to | e. have a baby soon. |
| | f. go skiing next winter. |
| | g. get married in a few years. |
| | h. be busy tonight. |

SPEAKING SKILL

AGREEING AND DISAGREEING

There are many ways to agree with another person's opinion, and to disagree politely.

Here are some common phrases you can use:

TO AGREE	TO DISAGREE
I agree (with you).	I disagree.
(I think) You're right.	I don't agree (with you).
(I think) That's true.	I don't think that's true. / I don't think so.
That's for sure.	That's not true.

WHEN YOU'RE NOT SURE

- I'm not sure about that.
- That may be true, but . . .
- Maybe . . .

Examples

MARION: But . . . well, it's not easy to raise a young child at our age.

MARK: **That's for sure.** We're always tired!

MARIA: I think many *young* parents feel the same way!

MARION: Mmm . . . **Maybe.**

TOM: I'm sure you know, teachers don't make a lot of money!

MARIA: **That's true.** Most teachers aren't rich!

Work in groups of four. Two students will be Group A and two students will be Group B. One student from Group A, read the statement in number 1 that you think is true. Then one student from Group B, use a phrase to agree, disagree, or say you're not sure about Group A's statement. Explain why and state your opinion. Continue taking turns stating opinions and agreeing or disagreeing.

Example

A: Most only children feel very different from their friends.

B: I don't agree. In most big cities, there are lots of only children!

Statements

1. Most only children (*feel / don't feel*) very different from their friends.
2. Only children (*are / are not*) more popular than children with siblings.
3. Only children (*are / are not*) more mature than children with siblings.
4. Many only children (*are / are not*) spoiled.
5. It's (*good / not good*) to be the youngest child in a family.
6. It's (*good / not good*) to be the oldest child in a family.
7. (*All / Not all*) children need siblings.
8. Many only children (*have trouble / don't have trouble*) making friends.
9. It's (*fine / not responsible*) to have more than one child.
10. Children (*need / don't need*) to learn how to enjoy being alone.

 **GO TO** MyEnglishLab **FOR MORE SKILL PRACTICE AND TO CHECK WHAT YOU LEARNED.**

FINAL SPEAKING TASK

*In this activity, you will role-play a conversation between Matt and Jessica. Matt and Jessica are married. They have a four-year-old daughter named Katie. They are talking about having a second child. Matt is 35 years old. He wants to have another child. Jessica is 34. She isn't sure if another child is a good idea. Try to use the vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and language for agreeing and disagreeing from this unit.**

Read about Matt, Jessica, and Katie.



MATT	JESSICA	KATIE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apartment: nice but very small • rent: expensive 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job: engineer for a large company • siblings: two brothers, and they're all very close • thinks it's important to have a sibling • wants another child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –day: teaches music in high school –some weekday and weekend evenings: sings at a jazz club • siblings: one brother, but they're not very close • doesn't think it's important to have a sibling • not sure if they should have another child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spends time with her grandmother or babysitter when Matt and Jessica are working • plays with a lot of friends in the neighborhood • likes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –read children's books in her room –play with her toys –watch children's videos –play games on the computer

* For Alternative Speaking Topics, see page 189.

Follow the steps.

STEP 1: The teacher will divide the class into two groups.

STEP 2: Group A: You are Matt. Make a list of reasons that you want to have another child.

1. *It's important for children to have siblings.* _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Group B: You are Jessica. Make a list of reasons that you don't want to have another child.

1. *Siblings aren't always close.* _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

STEP 3: Work with a partner from the other group. Role-play a conversation between Matt and Jessica. Talk about the future. Use the reasons on your lists. Try to make a decision about having another child.

STEP 4: Share your decisions with the class. How many pairs decided to have another child? How many decided not to have one? Explain your reasons.

Listening Task

Listen to your classmates. Did every role play end the same way? How many pairs made the same decision?

UNIT PROJECT

Learn about family size around the world.

STEP 1: Look online for information about average family size in your country now, 20 years ago, 30 years ago, 40 years ago, and 50 years ago. Then find the same information about a different country.

STEP 2: Draw a graph like the one on page 189 to show how family size has changed (or not changed) in the last 50 years in the two countries.

STEP 3: In class, sit in small groups and explain your information to your classmates. Discuss these questions:

- Did family size change in your country and the other country you learned about? How did it change?
- In your opinion, why did family size change (or stay the same) in your country and the other country you learned about? Try to think of some reasons, and discuss them with your group.
- Think about your parents' families and your family. Are they the same size as the average family in your country? Or is your family bigger or smaller than the average size?
- What do you think?
In the next 25 or 50 years, what is going to happen to family size in your country and the other country you learned about? Is it going to stay the same, get bigger, or get smaller? Why do you think so?

