

Deepen and Sweeten Your Relationship

As a parent, what is your greatest hope?
Think about it for a moment...

If you imagined the best possible outcome for you and your child, what would you foresee? If you could raise your child to lead a life of joy and meaning and cherish you for this gift, would you feel fulfilled?

In *Keepers of the Children*, Laura Ramirez uses little known Native American wisdom to show parents how to raise children to know their nature, develop their strengths and create lives of meaning and contribution. By giving your child the tools to create genuine happiness, you give the greatest gift of all.

Keepers of the Children is unlike any parenting book you have ever read before. Here's what readers have to say:

"Laura Ramirez is a natural teacher who proclaims that being a parent is a sacred gift and the noblest of enterprises. Contrary to conventional wisdom, she demonstrates that parenting is the decisive influence on children—not genetics or peers or media. *Keepers of the Children* is destined to contribute to our national dialogue on what it really takes to raise integrated, self-efficacious and joyful children."

—Joe Santoro, Ph.D., Co-Chairman of SLS Health, psychologist and author of **The Angry Heart: Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder** and **Kill the Craving: Overcoming the Desire to Use Drugs and Alcohol**

"*Keepers of the Children* is an example of a non-Indian application of Native American philosophy to raise children in a multi-cultural society. We all benefit through shared vision and worldview for balance and wellness."

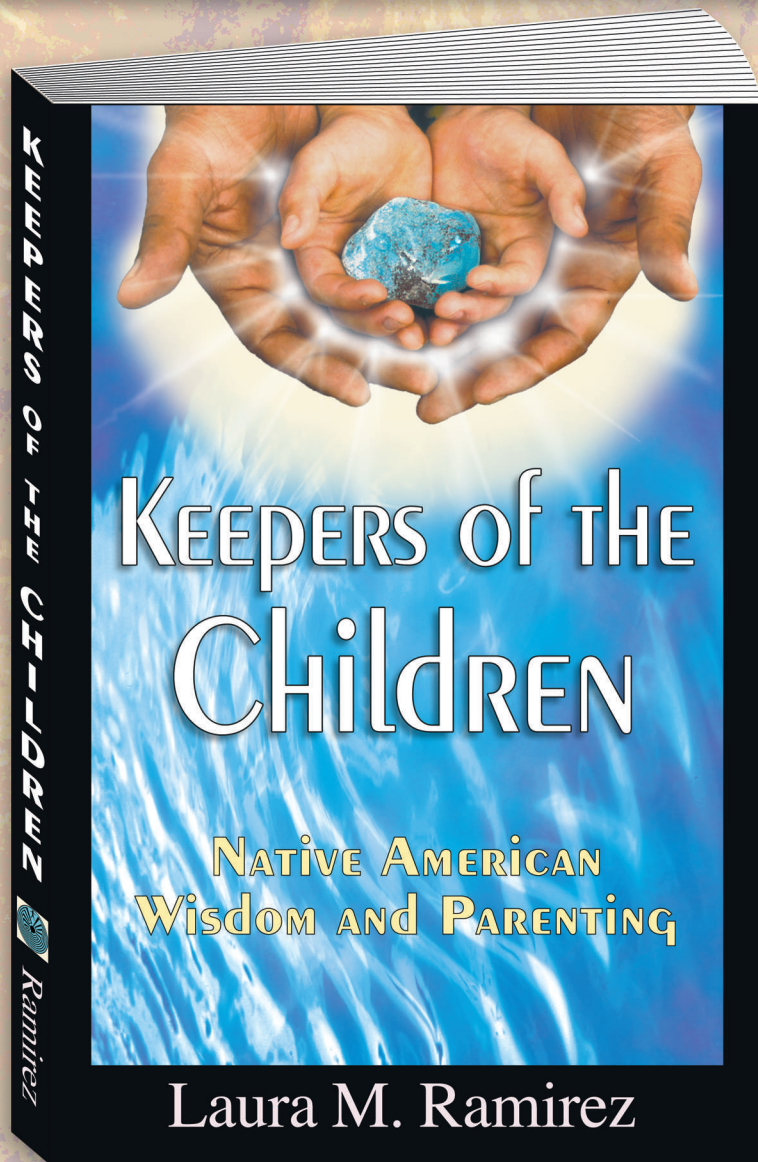
—Jim Warne, Ogalala Lakota, Director of the Center for American Indian Rehabilitation, American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee, Interwork Institute, San Diego State University

"I found this book delightful to explore. There are endless passages which echo the principles of good discipline. Laura Ramirez' poetic articulation of human development and selfless nurturing, however, deliver instruction in an eloquent and fascinating way."

—Laura Marineau, Community Education Coordinator for The Children's Cabinet

"In *Keepers of the Children*, Ramirez combines her own sound convictions about parenting and child development with ancient wisdom of Native Americans. The result is a powerful little guide, that, I am sure, will help many parents and educators. I recommend it."

—Johann Christoff Arnold, author of **Endangered: Your Child in a Hostile World**



ISBN 0-9748661-0-5

208 pages

\$18.95 US
\$24.95 CAN



Walk in Peace Productions
www.walk-in-peace.com/keepers.html



Laura Ramirez is the mother of two boys and the wife of a Native American man. In raising her children to embrace the fullness of their heritage, she has created a way of parenting that combines the most resourceful aspects of two worlds. Ms. Ramirez has a degree in psychology, has written numerous articles on raising children and is the publisher of *Family Matters Parenting Magazine*.

To order, go to www.kokopellistreasures.com/keepers.html or send a check (plus name, address and phone number) for \$18.95 plus \$4.95 shipping to:

Walk in Peace • POB 12396 • Reno, NV 89510-2396

Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting

by Laura M. Ramirez

A Finalist in USA Book News Best Books of 2004!

What reviewers are saying:

"Keepers Of The Children: Native American Wisdom And Parenting by Laura M. Ramirez (whose husband is a Pascua Yaqui Native American recently inducted into the American Indian Hall of Fame for his successful career in baseball) is the first "how to" parenting book that draws upon Native American concepts and teaching stories to show how to raise children to know themselves and their strengths, as well as create for themselves productive and meaningful lives. *Keepers of the Children* is informed and informative reading that can confidently be recommended to the attention of any parent, regardless of ethnicity or racial background, wanting to instill enduring family values into the character and lives of their children in our multicultural world."

—*Midwest Book Review*

"This is much more than a 'training manual' for the aspiring parent. It's a deeply spiritual book that explores important issues of human nature and development that transcend both Native American and 'western' cultures. It will appeal to parents of all races and creeds who desire to expand their abilities beyond the mere mechanics of 'child management' to the attainment of true parenting success.

Laura Ramirez writes knowledgeably and with passion about the necessity of having a clear vision for our children and of understanding the sacred nature of our part in their lives; of the importance of honouring our children as unique individuals and of constantly promoting their wellbeing and development even as we work on ourselves to become the best role models we can be.

This book can be referred to again and again for good ideas, for comfort and support, for hope and inspiration. Virtually every page is a reminder of something we can do as parents to make the world a better place for children. A work of meaning with its heart very much in the right place, *Keepers of the Children* is a welcome addition to my personal library of parenting books."

—*Bob Collier, Parental Intelligence*

"I'm impressed and delighted by the insights in this book. The author gives practical information on how we can raise our children with vision, honor their uniqueness and nature and create a parent-child bond that will be the greatest gift a child can have. The chapter on discipline is exceptionally valuable. Another thing this book provides is the understanding that parenting is indeed a path of self-growth. Laura Ramirez truly gets the point across that parenting is as much about guiding the unfolding of a child's sense of self as it is our own.

In a world where so many people have a lost or incomplete sense of self and continually look for approval or satisfaction outside of themselves, this book can help turn the tide. There is a strong movement, taking place right now, to transform parenting into a more nurturing, humane way of guiding and valuing children. *Keepers of the Children* is a vitally important work and needs to be read by all parents.

I can honestly say that it's one of the best parenting books I've ever read (and I've read a lot of them!)"

—*Jane Sheppard, Healthy Child Online*

"Laura Ramirez explores how the Native American tradition raised children, and the values it imparted to them. She discusses many parenting issues we have lost, forgotten, or delegated to others to handle. The book teaches you how to create a vision for both yourself as parent and guardian, as well as for your child. You are taught the Native American way of supporting the child's quest for identity. Indeed, it is a lack of identity and vision that are behind most of the teen problems we are seeing throughout the Western world. Insight into these concepts alone is invaluable."

—*Dr. Asoka Selverajah, Self Growth*

"In an exquisite blend of Native American ideals, child development and human psychology, *Keepers of the Children* presents a child-rearing guide based on balance and mutual respect."

—*Lynda E. Lukow, Myshelf*

"Keepers of the Children is written with great love, wisdom, and sensitivity and is a book I would recommend to any parent of any child. The principles are psychologically sound, and the writing is almost poetic in its eloquence. Highly recommended!"

—*Sandra McLeod Humphrey, Retired Clinical Psychologist, Author, and Character Education Consultant*

What readers have to say:

"As a father of three boys (ages 11, 9 & 7), I have often struggled with the best approach for raising my sons. This book not only contains insights in my quest to raise productive boys in our society, but contains insights for me as an adult. Laura gently reminds us that raising children is a gift, one that we should not take lightly."

—*D Ingram, NV*

"This book will not only benefit children, but parents and grandparents as well. I've gotten direction from the book's wisdom that I will be able to draw from in relating to my grandchildren, especially my three-year old grandson."

—*Bruce Ann Yellowoga, Peoria, AZ*

"This instructive 208 page paperback is about Native American wisdom - and its application to parenting. Regardless of your personal beliefs or interest in Native American culture, the book is strewn with nuggets of valuable information ANY parent can use to raise balanced, sensible, loving and independent kids."

—*Dr. Mani Sivasubramanian, Pediatric Heart Surgeon, Chennai, India*



Unlike any Parenting Book you have Read!



Description of *Keepers of the Children*

Keepers of the Children offers a unique perspective on parenting by using little known Native American concepts to show parents how to raise children to reach their true potential. By raising children to unfold the gifts within their hearts, parents more deeply touch their own. In this way, parenting is a path of *mutual becoming*—as the child grows, the parent is challenged to grow as well. This is a delightful perk of child stewardship.

The book is for any parent or grandparent (of any creed or color) who is open to ideas that are resourceful and effective in raising healthy, self-directed kids—kids who know their hearts and minds. Such children will grow into adults who use their strengths to create fulfilling lives and make unique contributions to the world.

In **Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting**, you will learn:

- How to encourage children's uniqueness and set them upon the path of purpose from the start.
- How to teach children to act from integrity and strength.
- The true meaning of discipline: How to teach children to make life-affirming choices on their own.
- How to use nature to teach children the basics of psychology so they will avoid the traps of peer pressure and those who intend to do them harm.
- All about child development and your development as a parent.
- How parenting is a path of personal growth for child *and* parent.
- How to create a lifelong, mutually fulfilling relationship with your child.

Awards and Recognition for NCPA Members

Laura Ramirez, author of “*Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting*,” received the Nautilus Book Award which honors titles promoting conscious living and positive social change.

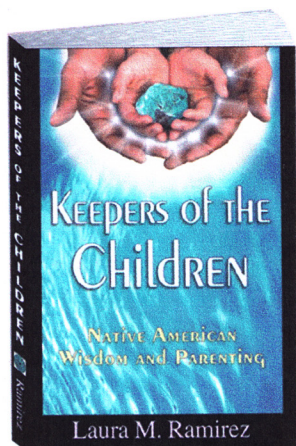
Ms. Ramirez’s book, which won the parenting category, teaches parents how to raise children to develop their strengths and lead lives of meaning and fulfillment. Says Ramirez “Each child is unique. Parenting is about bringing out what is already there. As parents learn to see inside their children’s hearts, they’ll see more deeply into their own.”

The awards ceremony took place in the ballroom of the historic Starrett Lehigh Building in New York City which overlooks the Hudson Bay and is owned by Martha Stewart Omnivision. Luminaries from the publishing world, including authors, editors, publishers and media were present. The awards were co-sponsored by *Body and Soul* Magazine (a Martha Stewart publication). Winners will be featured in the September issue.



According to Ramirez, “There were 195,000 new books published in 2004, so the competition for awards was fierce. I am honored to be in the company of authors like Deepak Chopra (who won the overall award) and thrilled that my self-published book competed effectively with big name publishers like Dutton and Penguin Books. This shows that judges are more impressed by content than celebrity or prestige.”

“*Keepers of the Children*” (which was also a finalist in *Foreword* magazine’s Book of the Year contest) is available on the author’s web site: www.walk-in-peace.com.



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How Native American Wisdom Helps Parents Raise Children to Lead Fulfilling Lives.

Like adults, children want and *need* to make a difference in the world. They yearn to discover their uniqueness and share their strengths with others. *Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting* by Laura M. Ramirez (ISBN 0-9748661-0-5, 208 pages, \$18.95) shows parents how to raise children to know their nature, develop their strengths and create lives of meaning and contribution.

Using Native American myths and little known cultural secrets, *Keepers of the Children* shows how an understanding of the natural world gives children a basic grasp of human nature. A child who knows his nature makes life-affirming choices because he follows the compass of the heart. Since he knows himself, he sees into the character of others, avoids the traps of peer pressure and those who intend to do him harm.

Keepers of the Children is a reflection of the author's marriage. Laura Ramirez is a white woman who is married to a Pascua Yaqui Native American man (who was recently inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame for his career in baseball). In raising her children to embrace the fullness of their heritage, she has created a way of parenting that is grounded in the physical world, yet spiritually based. Laura Ramirez has a degree in psychology, has written numerous articles on parenting and child development and is the editor of *Family Matters Online Parenting Magazine*.

Keepers of the Children is available nationwide from bookstores and online booksellers. A companion workbook is also available exclusively from the authors web site at: www.walk-in-peace.com.

Author Laura Ramirez, her husband Larry (of the Pascua Yaqui tribe) and their boys, Dakotah & Colt.



**KEEPERS OF THE CHILDREN:
Native American Wisdom and
Parenting**

By LAURA M. RAMIREZ

Walk in Peace Productions, 2004,
208 pp., \$18.95, ISBN: 0974866105.

Reviewed by Marilee Niehoff

Keeper of the Children emphasizes the mutuality the author identifies in parent-child relationships. While other parenting books may be overly child-centered, or focused on the parents' actions, this book builds a conceptualization of childrearing that asks the parents to engage in a process of self-analyzing where they are in their own spiritual journey. Critical to this process is the entering into awareness of how childrearing can be a vital aspect of personal growth and maturation for both parents and children.

She begins with a story, and then urges her reader to reflect on what kind of story they have been creating for their child. In doing this, she seeks to draw the parent into a mode that operates from vision, rather than from fear. Throughout the book, she guides parents toward an appreciation and acknowledgement for their child's uniqueness. Giving their child a secondary, spiritual name can be an important symbol of this.

Establishing healthy rhythms within family life also plays an es-

sential part in creating an environment for this relationship to flourish. Ramirez looks at the way discipline, the establishment of family codes, ritual dialogue building, and conscious commitment all form an important process whereby "your child becomes the muse to the sage in you and you become the leaping-off point for your child."

As a mother of five children, four girls and a boy, I think this book is excellent for the fact that it sees parenting as an organic process, a relationship that must be constantly assessed and tended to as a living thing. This is not a book with stock answers about every child; rather, it formulates the beginning of a process that will have unique meanings and outcomes for each individual.

Developmental psychology has

much to learn from Native American philosophy, as this book seamlessly illustrates. The richness of the culture lends itself to key insights which add depth and meaning to the dialogue on parenting.

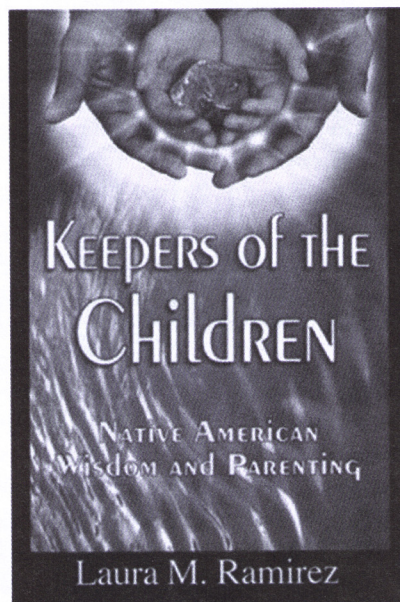
I have worked in developmental psychology my entire life, and early on became sensitized to American indigenous culture as

a deeply informing social, cultural, and spiritual resource. This book is an excellent starting place for people of all races, creeds, and backgrounds to formulate questions that look on their own unique identity and tradition as an important resource for their own growth and parenting process.

As she herself urges, "the time is ripe. The children await you."

MARILEE NIEHOFF, Ph.D., has spent

her career as an Organizational Psychologist helping people relieve stress, and she is a licensed water therapist, who specializes in Watsu, a form of Shiatsu exercise.



Parental Intelligence

September 2004

Issue 101

BOOK REVIEW by Bob Collier

**Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting
by Laura M. Ramirez**

From the Preface to Keepers of the Children:

"As a white woman married to a Native American man, my family is a mix of cultures. The parenting ideas presented in this book are a reflection of this cultural blend. In these pages, I have woven together an understanding of child development with little known Native American wisdom. The result is a unique blend of ideas that shows parents how to raise children to know their nature, hone their strengths and create lives of meaning, purpose and contribution. By helping children create fulfilling lives, parents deepen their sense of satisfaction with their own."

In her book Keepers of the Children, Laura Ramirez has combined her expertise in child development with her understanding of Native American perceptions and the customs and rituals that have grown from them to produce an analysis of the art and science of successful parenting that's both comprehensive and highly original.

This is much more than a 'training manual' for the aspiring parent. It's a deeply spiritual book that explores important issues of human nature and development that transcend both Native American and 'western' cultures. It will appeal to parents of all races and creeds who desire to expand their abilities beyond the mere mechanics of 'child management' to the attainment of true parenting success.

Laura Ramirez writes knowledgeably and with passion about the necessity of having a clear vision for our children and of understanding the sacred nature of our part in their lives; of the importance of honouring our children as unique individuals and of constantly

promoting their wellbeing and development even as we work on ourselves to become the best role models for them that we can be.

This book, once read, can be referred to again and again for good ideas, for comfort and support, for hope and inspiration. Virtually every page is a reminder of something we can do as parents to make the world a better place for our children and for ourselves and others.

A work of meaning with its heart very much in the right place, Keepers of the Children is a very welcome addition to my personal library of parenting books and I'm sure it would be to yours, too.

Buy yourself a copy and join Laura in her mission: to raise a generation of children who use their strengths to create a sense of belonging, meaning and contribution. "Such children will grow up to be adults who are lights unto our world."

Read more about Keepers of the Children here:

<http://www.walk-in-peace.com/keepers.html>

The art of parenting

The boys bound into the house after school and

by
Deidre Pike

deidrep@
newsreview.com

greet their mom. To their delight, a gift has arrived—Colt's new baseball bat. Dakotah, 11, and Colt, 9, give the bat a whirl. In the living room. Amongst objects of art. Made of glass.

The boys' mom does not appear tense. She does not yell, "Knock it off, boys, not in the house!"

She watches them swing for a few seconds. Then they're off to get ready for Little League practice.

Each member of the Ramirez family owns a turquoise pendant. Each retains its own character.

"The Creator gave each of us a special gift," she says. "It's the parents' job to bring that out, not to make the child conform to what we want or to live out our dreams vicariously through our children."

Babies are born with a natural sense of themselves, Ramirez says, that can be driven out through systems of rewards, punishments and failed communications.

"They come into the world, cry when they're hungry and giggle when they're happy," she explains. "It's a parent's job to make sure this authenticity is preserved, to draw out what's there. The child becomes more and more himself instead of more alienated."

Some confuse discipline with punishment, Ramirez says. Using behavior modification

techniques can backfire.

"Punishment is what we use to raise little robots—to train children to obey, like dogs," she says. "To discipline ... is to invite your children to become your disciples. You need to be a leader worthy of following."

Conversation is one key. Talk with your kids, she says. Listen to what they say.

Her book, which won a Northern California Publishers & Authors award, includes advice on giving your child a "spirit name" alongside Erik Erikson's eight stages of the life cycle and Bill Harris' four stages of learning. Ramirez has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Nevada, Reno. Her husband is a psychotherapist and a member of the Pascua Yaqui tribe.

While her parenting task seems smooth now, Ramirez acknowledges she hasn't encountered the individuation struggles of the teen years. She'll cross that bridge soon—and plans to write another book or two.

"Teens are kind of like the Nevada weather," she says. "You wake up and don't know what you're going to find." □



PHOTO/DAVID ROBERT

Laura Ramirez' turquoise pendant is a metaphor for her child-rearing philosophy: A parent's job isn't to try to shape the gem but to add the polish. Her sons, Dakotah, 11 (left) and Colt, 9, have their own pieces of turquoise, too.

"A picture-perfect home belongs as a snapshot in a magazine," says Laura Ramirez, the boys' mom and author of *Keepers of the Children*, a parenting manual that fuses child development theories with Native American ideas about nurturing. "Children can't feel safe if they're always afraid that if they breathe wrong, someone's going to yell. ... We have some breakable stuff in here. Our family code is that people are more important than things."

It's true—a visit from a reporter who's here to talk about parenting would put any mom on the best of behavior. But I get laid-back vibes from Ramirez—a feeling that this isn't an act. The denim-clad strawberry blonde seems comfortable with her tousle-haired offspring. And they're polite, active boys—not shy, not loud.

Parenting, Ramirez theorizes, centers around helping your children become who they are—and, in the process, discovering a thing or two about yourself. Her favorite metaphor: Your child, at birth, is an unpolished piece of turquoise. Your job is not to shape, chip or break this gem. The art of parenting is all about polish.

Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting (\$18.95) by Laura M. Ramirez, self-published by Walk In Peace Productions, is sold at Costco, Sundance Books, Michael & Sons Jewelers and Washoe Resource Center in Reno. More at www.walk-in-peace.com/keepers.html.

American Indian culture shared in 'Keepers'

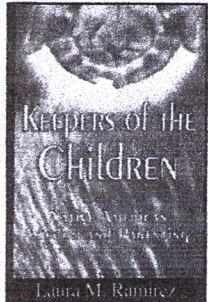
By Susan Skorupa

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Raising children to know who they are so they can find meaning in their life is Laura Ramirez's focus in a new book

on parenting.

In "Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting" (Walk in Peace Publishing, \$18.95



Walk in Peace Publishing

paperback), Ramirez, a white woman whose husband is a member of the Pascua Yaqui tribe, explains how American Indian stories and culture can help children understand both human nature and nature in ways that encourage life-affirming choices.

"I think with using different resources from these cultures, we can raise children to know who they are so they don't have a mid-life crisis," said Ramirez, a Reno area mother and writer.

"More important, they develop a source of who they are by contributing their strengths to others. It's based on being able to see who people are and know a person by what they do. It's a very grounded way of raising children."

Ramirez, whose husband, Larry, is a psychotherapist, decided to try to raise her two children, Dakotah, 11 and Coltan, 8, to be part of both her husband's American Indian culture and her own white culture.

"In biracial or multiracial families, a child reaches a certain point in development and may be forced to choose what (cultural) identity is he or she going to be," Ramirez said. "I decided to try to find a way to raise my children so they could feel a part of both cultures."

"There are more and more multi-racial families," she said. "Children grow up, and unless parents are keenly aware of culture, these children grow up without a sense of identity."

Ramirez stressed that the book isn't just for multicultural families.

"But we have to open to other world views," she said.

The Ramirezes were together a number of years before they had children and were aware of the divides between their worlds.

"A lot of (of people) accuse me of writing outside the culture," she said of her exploration of American Indian ideas. "But I'm married to the culture and am raising kids inside the construct of the culture."

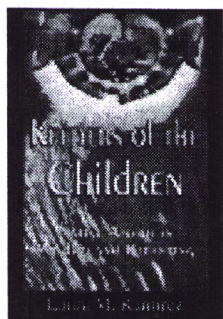
"I grew up in a white Protestant home," Ramirez said. "What I discovered in learning about my husband's culture is in the Native American world, the mother is the keeper of the culture. She

passes on ways and traditions." In studying, Ramirez found some ideas that encompassed parenting.

"So many parents look at their child and see their spouse or themselves," she said. "They miss the miracle unfolding. It's a unique being that has never existed before."

In "Keepers of the Children" Ramirez explains how understanding the natural world helps children grasp human nature and how being a parent who is active in his or her child's life helps the child experience life and develop talents and skills. She uses American Indian stories and legends to illustrate how parents can learn to know and trust their children.

"I talk a lot in the book about raising your child to be 'nice'. People do not realize that being nice is a skill of manipulation," she said. "It's what people do to get what they want. It's the difference between giving from the heart."



Keepers of the Children
Native American Wisdom and Parenting
By Laura M. Ramirez

In an exquisite blend of Native American ideals, child development and human psychology, *Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting* presents a child-rearing guide based on balance and mutual respect.

Among other suggestions, author Laura M. Ramirez encourages parents to look toward the future and picture your child as a joyful, fulfilled adult.

What gifts does your child possess? Through observation and exploration parents can help their child discover his unique talents and strengths. Once realized, parents can encourage their child to develop his talents so he may find happiness and become an asset to his community.

What ethics do you hope your child embraces? Involve your child in the creation of a code that lists your family's values. Encourage each other to demonstrate these principles daily and discuss others who behave differently.

The author also reminds parents that discipline should empower a child to make better decisions rather than inhibit the child's spirit. She does not advocate allowing a child free rein; she clarifies the difference between love of power and the power of love. She also discourages using a reward system to garner compliance because external incentives extinguish internal motivation.

Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting is a compassionate, common sense guide to one of the hardest yet noblest vocations known. Mrs. Ramirez supports her opinions with both Erik Erikson's model of child development (Life Cycles) and native stories like "Spirit Boy and the Gift of Turquoise".

Though the author's guidelines include many excellent suggestions, my favorite has to be adopting a spiritual name. My children and I considered the specific traits of different species, and together we decided which animal and adjective best fit their unique gifts. I will forever value the insight I gained. I believe all readers will enjoy Ms. Ramirez's unique gifts as much as I have. This is one guide wise parents won't pass by.

Publisher: Walk
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Productions

Release Date:
August 2004

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0974866105

Awards:

**Format
Reviewed:**
Paperback

**Buy it at
Amazon**

**Read an
Excerpt**

Genre: Non-
fiction / How-to

Reviewed: 2004

Reviewer:
Lynda E. Lukow

**Reviewer
Notes:**

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MyShelf.com

Book-signing at Costco Saturday

BY PETER THOMPSON

Appeal Staff Writer

Author Laura Ramirez is comparing raising children to living among wild animals. But it's not one's own offspring she's teaching parents to be wary of.



RAMIREZ

"In the wild you learn to see the difference between what an animal does, and how it presents itself. I think it's important to teach children to be able to discern the same difference in people, whether they're peers or adults."

While someone might seem cool on the outside, Ramirez says, teaching children to look deeper — at what they're really

about — is an invaluable preservation tool.

One that helps reach the goals of bringing out the natural strengths and abilities in children.

In her book "Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting," the Reno-based Ramirez combines little-known American Indian wisdom gleaned from her marriage to a Pascua Yaqui man, with her degree in psychology and her experiences raising her two boys to create a spiritually based, well-grounded tome on parenting.

"As a white woman married to a Native American man, I wanted my children to grow up and embrace both sides of their cultural heritage," she said. "In Native tradition, the woman is seen as the keeper of the culture." Taking the most resourceful ideas

IF YOU GO

What: Signing of "Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting"

When: noon-2 p.m.

Saturday

Where: Costco Wholesale, 700 Old Clear Creek Road

from both worlds, "Keepers of the Children" was born.

But one needn't be a parent to get something out of it, said Ramirez.

"A lot of people without kids are reading it," she said. "It's a resource that helps people reflect on their upbringing, examine their childhood."

"I see parenting as a path of becoming for both child and parent. Each interaction is a chance for you to grow as well as your child."

The book maps out human development from birth to death, in part to remind parents to develop reasonable expectations for child behavior.

"You can't expect a 2-year-old to clean a room like an adult," she said. "Yet some people do."

But the map is also for the parent, to understand where they are in their own personal development.

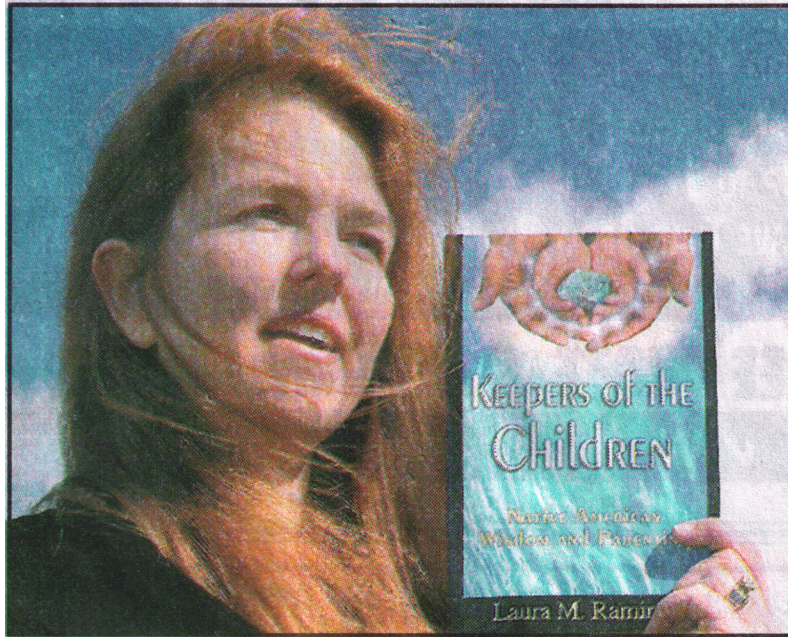
"Raising kids is a parent-child mutuality," she says. "Each is constantly teaching the other."

"Keepers of the Children" is the first part of a planned trilogy of parenting books, designed to evolve with the parent-child relationship.

Ramirez will sign copies of "Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting" from noon-2 p.m. Saturday at Costco in Carson City.

Contact reporter Peter Thompson at pthompson@nevadaappeal.com or 881-1215.

Local author combines cultures in parenting book



Tribune/**Debra Reid**

Nurturing children's strengths is an important topic in Laura Ramirez's book "Keepers of the Children."

BY ANGELA POTTER

Sparks Tribune

apotter@sparkstribune.net

Local author Laura Ramirez has taken Native American parenting ideas and combined them with Western psychology in her book "Keepers of the Children."

Ramirez, a Reno resident and mother of two, is a white woman who married a man from the Pascua Yaqui tribe in Arizona. She will be signing her book and talking about her ideas Saturday at the Costco in Reno between noon and 2 p.m.

Her marriage exposed Ramirez to new ideas from a culture outside her own. She has combined these ideas with her bachelor's degree in psychology to present a more rounded view of parenting.

One idea Ramirez borrowed from the Native American cul-

ture is the idea of a spirit name, or a private name used only by the family and those who know the child well.

"Since children are fascinated by nature and by animals," she said, "I encourage parents to give them an animal name. My children have a spirit name, which is used to acknowledge them for what they love to do."

The name would ideally be a reflection of the child's character. However, the name can also be used as a tool for changing problem behaviors.

For example, Ramirez's eight-year-old son Coltan had the bad habit of misplacing one of his shoes, so that every time the family was ready to go somewhere, they would be delayed by his shoe search.

See **BOOK** page 6A

To correct this behavior, the family began referring to him as "Coltan One Shoe," Ramirez said. Within a short time, Coltan began ordering his shoes in pairs to avoid that classification.

"He didn't like that name," Ramirez said. "He didn't want to be known as Coltan One Shoe."

Ramirez said Native American ideas are resourceful and supportive of individual talents.

"They really lend themselves to a nurturing style of parenting and bringing out the unique strengths in every child," she said.

The cover of her book depicts adult hands cupping a piece of turquoise. Ramirez said people in the Pascua Yaqui tribe say a pregnant woman has a piece of turquoise inside her womb.

"The parents' job is to polish the turquoise until its unique qualities come to life," she said. "Each piece of turquoise has a different matrix."

Ramirez said it was important to allow the child's individual strengths to appear by encouraging the child to do what he or she loves.

that they know their strengths and can use those strengths to create a meaningful and fulfilling life," she said. "My eight-year-old loves to cook. When they're little, they haven't been indoctrinated yet."

The title of the book comes from the idea that we are all guardians, and not owners, of the children.

"We are all keepers of the children," Ramirez said. "Your children don't belong to you but they are yours to keep. It wasn't that long ago women and children were thought of as property. We are keepers of their hearts, minds, spirits, self-perceptions and world views until they are mature enough to keep themselves."

Ramirez also uses Western theories of development in her book to cover the stages of life from birth to death.

"I think it's critical for everyone to understand development," she said. "It creates reasonable expectations for child behavior. A child does not come into the world knowing how to be socially appropriate."

Ramirez said she sees a lot of adults who still behave like adolescents. She also said many parents are confused

"A lot of parents treat their children like they're criminals," she said. "The word discipline comes from the Latin word for disciple. You have to become a leader worthy of the child's following."

Ramirez said she has tried to raise Coltan and Dakotah, her eleven-year-old son, with ideas from both of their cultures.

"With biracial children, usually at some point in the child's development either one or both parents will ask the child to choose what he wants to be," she said. "I didn't want my children to face something like that."

Although she hasn't faced the struggle yet, Ramirez said she understands how a Native American could be offended by a white woman writing about that culture.

"I understand how native people feel when people write about their culture who are not part of their culture because conquest took so much away from them," she said. "But differences in cultures are meant to be shared. In the Native American world the woman is seen as the keeper of the culture. I saw this as my role."

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2/1/2005

Native American Spirituality in Parenting, Feb 1, 2006



The spiritual basis for parenting children, as inspired by Native American philosophy, is the topic for this show. Laura Ramirez, author of *Keepers of the Children: Native American Parenting and Wisdom*, returns to discuss the spiritual underpinnings of her parenting approach, which helps to deepen and sweeten your parenting experience with your child.

1/25/2005

Parent-Teacher Communication, Jan 25, 2005



Author and professional speaker Sam Horn (Tongue Fu! for Schools) and diversity/mentoring coach and former high school principal Dr. Richard Gross discuss the problems and solutions of parent-school/parent-teacher communications, emphasizing the extreme pressures on teachers, administrators, parents and students in our modern times.

1/18/2005

Native American Parenting & Wisdom, Jan 18, 2005

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Laura Ramirez
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Experience Native Culture at Local Book Signing

Laura Ramirez, longtime Reno resident and author of “Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting” invites locals to attend a book signing event at Barnes & Noble in Reno on Saturday, September 17 at 2:00 p.m. Ramirez, who believes that differences in culture should be shared, has commissioned a local tribal drum group to perform at the signing. According to Ramirez, “The drum is central to native culture. As people listen to the drumbeat, their hearts attune to it. The power of the drum is that it creates an experience of Oneness. Beyond our ideas of separateness, there is one heart, one drum.”

Ramirez’s book, “Keepers of the Children” recently won the Nautilus Award which honors titles that promote conscious living and positive social change. The book uses Native American spiritual ideas to show parents how to raise children to develop their strengths and lead uniquely purposeful and fulfilling lives. “Native culture is resourceful for parents of any creed or color because it teaches us that each child is unique. Parenting isn’t about making your child into this or that—it’s about bringing out what is already there. As parents learn to see into their children’s hearts, they’ll see more deeply into their own.”

At past book signings, Ramirez has been delighted to see that people of different ethnicities come to buy her book. “Native ideas lend themselves to a nurturing view of parenting and bringing out the best in every child. Resourceful ideas from different cultures benefit us all. This is why they must be shared.”

Ramirez is a white woman who is married to a Native American man. While raising her children to embrace both sides of their heritage, she decided to write a book on parenting that combines ideas from native and mainstream cultures. In the tradition of the Native American give-away, Ramirez will be giving away frameable copies of the “Prayer for a Conscious Life” which appears in her book to all who attend the signing.

For Immediate Release

Contact: Laura Ramirez
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Ex-Costco Employee Wins Prestigious National Book Award

Laura Ramirez (who once worked at the Reno Costco) won the Nautilus Award for her book, “Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting.” The Nautilus Award honors titles that promote conscious living and positive social change. Ramirez’s book, which won the parenting category, uses Native American spiritual ideas to show parents how to raise children to develop their strengths and lead uniquely purposeful and fulfilling lives. “Native culture is particularly resourceful for parents. It teaches us that each child is unique. Parenting is about bringing out what is inside a child. As parents learn to see into their children’s hearts, they’ll see more deeply into their own.”

The awards ceremony took place in the ballroom of the historic Starrett Lehigh Building in New York City which overlooks the Hudson Bay and is owned by Martha Stewart Omnivision. Luminaries from the publishing world, including authors, editors, publishers and media were present. The awards were co-sponsored by Body and Soul Magazine (a Martha Stewart publication).

According to Ramirez, “There were 195,000 new books published in 2004, so the competition for awards was fierce. I am honored to be in the company of authors like Deepak Chopra (who won the overall award) and thrilled that my small press book competed effectively with big name publishers like Dutton and Penguin Books. This shows that judges are more impressed by content than celebrity or prestige.”

Ramirez has had two successful book signings at the Costco in Reno and Carson City this year. At the signings, she gave away a frameable copy of the “Prayer for a Conscious Life” which appears in her book. “I was delighted to see people of many ethnicities buying the book. There were whites, blacks, natives and people of Asian descent. Native ideas lend themselves to a nurturing view of parenting and bringing out the best in every child. Resourceful ideas from different cultures benefit us all. This is why they must be shared.”

“Keepers of the Children” has also won NCPA’s Gold Book Award, Best Non-Fiction “How-To” and Best First Book. It was a finalist in Foreword Magazine’s Book of the Year Contest and the IPPY awards

For Immediate Release

Contact: Laura Ramirez
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Local Author Travels to New York City to Receive Book Award

Laura Ramirez, author of “Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting” received the Nautilus Book Award which honors titles promoting conscious living and positive social change. Ms. Ramirez’s book, which won the parenting category, teaches parents how to raise children to develop their strengths and lead lives of meaning and fulfillment. Says Ramirez “Each child is unique. Parenting is about bringing out what is already there. As parents learn to see inside their children’s hearts, they’ll see more deeply into their own.”

The awards ceremony took place in the ballroom of the historic Starrett Lehigh Building in New York City which overlooks the Hudson Bay and is owned by Martha Stewart Omnivision. Luminaries from the publishing world, including authors, editors, publishers and media were present. The awards were co-sponsored by Body and Soul Magazine (a Martha Stewart publication). Winners will be featured in the September issue.

According to Ramirez, “There were 195,000 new books published in 2004, so the competition for awards was fierce. I am honored to be in the company of authors like Deepak Chopra (who won the overall award) and thrilled that my self-published book competed effectively with big name publishers like Dutton and Penguin Books. This shows that judges are more impressed by content than celebrity or prestige.”

“Keepers of the Children” (which was also a finalist in Foreword Magazine’s Book of the Year contest) is available locally from Barnes and Noble, Borders and Sundance Books. Autographed copies are available from the author’s web site: www.walk-in-peace.com.