Functionalism

Society is made up of different parts that each tend to the maintenance and well-being of society as a whole.

Family performs important roles for society.

Nuclear is the best type for society as it is able to 'programme' them into achieving the 4 main functions:

Stable satisfaction of the sex drive
- Marriage stabilises the social system and prevents conflict

Reproduction of the next generation
- Money is passed through generations

Socialisation of the young
- Trains them into future roles

Meeting members economic needs
- Family is a unit of consumption

Murdock

Rose tinted view

Parsons

Needs to be geographically and socially mobile

New Right

All about moral values and doing what is 'right'

Disapprove of:

- Abortion: should take responsibility of children
- Illegitimate births: should be married (stable environment)
- Cohabitation: married for stability instead
- Divorce: creates welfare dependency
- Lone-parents: children need 2 role models
- Full-time working mums: give up work to care for children as it is their responsibility
Children as a social construct

Childhood is universal as everyone goes through it but as everyone has different experiences and there is no natural or biological value, it is a social construct.

The future of Childhood

Changes in the position of childhood

March of progress
- Protection from harm and exploitation
- Higher standards of living
- Child-centred society

Childhood is disappearing
- Children use pestle power to buy things
- Children have too many rights and too much power
- Media and peer groups influence more than parents do
- Blur between childhood and adulthood
- Paranoid parenting