

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

TURN YOUR PICNIC INTO A REUNION

February 2017

The Situation:

Our family doesn't have a traditional family reunion but we do get together to celebrate all the summer holidays (Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day), and we do have fun eating, playing games, and just being with each other.

My family thinks holding a "real" reunion will ruin what we have. I don't think it will, and I like your idea of *family reunion, more than just a picnic*—especially since we don't really talk about important things like our family history, tracing our roots, where we come from, etc. How can I introduce elements of a real reunion during our picnics so my family will see it can still be fun and not change what we have?

The Fix:



Doug Harris

My first suggestion is that you call it a picnic as you always have. Do not rename it a reunion, but add reunion elements as you see fit. If you want to trace your family's roots or share family stories, add them as optional activities during the holiday picnic. For example you could announce that at 2:00 Uncle John and Aunt Mary will be discussing what it was like to grow up in the segregated South; or that Cousin Ed is going to share what he's found out about his genetic make-up from a DNA test. I'd advise adding one activity at a time, rather than trying to do everything at one picnic. Having fun "eating, playing games, and just being with each other" are all positive and worthwhile as part of any family gathering. These parts "ain't broke," so don't try to fix them. Just add the new, one piece at a time.
