

DRAFT Cultural Awareness Guide for Children from Eldorado April 22, 2008

In order to meet the needs of the children from Eldorado, caregivers should be aware of and prepared to deal with their unique cultural practices and beliefs. The purpose of this is guide to provide information on how these children have been cared for prior to placement outside the FLDS compound and since April 4/5, 2008, when they were placed in shelters. In addition, a glossary of terms that the children may use in their every day language is provided. Although this information is not all inclusive, it can be helpful when communicating with and caring for these children.

Culture:

- Have a deep instilled fear of the outside world.
- Have strong ties to family connections and to the environment in which they have lived
- The safety of the family is first priority.
- Universal/communal parenting: many adults serving in parenting roles.
- Puberty is considered the onset of adulthood.
- Males' dominant females.
- Strong belief that family issues are private matters.
- Their Prophet or President is seen as a persecuted martyr.
- Distrust of all outsiders especially of government and the criminal justice system.
- Adults are monitors and censures of the children's behavior and will discourage any disclosures. Older children will take on the monitoring role when adults of the community are not present.
- Children have received formal coaching on how to behave themselves.
- Electronics, including TV and radio, are prohibited. However, many women and older boys have had cell phones.
- Minimal outside source of media, including books with factitious characters.
- April 6th (Joseph Smith's birthday) is their only significant holiday.
- Since 4/4/2008- Children, while in care, especially young boys, have made derogatory remarks to staff of color.

Behaviors:

- The children appear to cooperate but may not. They will demonstrate politeness but may disclose little and/or contradictory information. Children in care were initially extremely compliant, but are beginning to "act out" after separation from parents
- Children are socialized to believe that sexual activity with adults is positive.

Living Conditions at FLDS Compound:

Food:

- Non-pasteurized milk (since 4/4/08 – children have been drinking pasteurized milk)
- Whole grain breads

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- No pork
- Beef, Chicken and fish OK
- Brown Rice
- Yogurt, cheese, molasses, and almonds used in baby formula
- No processed foods and snacks.
- Occasional fasting for 1-3 days

Clothing:

- For Girls-
 - Long Sleeves
 - Long dresses
 - Pastel colors
 - Shoes with stockings, socks or leggings that cover the ankle.
 - Black Nikes and Crocs (all colors except red)
 - “Modest” undergarments. They are considered sacred.
 - Hair spray and “Scrunchies” needed to secure styling of hair
 - The color “RED” is not acceptable for clothing
 - Children, while in care, have made negative comments concerning women wearing jewelry.
- For Boys-
 - Long sleeved shirts - usually blue
 - Black pants
 - Black shoes
 - Types of Undergarments unknown
 - The color “RED” is not acceptable for clothing
 - Boys, while in care, have been upset that men are not clean shaven, and are not wearing long sleeve shirts.

Educational Background:

- Attended school while on the compound.
- Some older children may have attended public school out of state.
- Some children may not have education beyond the 8th grade.

Health Care:

- They believe in practicing good nutrition and preventive care, with the Word of Wisdom (see glossary).
- Have a strong belief in home remedies and herbal medicine.
- Parents, although ultimately responsible to God for their children’s health, usually turn to traditional medical care in a crisis.
- Children have had no immunizations.
- Home births are traditional and very common for economic, social and privacy reasons.

Recreation:

- They are accustomed to playing with simple items such as balls or jump ropes, or to doing work projects with the family unit.
- Children enjoy coloring, drawing, painting, writing and other crafts,
- No red toys.
- Since 4/4/08 children are playing with cars, battery operated toys, riding tricycles, and enjoying other more mainstream toys

Home Environment:

- The children are accustomed to “congregate care” with many female figures from the community.
- Most activities occur in groups. There are very few individual activities.
- The use of the term “Father” refers to the head of household and the term “Dad: or “Daddy” is considered disrespectful and inappropriate.
- Family living arrangements vary considerably and frequently change in these plural families due to belief systems, and the number or ages of children and wives within a family.
- Children do not know the correct names for body parts and are not familiar with the terms “intercourse”, “sexual intercourse,” or “sexual relations”.

Religious Beliefs:

Clarifier: At this time, it is difficult to determine many of the religious beliefs of this particular community due to their isolation from mainstream society.

- Members of the Fundamentalist Latter-day Saint sect believe they are following the true Mormon faith. They claim their authority to practice plural marriage comes through early LDS Church leaders. The FLDS Church teaches that a man must be married to three or more wives for eternal exaltation.
- The priesthood, held only by men, is the highest authority in the church, home and community.
- Women and children are taught to respect and be obedient to their spiritual and secular leaders.
- The Prophet can speak with and/or receive direction from God for all members of a group. The FLDS members call the leader of their church “the Prophet.”
- Word of Wisdom is a general health code found in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 89. It discourages consumption of alcohol, hot or strong drinks and tobacco. Groups interpret this differently, but many believe it encourages herbal medicine and discourages the use of conventional medicine.
- God communicates to humans by offering guidance, answering to prayers or providing insight concerning doctrinal issues. Generally, fundamentalists believe individuals can receive revelations for themselves; heads of families for their families; and heads of organizations or churches for the congregations over which they preside. They believe personal revelation can come in the form of a strong impression, dream, voice, vision, or “burning of the bosom.”

- “Righteous children,” refer to those who stay in a fundamentalist group and live in plural marriage. Parents believe that bearing children and raising them to be honorable, industrious and religious is the purpose of plural marriage. If children do not conform to high standards set by the parents, they often feel they are failures, and parents may take extreme disciplinary measures to force obedience.
- They prefer to pray in private and may need space to pray or conduct religious meetings.
- Intercourse is referred to as “heavenly relations”, or “marriage relations”.

Glossary

Aunt: A biological aunt, “sister wife,” “another mother” or just a title of respect and endearment for an elderly woman in the family or community.

Bishop: A bishop, appointed by the church president or council, is the ecclesiastical authority over a group of members and represents the church president in his leadership position.

Celestial Kingdom: Another name for the highest of the three levels of heaven. The Celestial Kingdom is reserved for the most righteous and some groups believe polygamy is an essential practice to dwell in this kingdom.

Celestial Marriage: The preferred term for plural marriage, polygamy or polygyny by its adherents. Many polygamists consider celestial marriage an essential practice to enter the highest level of the Celestial Kingdom.

Committed Relationship: Polygamous relationships (not legal marriages) that a man has with the mothers of his children.

Constitutional Law: Some fundamentalists believe that the Founding Fathers' intent in writing the Constitution and Bill of Rights was divinely inspired with the goal of establishing a land where complete religious freedom could be enjoyed. They also believe the United States will fall by the hand of God because of sin. Some believe the current federal and state governments and many of their laws are corrupt and that every action that takes freedom away from the individual and adds power to the government is unconstitutional and must be weighed against the "original intent" of the Constitution. Even though the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that polygamy isn't protected by the Constitution, they claim plural marriage is protected under the Freedom of Religion clause.

Corrected or Handled: When an FLDS member is disciplined by being forced to leave his home or having his wives and children “reassigned” to another man.

Curse of Cain: Some fundamentalists believe African Americans are an inferior race.

They also believe that black people are descendants of Cain and have been cursed by God and therefore ineligible to hold the priesthood.

Doctrine and Covenants: The title of religious scripture used by both the LDS Church and fundamentalist groups. This book contains revelations concerning polygamy.

Double Cousin: One may call a person a “double cousin” if he or she is related to them through both their mother’s and father's families.

Elect of Israel: Righteous people who are chosen by God to be saved in the last days of the world. Some polygamous groups believe they are God’s “Elect.”

Exaltation: Most fundamentalists believe that those who have kept all of God’s commandments (including plural marriage) will become exalted and attain the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom. Those who are exalted are believed to be granted eternal life, eternal increase, greater glory and power, and ultimately become gods or goddesses. Many polygamist men believe they cannot reach this level of the Celestial Kingdom unless they have at least three wives. Women believe they cannot be exalted unless they are married.

Father: Many fundamentalist families prefer the title “Father” and consider “Dad” or “Daddy” disrespectful and inappropriate.

Gentile: Anyone who does not have the priesthood or is not a member of the various fundamentalist groups. Some also refer to them as "outsiders."

Half sibling, Half brother or Half sister: Siblings with the same father but not the same biological mother.

Head: A man who holds a position of respect, authority, or leadership, such as "head of the family," "head of the Priesthood" or "head of the group."

House-Mother: A sister-wife who stays home to provide the daily care for children of other wives who may work outside the home.

"Keep Sweet": An admonition to be compliant and pleasant despite the circumstances.

Kids: Most fundamentalists consider this term offensive and prefer the word "children" instead.

Lost Boys: Young, unmarried men who are exiled from fundamentalist communities. They usually have little education and few skills to help them live on their own. Some are more susceptible to drug abuse and other problems because they have been told they are going to hell. Some have been told they were asked to leave for being a bad influence but most believe it is because they are competition to older men who are looking for wives.

Mother: In some families, children are taught to address their biological mother as "Mother" as a sign of respect rather than the more familiar "Mom," "Mama" or "Mommy." Some children also address their "other mothers" using the title *Mother* in front of their given name, such as Mother Alice, as an alternative to the title *Aunt*.

New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage: Another term for plural marriage.

Other Mother: Children in polygamous families often use this term to refer to their biological mother's "sister-wives." It should be noted that "other mothers" might also be biologically related – such as an aunt, cousin, etc.

Poofers: A slang term for girls who suddenly disappear from their community in order to take part in an arranged marriage. The girls are either kept hidden or moved to another state or country. This term is most often used by the FLDS Church.

President: Another title used for the priesthood leader or leaders in some groups.

Sister-wives: Women married to the same man. Other terms that identify this position are "other girls in the family," "other mothers" or "other ladies."

True Order of Prayer: The way some fundamentalists pray to God, which is to use certain symbols and words that they believe allows them to pierce the veil to speak with God and/or deceased individuals.

Uncle: "Uncle" may refer to a biological uncle, an FLDS prophet or a title of respect or endearment to an elder in the family or community. Some children in the Kingston community call their own father "Uncle" as a term of endearment or reportedly as a way of protecting the father's identity.

Word of Wisdom: A general health code found in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 89. It discourages consumption of alcohol, hot or strong drinks and tobacco. Groups interpret this differently, but many believe it encourages herbal medicine and discourages the use of conventional medicine. Some fundamentalists consider the Word of Wisdom to be a "lesser law" given to the weak and so obedience to it is unnecessary for their salvation or exaltation.