

## 2016 Section B Q5

**(a) Analyse the social and economic changes that affect contemporary families.**

### Social Changes

- 1) Marital breakdown: since the introduction of the Divorce Act 1996, there is less stigma around divorces and separations and they are becoming more acceptable  
Effect - increase in one parent and blended families
- 2) Changing role of women: more women are advancing to 3<sup>rd</sup> level education than ever before which means more women working outside the home than ever before.  
Effect - families tend to be smaller as women are having less children.
- 3) Same Sex Marriage: The Marriage Act 2015 meant that people of the same gender could now marry. This has led to changes in family structures which are now more widely accepted in our society.  
Effect – families now may be legally headed by married couples of the same sex

### Economic Changes

- 1) High cost of living: Ireland is now one of the top 10 most expensive countries to live in with housing prices soaring across the country and especially in the capital.  
Effect - families are having fewer children due to the high cost of childcare.
- 2) State Benefits: payments help families deal with the financial pressure of raising children e.g. One-Parent Family Payment  
Effect - this allows lone parents to provide for their children's needs

**(b) Explain how the family can meet the physical and psychological needs of children so that they can contribute to and succeed in a rapidly changing society.**

Physical Needs

Family should provide food as it is an important basic need of children. It is important for the family to provide nutritious food to the child to promote physical wellbeing.

Family can meet the physical needs of the child by providing housing for their children to have a safe, warm and secure place to live in. The government helps families to do this in many ways including providing social housing to those who need it.

Clothing should be provided for modesty and protection. The back to school clothing and footwear allowance helps some families to provide for the children's physical needs by helping them cover the costs of school uniforms.

Psychological Needs

Family should provide an open, loving and supportive environment for their child which allows the child to feel safe and loved in their homes. This type of environment helps support the child's emotional development.

Parents should act as a role model for the child by showing them the norms and behaviours that are acceptable to society.

Family should create a positive learning environment to help the child's education. This can be done by giving the child praise and encouragement.

**(c) Discuss the challenges that may be experienced by the parents of a child with special needs.**

Isolation and exhaustion may be experienced by the parents if they are the primary carer of the child. This would mean that they do not get days off which would be very challenging to handle especially if they have their own job too.

Reduction of income is common in families who have a member with special needs. If a parent decides to give up work to stay at home and look after the child, there will be less money coming into the house. Financial obligations may become difficult and disposable income is reduced.

Feelings of stress and guilt can be felt by parents who may struggle to split their time between all family members. This may lead to conflict within the household.