Unit 1: The Generation Gap

Culture

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The return of the extended families in the UK and the USA

1 Read the following text about the coming back of the extended families and answer the questions.

Over the past few years, in both the USA and the UK, the number of multi-generational households with three or four generations living under the same roof has increased. This trend has been the result of several economic factors.

High unemployment rates, part-time work and low-paid jobs have forced young adults to move back with their parents. In addition, families now face higher costs of housing and heavier pressures of both childcare and elderly care.

Living under the same roof with three or four generations can be frustrating because of the lack of space, independence and privacy, and the daily conflicts brought about by differences in values and attitudes.

However, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages. When living with members of their extended family, young children can develop relationships with adults other than their parents, and old people can become more active when interacting with the younger generations.

Whether we accept it or not, the trend keeps growing as more and more people are choosing traditional extended families.

Questions

1. What family trend has increased in the USA and the UK?
2. What are the reasons for this family trend?
3. List some disadvantages of living in an extended family.
4. How do young children benefit from living in an extended family?
5. How can old people benefit from living in an extended family?