

Below are some recent reviews of ***Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting*** by Laura Ramirez. (Also included are reader comments that have been posted to Amazon.)

Parental Intelligence

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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.kokopellistreasures.com/keepers.html>

Review of *Keepers of the Children* by Laura M. Ramirez

For Compleat Mother Magazine

Review by Roberta Waters

Compleat Mother readers with small children may find Laura Ramirez's book a useful guide for raising their children in a gentle manner. Although Ms. Ramirez is a white woman, she is married to a Pascua-Yaqui Native American man and has come to embrace his culture. The focus of the book is on how to parent your child relying on the wisdom of the ages in a loving, compassionate way.

An early discussion regards fear and American parents know well how to parent with fear. We run off to physicians at the first sign of pregnancy in case something is wrong; we subject our unborn babies to a myriad of medical tests with unknown future consequences in case something is wrong. We birth in hospitals out of fear our bodies will fail us during childbirth and we are terrified of the pain of giving birth. And on and on. Fear drives our society. Yet Ms. Ramirez begins the book with a solution to parenting with fear and beings with a Native American myth story, one of several interwoven to stress important points.

For example, the opening story is about a young couple with their first child and the wisdom of the Grandmother. It deals with learning the nature of each child. In the story, the Grandmother advises that a "baby is like a piece of turquoise" that needs to be polished in order to see it's full beauty and is unique. As the myth unfolded, the young mother began mothering with fear as her touchstone, but gradually, as she learned to trust and know her son, she let go of her fear and allowed herself to really get to know her child and appreciate him for the person he was. This is a theme that repeats throughout the book.

Becoming a visionary parent means anticipating the person your child will become while living with them in the present and looking back at how far they've come. It requires active parenting, being "one who mothers" or "one who fathers," conscious of your actions and effects on your child. Fear conflicts with vision because it prevents parents and children from experiencing life to the fullest and developing their talents and self to the utmost.

Discipline is an area where being "one who mothers/fathers" can be honed. According to Ms. Ramirez, time-outs are a preferred method of getting children to change their behavior to an approved conduct rather than the traditional punishment and reward system. According to the book, time-outs help your child learn self-control by teaching him how to monitor his own feelings and think ahead.

One of the most use suggestions in the book is the Native American "talking stick." For those unfamiliar with this concept, it involves using an object that can be passed around when holding family (or other) meetings to resolve a conflict. Only the person holding the stick has permission to talk -- everyone else must be quiet until it is their turn. For families with children old enough to participate, this is an excellent idea even for regular family meetings because it ensures that all will get a chance to speak and be heard.

Many pages are devoted to Erik Erikson's child development theory in which Ms. Ramirez explains the different developmental states Erikson defined and attempts to weave visioning parenthood with this theory much loved by teachers of nurses.

Ms. Ramirez informs the reader in the preface that her children are small and some of the suggestions made in the book reflect her lack of experience in dealing with older children. While some families may be blessed with cooperative teenagers, many find themselves parenting surly, argumentative and down-right nasty kids who may not willingly (or otherwise) perform the kinds of chores she recommends. But, that is a small quibble and easily overlooked since she admits her expertise is with the small ones.

Overall, this is an interesting book, of about 200 pages, with an intention of giving the reader the tools to write their own family story. The frequent insertions of Native American practice are a welcomed innovation. A companion workbook is available and also a web site for additional information about parenting and child development. Cost is \$18.95 for the book, \$14.95 for the workbook, plus shipping (\$4.95 for first book, \$2.00 each additional).

5 Star Reader Reviews which appear on Amazon.com:

Raising children and parents, September 20, 2004

Reviewer: [D. Ingram](#) (Nevada) - [See all my reviews](#)

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 also contains insights for me as an adult to live my life better. For the most part, our society has failed in our parenting duties. Laura gently reminds us that raising children is a gift, one that we should not take lightly. She does an excellent job demonstrating that being a parent is a honor, and that we are blessed with the responsibility of being a parent.

Laura provides concrete examples of her experiences in being a mom that drives home points she is making in every chapter. The book is scattered with words of encouragement that are very refreshing. I've read so many parenting books over the years, and have found only nuggets of wisdom in each of those books. However, after reading "Keepers of the Children", I find that the entire book itself is one healthy nugget to advance me on my parenting quest. Even if you are not a parent, I implore you to read this book to gain unique insights into the parenting process espoused by Laura Ramirez, insights that help people overcome their past and become adults.

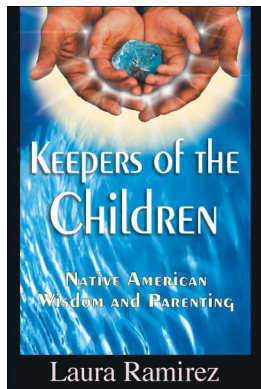
Every Parent Needs to Read This Book, September 19, 2004

Reviewer: [Jane Sheppard "Healthy Child Online"](#) (Santa Rosa, CA USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

I'm impressed and delighted by the wisdom and insights in this book. The author gives a lot of practical information on how we can raise our children with vision, honor their uniqueness and true nature and create a parent-child bond that will be the greatest gift a child could 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 to 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!)



Keepers of the Children: Native American Wisdom and Parenting can be purchased online at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, kokopellistreasures.com, or walk-in-peace.com. For more information or to contact Ms. Ramirez for an interview, email her at info@walk-in-peace.com.