

## Next-Door Families: What Makes a Family?



Genre	Production Companies	Country	platform
Unscripted Series	KBS	Republic of Korea	YouTube

### 1. CORE CONCEPT: Redefining the Modern Family

In South Korea, where one of the world's lowest birth rates intersects with deeply rooted conservative norms, families that fall outside the traditional model continue to face legal and social barriers.

"Next-Door Families" follows the lives of those who exist beyond these boundaries, asking a fundamental question: what truly makes a family?

The program highlights diverse paths to parenthood, including sperm donation, adoption, and same-sex partnership, proving that a family's strength lies in love and commitment, not just biological ties.

Rather than offering a single answer, the program reflects a reality already unfolding. A reality in which family is defined not by structure, but by care, commitment, and choice.

## 2. SYNOPSIS

“Next-Door Families” explores the lives of those who define family beyond legal and institutional boundaries. Questioning Korea’s bloodline-centered norms, the program documents new forms of family already present in society.

This episode follows four individuals on their journeys to parenthood through interwoven narratives and studio talk. Comedian Kwak Beom represents a traditional perspective. Sayuri, a single mother by choice, raises questions about reproductive autonomy. Hong Seokcheon, who became a father through adoption, shows responsibility beyond immediate blood ties. Lesbian mother Kim Kyujin demonstrates the resolve to protect her family’s rights despite institutional gaps.

By showcasing families formed through sperm donation, adoption, and same-sex partnership, the episode emphasizes that family is defined not by societal structures but by love and commitment. Following its broadcast, it sparked renewed debate on family in Korea, advancing a message of inclusion and solidarity: whatever form we take, we are family.

## 3. CHARACTERS (Featured on Official Poster)

- ✓ **Kim Kyujin** - Korea’s first openly lesbian mother who formed her family through sperm donation, navigating institutional barriers with courage.
- ✓ **Sayuri** - A prominent Japanese media figure in Korea who sparked a national debate on reproductive autonomy by choosing motherhood via sperm donation.
- ✓ **Hong Seokcheon** - Korea’s first openly gay celebrity and a devoted single father who adopted his niece and nephew, proving parental love transcends traditional bloodlines.
- ✓ **Kwak Beom** - A popular comedian and father in a conventional heterosexual family, acting as an empathetic bridge between traditional norms and diverse realities.

## 4. KEY DIFFERENTIATORS & IMPACT

- Beyond Bloodlines: Strikes at the heart of Korea’s lineage-based social fabric.
- Hybrid Storytelling: Blends documentary-style realism with accessible, witty studio conversation.
- Real Impact: Sparked a nationwide debate on family law and inclusivity, bringing visibility to households often excluded from mainstream media.
- Global Resonance: Reflects the global shift in the definition of kinship.