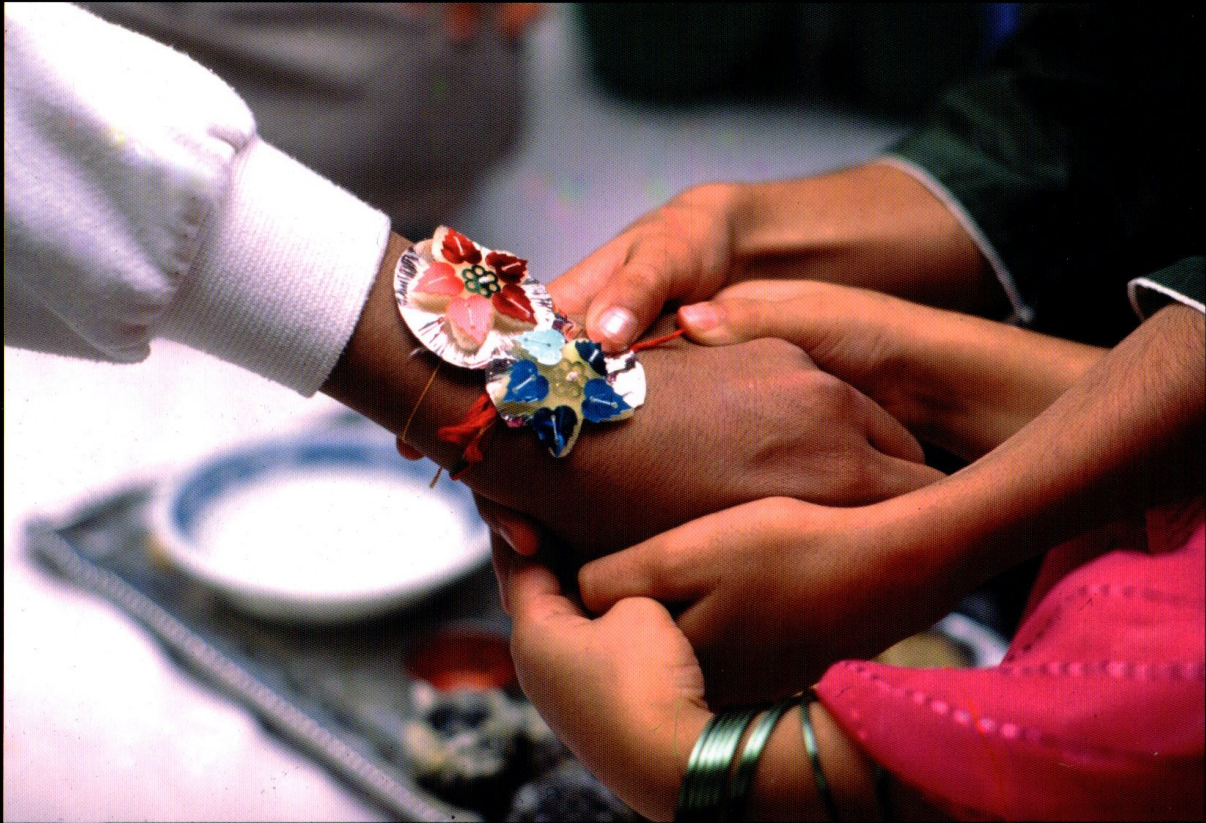


8. The Hindu Home and Family



- Hindus believe that home should be a special place. A nice home is where people are happy to see you and be with you.
- Hindus believe that the baby has come from another place. So, they welcome the baby back into the world, into a new family.
- Babies are welcomed into the home by special ceremony. The baby is given a new name. Why don't you find out some Hindu names?
- Sometimes the father will whisper the name of God into the newborn baby's ear. He puts some honey on the babies tongue.
- Hindus also believe that it is important to behave properly to guests – people who visit your home. It is important to give them three things: (1) a comfortable seat (2) some nice words (3) something to eat and drink
- Sometimes holy people visit the home. It is important to welcome them well. Sometimes, Hindu people will wash their feet. It is a sign of love and respect.
- Almost all Hindu homes have a shrine. It is where the family worships together or where they say prayers.

- Many Hindu families are quite large. The grandparents may also live at home. This is called the 'extended family'.
- The love between brothers and sisters is celebrated in the festival of Raksha Bandhan. Raksha Bandhan takes place in August.
- The sister ties a rakhi on the wrist of her brother's right arm. The rakhi is made of red thread, and silk and glittery tinsel. It is often in the shape of a star or a flower. Sisters make them or buy them from a shop.
- Rakhi means protection. Bandhan means to tie. The rakhi is meant to bring good luck, and to protect the boy from harm.
- The sister also gives her brother some sweets. The boy gives his sister a present in return and promises to be kind to her and look after her.
- Hindus believe that life is a journey. There are four stages of life (1) a student (2) a married person (3) a retired person, who no longer works, and (4) a person who leaves home to search for God.
- There are many special ceremonies in life. The wedding is one of the most important. The last one is the funeral ceremony.
- Hindus believe that the soul does not die but goes on. It starts a new journey. This life is just like one chapter in a very long and exciting book!