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Sneha, my best friend stays with her mother. She is twenty now and hardly remembers her father's face. Her parents had divorced each other when she was a two year old kid and since then she never met her father. I tried to ask her many times whether she misses her father or not but somehow she always diverted the topic. I could see the pain in her eyes whenever she used to see other girls with their father or me with my father, though she never expressed her feeling because she knows her mother will get hurt. On the other side, she calls herself the luckiest one to have such a mother who tried everything to make her daughter happy and to make her daughter never feel the absence of her father.

Like Sneha there are millions of kids who stay with either with father or mother. Single parent adoptions came into existence since the mid 19th century. State welfare officials found it very hard for single people to adopt. Agencies looked for families of married men and women. In 1965 the Los Angeles Bureau of Adoptions allowed the single African-Americans for the African-American orphan children for whom married families couldn't be found.

The concept of single parenting is not new in India. The death of any of the parent was the commonest reason followed by absenteeism. Such an absenteeism could be related to work or because the father had simply abandoned the family. Earlier, much of these single parent households were hidden behind the joint family facade and there were many people to bear the responsibility of the bringing up of the children. As the concept of joint family system started changing as well as the rate of divorce and unmarried parenting increased, the single parent phenomenon is now coming out into the open.

Bringing up a child is not that easy. We think that if we fulfill all the requirements then we can make our child happy, but we often don't realize that they need many things beyond that and one of those is care and attention from both the parents. The presence of both the parents in a child's life is equally required. Children get more attached to their families when they find the presence of both of their parents. It is an unfair to the children if their parents do not stay together.

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