

Acknowledgements

It should be noted that the text of this book has been directly translated into English from Meeka Arnakaq's compilation of her traditional teaching, handwritten in Inuktitut syllabics. Its content and sentence structure have been minimally edited. It was very important to Meeka Arnakaq and the team of people working on this project that the book completely reflects a direct translation of Meeka's words to maintain the integrity of her work and oral traditional knowledge. The little girl illustration on the cover is based on a photograph of Meeka's granddaughter, Minnie.

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Photographs included in this book are part of Meeka and Reepa's family collection. Illustrations are based on Meeka's original sketches and text.



Dedication:

I dedicate these teachings to my husband Abraham, my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and also to Reepa and Rachel.



Written by:
MEEKA ARNAKAQ
Pangnirtung, NU

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Meeka Arnakaq's Biography



Meeka Arnakaq is an Inuk Healer and Elder from Pangnirtung, Nunavut. She has been involved in her local church for over 30 years as the organist and lay reader. Meeka writes her own music and has recorded a CD;

she is currently working on other songs for another CD. She taught life skills and Inuktitut at Nunavut Arctic College and retired in the summer of 2007 after 30 years of service. Meeka has one biological child and four adopted children, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Meeka has been recognized for her efforts in helping people deal with social issues and she is well known as a leader of healing circles. Meeka provides individual and group sessions, working on her own and with other healers, including her husband, Abraham. She travels to many communities in Nunavut and other regions in the North. She also travels to southern Canada, where she delivers group and individual healing

sessions, and trains counsellors and healers, some of whom provide healing to the prison inmates within the Tupiq program, a federal correctional program for Inuit inmates. Meeka has been working with Tungasuvvingat Inuit and the Ottawa Inuit community since the 1990s. She works particularly closely with the Mamisarvik Healing Centre, which provides a unique Inuit trauma and addiction treatment program based on Inuit traditions and culture, serving Inuit clients from around Canada. Meeka received a Wise Woman award in 1994 by the Status of Women of NWT and on Canada Day 2009, Meeka received an honorary degree in justice from Dalhousie University. Meeka participates as an Inuit Elder on the Elders Advisory Council for the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA). In November 2008, CCSA and Tungasuvvingat Inuit/Mamisarvik Healing Centre signed a three-year memorandum of agreement to partner and collaborate on a project that will help record the teachings of the traditional Inuit society of yesterday and today. Meeka's teaching manuals, written exclusively in Inuktitut syllabics, will be published for Inuit Nunaat and all Canadians to learn more about Inuit culture and traditional knowledge and healing.

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Helping Aboriginal people heal themselves

Foreword

This manual has been produced to teach Inuit families about the traditional Inuit child rearing practices and how these methods can be used today, within our families. In understanding these traditional ways of raising our children, it promotes a healthy lifestyle for today's generation of Inuit and their extended families.

By looking from within our Inuit culture we can strengthen our understanding of Inuit traditional knowledge. The Inuit way of 'knowing' is the basic foundation for our families and our survival. Using our instincts and embracing life, with the support of our Elders and community members, we will move towards the future as Inuit.



Children need to hear
words of encouragement.

When they're told how good
they are, **they love it.**



From Babies to Children For Babies and For Children

Written by

Meeka Arnakaq
from
Pangnirtung

This manual was created in condensed form.
The contents written are to be used to create more
useful ideas. Taken from past childrearing
to the present day.

**The mother polar bear
with its cubs is used here to
represent small children.**



The mother polar bear with its cubs is used here to represent small children. This was chosen because a mother polar bear always protects the well-being of its cub, and the cub will always follow its mother while it is small.

When a mother polar bear is ready to deliver its cub, she builds a den in which to keep them. Once the den is built, this will be the home for the mother and her cub for a period of time. The mother will not leave the den nor leave the cub by itself, as she concentrates only on raising her young. She remains in the warm den with her cub until they can eat solid food. The mother polar bear carefully tends to her cubs. From what we have heard, if a female bear delivers her cubs without a ready den, she will pick up her cubs, making sure they don't get cold and start searching for a safe place in which to keep them. That is how much a mother polar bear loves her cubs. Once the cubs have grown bigger, she introduces them to the outdoors. She starts by walking around slowly making sure that they follow her. The cubs always follow their mother closely for safety. The father bear does the hunting for their food until they are able to hunt for themselves. He teaches them how to hunt for food on their own, teaches them continually to hunt for wild animals that they feed on. The father polar bear also plays with them by teaching them to slide down a slope, and to play fight until they get older. The parents of the cubs will keep them until they are full-grown and can hunt for themselves.

This example is very similar to how Inuit women will care for her children right from the time she delivers her baby. Even if her children are born years apart. She carries her baby in her warm amauti, holding the baby close to her always as she breast feeds. There is always physical contact with her baby. She makes sure her child is well fed, and makes clothing for it. She shows her child that it is loved. The mother provides a safe home for her child where there's enough room to grow. Fathers make very competent caregivers as well but not as well as a mother. A mother will care for her offspring until the child is able to take care of themselves. Then when they let them go they will live their own lives in the community.

Children will follow their mothers around just as the polar bear cubs will follow their mother. For this reason, the children should give heed to their mothers and listen to what is being said. An obedient child listens to one's mother when being told to do something and already understands what it is the mother wants done or not done. A child knows the smell of its mother's scent because there is none like hers. All children will experience disappointment when their mothers correct them as little children and as older children or teenagers. These corrections are done to help the child to grow mentally even though it is no fun for the child or the parents.

The child must understand who the authority figure is.

If my lifestyle were unhealthy, it would be better that I avoided work that involves dealing with other people's issues, because the person who works with others needs to be approachable and able to listen.

What this means is the child who is raised by both their father and mother and is obedient will grow up healthy in all aspects of its life. When this child becomes an adult they will lead a healthy lifestyle. This person will not need to look for assistance to get back on their feet, nor will they need to have someone help them in finding assistance. Once grown up, this well raised child will need only to refocus on issues he's facing and dealing with to gain inner strength again.

As an adult, this person will follow a healthy path in life, heeding the rules that were set out for them and will know where they stand in the community. They will not live a risky lifestyle, but will lead a healthy life.

A child who does not respect their parents will "talk back" and tend to do things they are not supposed to be doing. Possibly later on, this child will need help from social workers because they have lost their way and run out of options. They may become defensive and blame others. They may become abusive in order to get attention from family members. That kind of lifestyle is part of the reason why family ties are broken. A person breaks away from the family circle and causes grief to their family members.

Even as an adult, some will live an unhealthy lifestyle. They may do things to hurt people on purpose, perhaps to get revenge, and perhaps with malicious intent, to be spiteful towards people who may have hurt them. They may portray themselves as the victim when it is they who caused it all to begin with and therefore the one who created this broken family and falls away from the family.

The family members too, may start doing unhealthy deeds to seek revenge on the one who caused conflict within the family. By doing such things, they are just creating a situation that will only trap them into a vicious cycle. What has happened is that they have stepped outside of the path, which then redirects them to reconcile with the people they have hurt. The positive side to this is that there is always a way to make amends and start over.

Even though it hasn't been documented by all Inuit, this was the way a small child and children were placed within the family before Inuit from different regions started living in the same communities.

If an unmarried woman bore a child she would be the one to keep the baby, even if she were only 14 or 15 years old, and even if she didn't have anyone to provide for her. The reason for this was to help the young woman settle down, and to help her focus on her life and learn from her circumstances, even if she was not yet capable of all her responsibilities. This has proven to teach responsibility and help her settle down. Girls weren't given duties that were too much for them to handle or too heavy for them to do on their own. It may have seemed that people just watched them on the side-lines. But it was the way Inuit survived, even if it wasn't pleasant.

Another topic to discuss is that not all women had abilities to care for children. Some women, when you see them with children, seem to handle them clumsily and you start to feel like you should give them a hand. Even if that is the case, no one else will step in to raise those children as long as they have their own mother to care for them. The reason for this is they will become a close-knit family even if they seem clumsy in their dealing with each other. In those days the Inuit communities didn't have dangerous people, nor were there things that could damage the well being of Inuit, both physically and mentally. Unfortunately, this isn't the case in today's Inuit communities.

Back then, it was a part of life, and our beliefs were that when a woman would deliver children and they didn't live very long, or if she were to miscarry, the best way to correct this was for her to adopt a child. After adopting the woman may become pregnant again, carry to full term and have a family. That was the belief then.

Back then, a woman had babies right up until menopause. Some women only had one child, and then some had five, while others may have 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13 children, right to the end of child-bearing age. They seemed to have children at a fair pace, and mothers didn't look worn out because back then they had healthier, stronger bodies.

Written by
Meeka Arnakaq



The “Inuit Way” to Raise Children

In years past, we lived comfortably, not looking outside for further comfort. We lived on what was essential for survival. We lived this way on a daily basis, not by just waiting for the day to end. We lived according to the weather outside and according to the land. We were very closely connected to our environment. Everyone in the community knew each other, without threats for safety. Clothing made and worn by the Inuit are very different from clothing made in other parts of the world. The clothing that Inuit make can be used as a logo.

Back then, the Inuit chose to live a healthy lifestyle, and those values were carried over to the next generation. Today’s generation of Inuit have now re-adopted the healthy lifestyle that our ancestors lived by, even when damage is being done to healthy lifestyles, there are very positive things that can be done today if we are diligent.

In the past, the children were more obedient of their parents or caregivers. They followed the rules that were made in their households. As a result they didn’t become confused as to how to live their lives.

The children didn’t leave home before they were grown. Back then they didn’t have reasons to leave their families behind. Families looked after each other better then.

The only reason for having to leave family behind, back then, was if they were orphaned and got adopted by another family, however, not all orphaned children had to leave their community. The other reason for leaving a household, back then, was when they got married and were helped by the parents in raising the children. And though the Inuit weren’t wealthy, the parents made sure that the whole household was fed and family was treasured.

Children Have a Short Attention Span

Children always show whether they have a happy home through their attitudes. For example, where there is no worry about being safe, it becomes evident, through observation of the child, that they are given room to grow and develop.

While they are still quite small, children have all of their needs taken care of. These are physical, lifestyle, emotional and shelter needs. From a child's viewpoint there is no need for fear. When they hear a voice there is no need for panic. The voices that they hear are gentle and encouraging.

When a child is born, it receives the right amount of time to just be a child, in all aspects of life. It's a beautiful thing to see because what they portray comes straight from the heart with happiness.

Children show how they feel by the way they move around. Little girls have to be allowed to be girls. Children shouldn't be given anything that could be harmful. They need to see a friendly face where they are being cared for, they need to be taught rules, and they shouldn't be living with quarrelling parents but parents who are gentle in the way they treat each other.

The children will learn to show respect under these circumstances. Children need to hear words of encouragement and when they're told how good they are they love it, and they don't feel there is anything to be afraid of. When they are praised and encouraged, they love it and it will show by how they carry themselves, and in what they do. They will carry this forward into their future.

A child needs to grow physically and mentally at the same time. A child should never be threatened with physical harm. What a child needs is to hear that they are loved, on a daily basis.





How a Woman Feels Towards a Child She Brought into the World – For as Long as She’s Alive, that Child is Hers

A mother’s face is the face a child remembers. Her scent is pleasant and the milk with which she feeds it is the most delicious! To the baby, the way the mother loves, is like perfume. A small child is wrapped in warm clothes and blankets and even the food it is fed has to be warmed. Even the colours of the clothing worn by the child are toned down to soft colours: white, yellow, pink and pale green.

A mother’s joy of having a baby is reflected in the joy of sewing things for her baby, and it helps the love for her child, along with it. Her voice takes on a gentleness, it’s softer. She will coo her baby. There is nothing like a child’s birth. Becoming part of the community is very important. There is nothing more important or more dear than a child’s birth, it’s even bigger and more important than some think. It does not matter if your baby’s coloring is pale or a darker skin tone – or if it’s a boy or a girl, what matters is that you have finally received what you have been waiting for so long. Whether you longed for a girl or a boy baby, or if you got a boy instead of a girl that you wished for, it doesn’t matter because your love for your baby will make up for that and you will be glad that it was boy baby in the end. In other words – the baby is still lovable. A child comes into the world with importance. It even looks like it came from some other place. It is welcomed with open arms. It arrives to loving mothers and loving fathers who love children. Even if a child is born to be adopted, the adoptive parents are overjoyed to receive the child; it’s as if they had just entered into a whole new world.

Adoptive parents love their babies dearly. They were given the child to care for and raise. It's like you aren't sure what to do next when you are given a small baby that comes with an aura of importance. There are no words to describe that. You start to feel unsure about whether you can care for the baby properly. There are people who can help with these doubts. The grandparents of the new baby are also involved in the welcoming group and love of older children as well. But there is nothing that compares to the warmth the mother gives her baby. The mother will have to know how she wants to raise her baby as she goes along in her daily life. She will start to visualize what the child will be like when it gets bigger. They enjoy what they see with their eyes more. They enjoy what the plant life is like, being outdoors in the fresh air and viewing the landscape. She's one with nature and will grow. Even as that is going on in her life what she wants from her parents is very different. Little children have a right to grow up happy, and parents should try and learn more about their children's characters and give them more room in which to grow.

Little girls look at the world differently in some ways than how little boys view the world.





Small children enjoy being in a moving vehicle and will always look forward to travelling again. They especially enjoy sleeping in a canoe and can hardly wait for the following day when they will be travelling again. Children enjoy being in a moving vehicle and look forward to where they have gone before. The travels that they go on with their parents set up the path that they will travel in life.

A little girl learns by watching and tries to duplicate exactly what she has seen because they want to be able to do what the adults can do. Grown women will carry their babies in their amauti, so little girls will copy that practice. A little girl will be allowed to get her way by putting a child in her amauti for a short while. Then it's over soon because she's tried it and she gives up on the idea and quiets down after trying it out. Children do need to get their way once in a while, and you need to consider a little girls' character.

We can't always have perfect, obedient children, we cannot always approve of what they do, that doesn't matter; it's always better to conform to a child's personality because once a child's grown they will realize the teachings they were taught. Children need to know that they are believed in and trusted.



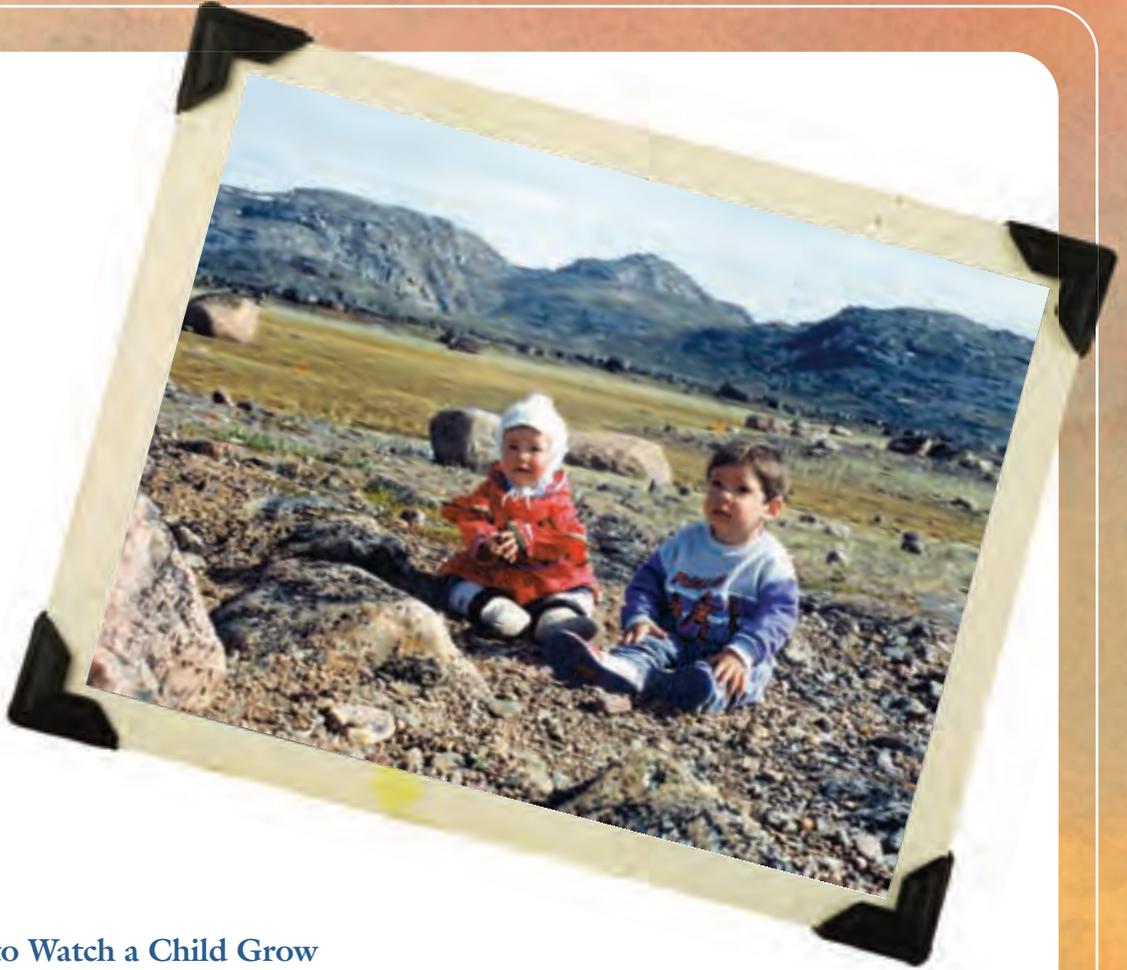
A young child's mind grows with memories that are hard to understand; their recollections are full of holes. The memories they have of a certain occasion aren't a complete scenario. A child has memories that are cut up into a shortened form. "It's like this, it was almost like," the story isn't complete and hard to understand, like the photograph here on the right. Does anyone make out what it's all about?

If a child's memory is like that it's okay. It's no wonder the child's memory is that way. To the child it's true, and there's nothing that can be done to change it. The child is not fully grown yet.

It's amazing that even though a child's memory is blotchy, it still seems normal. Once you are grown you realize that it really wasn't something to be alarmed about. It is only when you get bigger that things become clearer and your ability to retain memory grows. What a child will remember most from childhood are times when they were very ill or when they were so amazed by something.

Parents have to be careful in how they raise their children, so that the contact remains. "If you raise your children in this manner, you are being a good parent to your children, to your babies and small children."





It's a Joy to Watch a Child Grow

A baby learns to do things on its own physically. It's amazing that a small child will learn to do so many new things within a year. The child starts to notice wonderful things around the home. He finds all the people he loves live in the same place. But who he loves mostly is his mother. She makes sure that he's always in contact with her and he must be where she is at all times. He starts crying if he can no longer see her. There is a make-believe story used for when a child wants to go for a sleepover outside of the home; that his father's big toe will go in search of him. Which is to explain that his parents love him dearly and do not want to let him go. A father especially treasures his son and keeps him very close; he takes him places. Because he treasures him, he will teach his son what he knows and finds new things he can teach him. The father looks forward to the time when he can go hunting with his son. He just loves the way his son is learning to use his pointer finger. This is part of what parents go through in raising their children. It is a healthy way and is amazing.

What would you add to this?

So Lovable that it Hurts Deep Inside



A Child's Goal is to Learn How to Do Things

All children are born with the ability to bring joy to people's lives and will pass it along to their parents. The parents learn to become wiser by raising their children because they start to realize the way they need to be doing things, now that they have the responsibility of a child. Therefore, the parents must learn how to manage their household.

They start to contemplate what should be done for a child who is more aware in some way or another but is still too young. An intelligent child will know what is expected because he understands how something is used. How much a child has grown is evident in its capabilities. A child will learn to do things without a parent being aware of all it has learned. It will learn what something is used for; they learn by watching and mimicking:

1. This is how you use this
2. Get up on a ski-doo
3. Take your boots off when you enter
4. Take your coat off when you enter
5. Put them back on before going outdoors

These things are learned when a child is only a year old. They learn to recognize things and treasure them. Children are so adorable the more they learn to do different things.

All children learn to do new things and learning to recognize them is also involved. The parents then have to start watching them more closely because the child will just start going towards whatever gets its attention. The parent has to be more aware of her small child as it still doesn't recognize danger when he sees it, and now wants to be outdoors whenever he can. The child doesn't even realize how cold he's gotten because it's too much fun to be outdoors. This is the case especially in boys.

The way a child does things changes as they grow. They learn that they are getting bigger and older by the celebration of each birthday. They learn to be around other children by inviting children to celebrate their birthday, and the children who are invited are overjoyed and want to bring along a present.





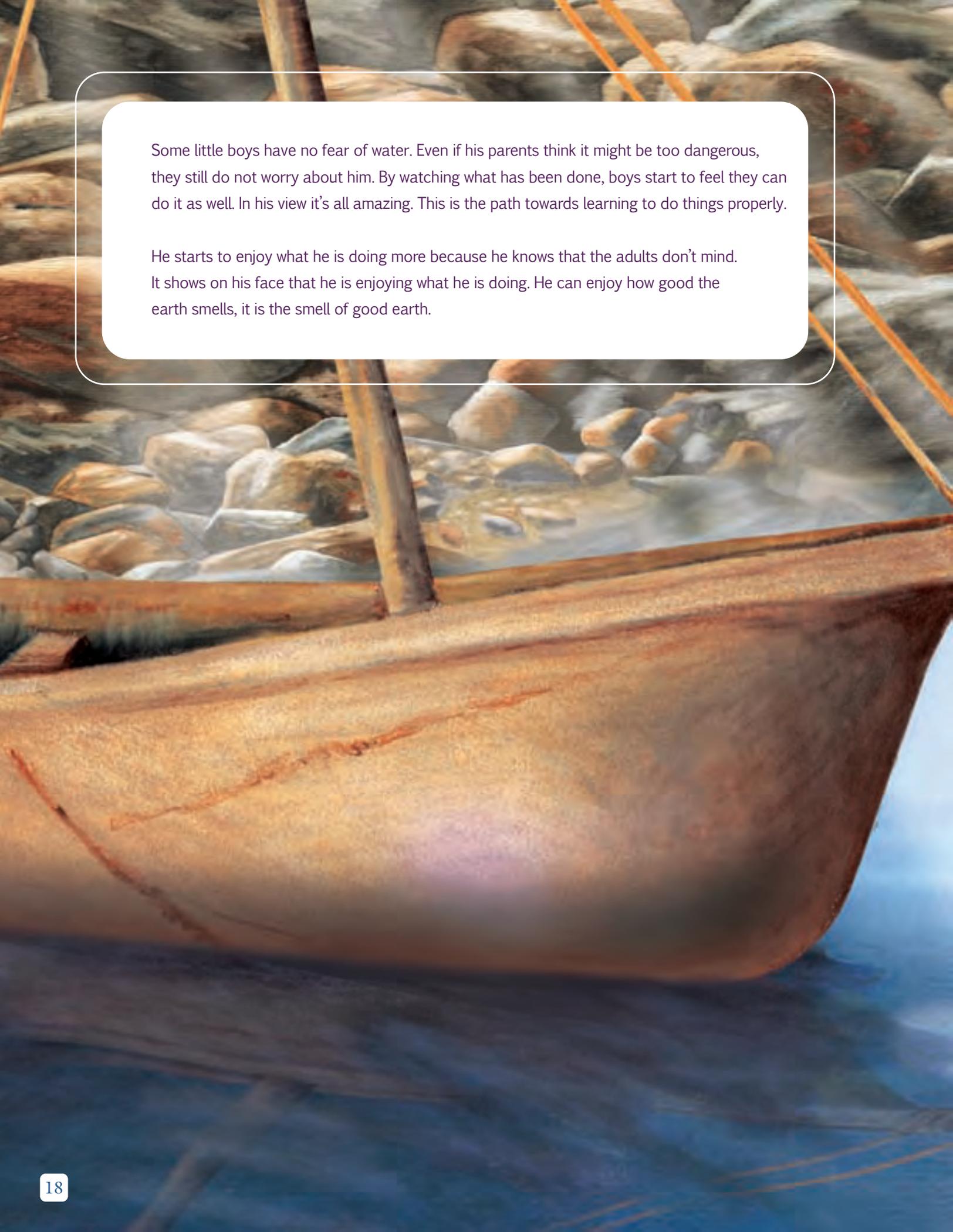
These are some of the things that are characteristic in a child. They start doing what the father does, they want to be like dad. They mimic his actions. Because the child is praised for learning something, he believes it. His eyes are opened to his father, and the two become more attached.

When you watch little boys you'll see they do things quite differently, in a more carefree way. Your heart just goes out to them. It's wonderful to watch them the way they do certain things. They have a certain gift in whatever it is they are working on. They are still so young in what they do. It's the way boys are. Some boys are more risky and unafraid; they just go about enjoying whatever it is they are doing at the time. They don't take things too seriously in life. These things are evident when you watch them. Little boys don't try and create things through thought or from their hearts, but through word of mouth only. It is only through telling repeatedly that they become wary of dangers. The little boys learn that it's wonderful to be outdoors, and will stay outdoors even when they get cold. Sometimes they are not even aware that they have gotten cold. This is preparing them for what lies ahead.

With Respect to Little Boys

Indeed, little boys are precious in everything they do, even more dear when they use things in a clumsy way. This is how they show that they are wonderful the way they are. Look at the picture below and see how a young lad is so happy with the way he has folded a sleeping bag. He's amazed at what he can do, and he's so happy that the adults are thankful for what he has done.



A detailed painting of a wooden boat on a river. The boat is in the foreground, with its hull and a wooden pole visible. The background shows a rocky riverbank and water. A white text box with rounded corners is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

Some little boys have no fear of water. Even if his parents think it might be too dangerous, they still do not worry about him. By watching what has been done, boys start to feel they can do it as well. In his view it's all amazing. This is the path towards learning to do things properly.

He starts to enjoy what he is doing more because he knows that the adults don't mind. It shows on his face that he is enjoying what he is doing. He can enjoy how good the earth smells, it is the smell of good earth.



A child enjoys trying on clothing and loves to show how cute and lovable they are.

Children love to play on rough ground and hilly areas and especially near cliffs. They learn to be adept on their feet by running around on them, to conquer the challenge.

Indeed even this little child will forsake these things when he's grown. His mother and father will raise him to become aware of things and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. He will learn what he enjoys and what he approves of.

His parents will strive to prepare him for life.



A child shows he is cute and loved when they bump themselves a little. He is fully aware that his movements and “showing off” will be acknowledged. He is filled with happiness because he knows he’s loved and treasured. Children especially enjoy themselves when they are doing things they enjoy.



Children will remember the things they enjoyed doing. They love being out on the land and learning to recognize the surrounding area. When he knows that he will be returning to go out on the land he can hardly wait, and accompanies the adults and other children are welcomed to go along.



I wonder if this baby knows that he's in an airplane, will he remember it or not? The mother can tell you if her child understands or if he's still too young. Will this baby, who still has no idea of how things are done, have recollections of having taken a plane ride? Later on when he sees himself in a picture he'll then know that he had gone on an airplane ride as a small child.

Even in this illustration, the baby looks as if there is something on his mind – just look at the way his hands are, they are clenched. Maybe the noise of the engine is too loud or perhaps this baby will grow up to be a strong man. Even though this child is immature right now, he will grow up into an intelligent human being like his parents are. “If I could just give you kisses, it seems as though it is enough to quench my thirst.”

His sister seems to understand where they are headed, thinking about her relatives whom she loves that they had left behind. Later on she will talk about her memories of that time, but not the entire trip.

If little brother and sister's first recollection of their early childhood is about being in an airplane, perhaps it will spark a desire to become an airplane pilot. It will diminish any fear of flying and they will start enjoying airplane travel just as much as they enjoy a boat ride.



A Child Understands What it is He Has in His Hands

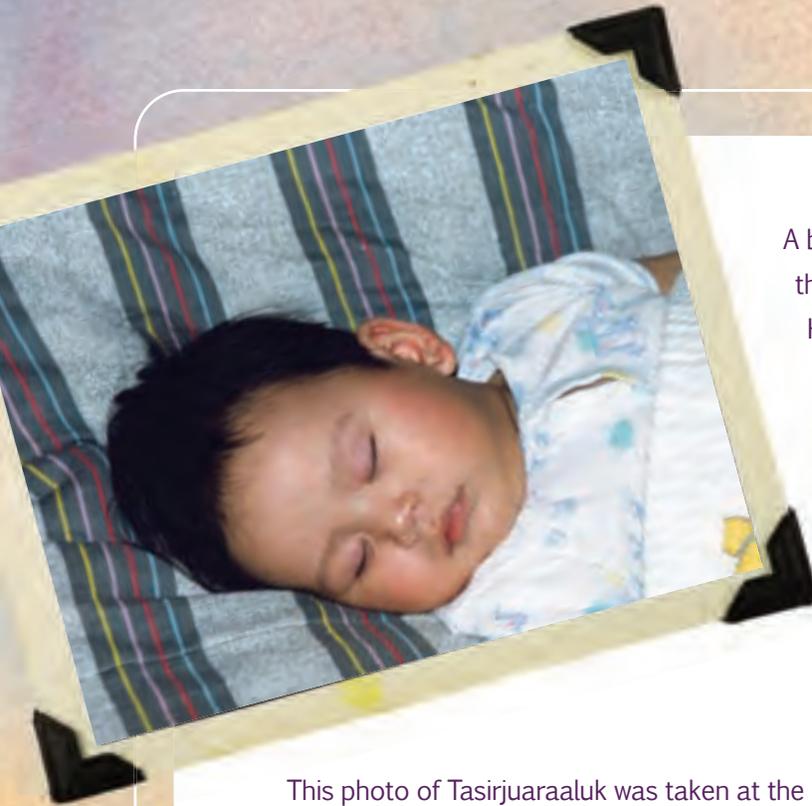
This child appears to like what he's got in his hands. The look on his face tells us he is a little boy. What he's holding is what males use. Look at the way his little hands are holding the toy, it's adorable. The way he's holding the toy shows it's not the first time he's handled this toy.

The shape of his mouth when he looks at his toy shows he likes the toy and knows he's holding the toy. It's adorable. He's just learning to play with toys, and is not yet a year old but will learn more as he notices and handles different toys.

He's not so attached to his mother as before, because he's learning new things. Now that he's gotten bigger and can be placed in a baby chair he can recognize that it's where he's usually placed. It's adorable the way his mouth is set and his whole face shows that he likes his toy. He's learning to not be just with his mother, he's also learning to enjoy being out in the fresh air.

Even though he still can't talk, he knows when he'd like to be taken outside, and that he gets tired of being indoors. The adult should take the child outside for some fresh air when the child lets its desires be known because these things are a part of what will form his life. He will remember that his desires are met.





A baby requires sleep several times daily. It's good that he sleeps when he needs to, it helps with growth. He knows where he usually is put down for a nap and at what part of the day. He gets used to the routine. His mother knows what her baby requires at certain times of the day. Once a baby has been outside for some fresh air, it usually gets sleepy soon after that.

This photo of Tasirjuaraaluk was taken at the lake near Nattilik. It's a place that Inuit have gone caribou hunting for many years now. It's known that caribou are numerous in the area, even in winter.



A mother with children and smaller ones is always in close contact with them. It's only when she sleeps or someone else takes care of them for a while, that her hands are free. Though that is her life as a mother, she enjoys it. She loves her children and she does not feel they are too much to handle. She knows exactly how to treat her children. The mother and each of her children know each other.

Her child soon learns to recognize their mother; her scent is different from other women, her movements are different and the way she loves is not the same. A woman's workload is quite large and she has a lot to do. Women with more than one child have a big responsibility, she knows what her children will be needing. She toils daily in taking care of not only her children's needs but those of her husband. Her husband is the one who can give her what she needs for her household. The father makes sure there's food for his family, his wife and children. The man is the one who makes sure there's enough food because he enjoys going out hunting, even though it's hard work, he doesn't mind. He doesn't get lazy, men will take on heavy duties physically when striving to hunt for their families and community members.

This practice includes teaching the skills to small children. This way the boy is introduced to do certain jobs. He'll learn what they eat while out hunting and get used to different meals. In this way a father and son will bond with each other. Look at the child in the illustration: he looks like he's studying something in front of him.





Children are Adorable from Every Aspect – Even the Child’s Teeth are Amazing. She Probably Admires Girls with Long Hair and Wants to be Like That.

The small child learns how to carry a doll in an amauti. Who taught her this?
She’s seen adults and older children carrying children in an amauti and copies them.

- She thinks it’s for real? Yes
- Is she amazed by this? Yes

When you look at this photo, it’s clear that she is too young to know how to manage her life.
What then?

Who will protect the welfare of little children? They cannot manage or stand up to things on their own. All children cannot decide on their own how their lives will be. They aren’t able to formulate these things. It’s the parents who instruct their children as to how to stand on their own two feet. This is done while raising the child. Indeed, it is very important to raise children properly.

From the time a baby turns a year old, they soon learn to copy what they see around them. It becomes noticeable that they are thinking about certain things and trying them out. Little girls lean more towards learning to do what women do and love trying on an amauti. Those things are learning tools for a little girl’s future. Watching things and then trying them out is how she learns to do them.

It’s wonderful to watch children learn to do things. If a child is being raised gently, it wouldn’t do things that are worrisome. They have parents who they love dearly and will defend and teach them.

The person who is responsible in raising a child has to teach the child in stages and in a gentle way. Children always believe and trust their parents.

This being the case, let us love them and see them as capable of learning things.

The agencies like day care centres have a responsibility to take part in teaching children to be with other children, and grow up with other children around. These are some of the things they are taught at day care. They are taught routines at the day care. The adults who work there are the ones who teach through doing things with them.

Inuit work at an Ottawa day care, and some of the children are Inuit as well. These workers at the day care demonstrate healthy living to the children. When you look at the children who go there, they have very good things available to them. Around the walls are things that they are taught and their meaning. It helps them learn their language.





Inuit instruments are used to instruct children. This illustration of a little boy with a drum shows he's very good at drumming. He has learned how to drum from the people who work at the day care centre. Children are easy to surprise when someone is amazed at what they can do.

Using Colors and Things that Make Noise are Some of the Best Ways to Teach Children.

In this photograph, it's good to see this boy being so relaxed, the sky is clear and the sun is shining. It looks like they will have a good day.



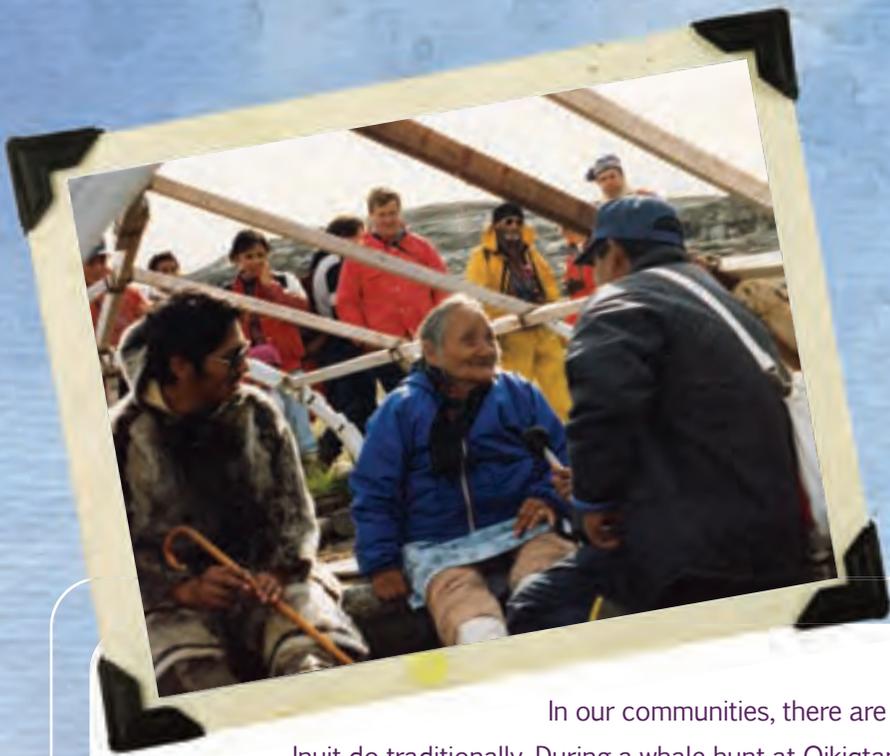
Inuit will Remember

Children will remember what they have witnessed and heard. Children will practice it as they learn about it. Whatever we have been told as children, and what we've seen, is impossible to forget. We can bring those memories to the present by talking about them. The children, who were there at that time, will remember what they heard and who had done what.

Children always remember certain parts to events and always are a part of what we remember. Children will remember happy things because they can relate the story. The little children will treasure their recollections when retelling them. Children as early as three years of age will start remembering things of what had occurred.

I have my own first recollection when I was just three years of age. I remember that my father was carrying me on his shoulders across a small creek. I could only remember this certain part of the story but it made sense later on when I told my mother of my memory and she told me the whole story of where we had been living. Apparently we were at Qajaqtalik while there was a bowhead whale hunt going on, and though I don't remember the hunt, I remember the crossing. This is an example of how a small child's memories can be pieced together by an adult who was there.

Children are always present when there is an event happening. And the ways they tell the story of their recollections is pleasant to hear – so for this reason children shouldn't just be thrown aside like useless things. Why is it that no one takes children's stories seriously? They tell the truth. Stories that are pleasant to hear are sometimes amusing. Children have ability, just like the adults, of keeping things alive.



In our communities, there are times when accidents happen, in what Inuit do traditionally. During a whale hunt at Qikiqtani in 1998, there were children present at the camp, so they were aware of what was happening.

In the year 1840, this place was where Inuit would camp while bowhead whale hunting; it was at that time the whalers would come into the large inlet at Pangnirtung. Inuit had camped in this area long before the qallunaat started coming inland.



But since that time, no one goes there to camp anymore until recently. After quite a number of years passed, Inuit once again started going bowhead whale hunting. And as a large group of Inuit had gone down, it was a happy time. You could see people showing respect for the land. The children could hear and witness the adults celebrating while hunting for an amazingly large animal. Here the children learned the importance of working together and following rules. This helps a lot in terms of respecting things. The children who were present at that time and heard first hand will think of this as an important thing to know. The children who were there will carry this in their hearts.

Small children love to play in rocky terrain – where there are boulders around. They don't realize all the dangers involved in playing around them, so they have to be warned of these things. On some days they learn certain things from playing around them but some parents view such places as dangerous. What the children see is different from what adults see in some instances.

Little children don't know about dangerous things nor do they know how to recognize them when they see it, though they are aware of some dangers. Children are delightful in their own way; they are so carefree in life.



It's a wonderful scene when the hunters get their catch at Qikiqtani – it's the middle of the night but it doesn't feel like it. The happy voices of adults recounting a successful hunt could be heard all over on ham radios and CB radios and others joining in and congratulating them.

It was so amazing and the Inuit were able to see an amazing huge bowhead whale. The children, too, will remember what the Inuit witnessed and visualize the scene and still be amazed all over again when recalling the occasion. They will remember all the sounds that went with the celebration in a happy way.

Even though the children's recollection of that time will not be the same as those of the grown-ups, and they will not retain all of what they saw and heard, you can still feel the emotions as they relate the story. Perhaps the young boys were very proud of their fathers or their grandfathers of witnessing their skills and abilities on a hunt.

It's a child's way to admire good things and idolize heroes. They are amazed at things that grown-ups aren't really amazed by.



The Home Environment Children are Raised in

Home, from a child's point of view, is wonderful and large. Children grow up in homes where the people they love all live in the same house. They enjoy being at home when parents make it a comfortable place to live in. But if there is something that isn't right, they feel it in their hearts, their minds and it shows in their attitude.

A small child needs pleasant things to look at in the home, where their needs are met. To have a home that is pleasant to be in plays a large part in raising a child and should be considered seriously.



When a child looks at their home, it will love its mother, and think of her as the most beautiful person, and will grow up loving both parents. A child is home to both parents.

Even though there might be stormy weather outdoors, the home needs to be a peaceful, comfortable place to come home to. Having a home that is kept clean is a sanctuary and minimizes sickness. Providing a clean place, making sure the air the child breathes is clean, and what a child will see in the home, is important for a growing child.

Children will respect what their parents are expecting from them. A home needs to have toys around for them to play with, even if they are home-made toy animals. They are kept around even if the child throws them all over the place, it doesn't matter. It's an important responsibility to ensure that a child has a safe place to grow.

A home where children are living that doesn't have toys around to play with seems like a dull place to be in, when you consider this from a child's point of view.



It's easy to see in these photographs that it's a little baby girl, by the clothing she's wearing and her surroundings are done in pink. In this photo, it's easy to see that it's a newborn child. Born to join those already here, born to contribute to our society. She's still too small to understand anything around her. Her parents have created her surroundings for her to live in – a safe place to live in where they tend to her needs because they know their child.



In the meantime, her parents continue bonding with her and their love for her grows even stronger. Even if it will require holding the child for a whole year or more, it doesn't matter. Their love for the child makes it okay to have the huge responsibility that comes with it, even though looking at it from the outside, it would seem too much.



An image of a baby lying on its blanket on the ground depicts the ground where plants grow. The child, too, will be raised by its mother, nurturing it just like plants grow from the ground. The parents will tend to its every need carefully, until it's able to be on its own.

What a child sees in its environment, he sees as its universe. Just as a child loves the outdoors, a home should be just as beautiful to look at so it too can be a useful thing while it's growing. What a child sees and what it hears are an important part of raising a child in a healthy way, especially a home that is kept clean is comfortable to live in.

A child will never forget being taught to be gentle with things; it is raised to respect the home. A home, right from the beginning of time, is the dwelling most used than any other building.



A Camp Away from the Community

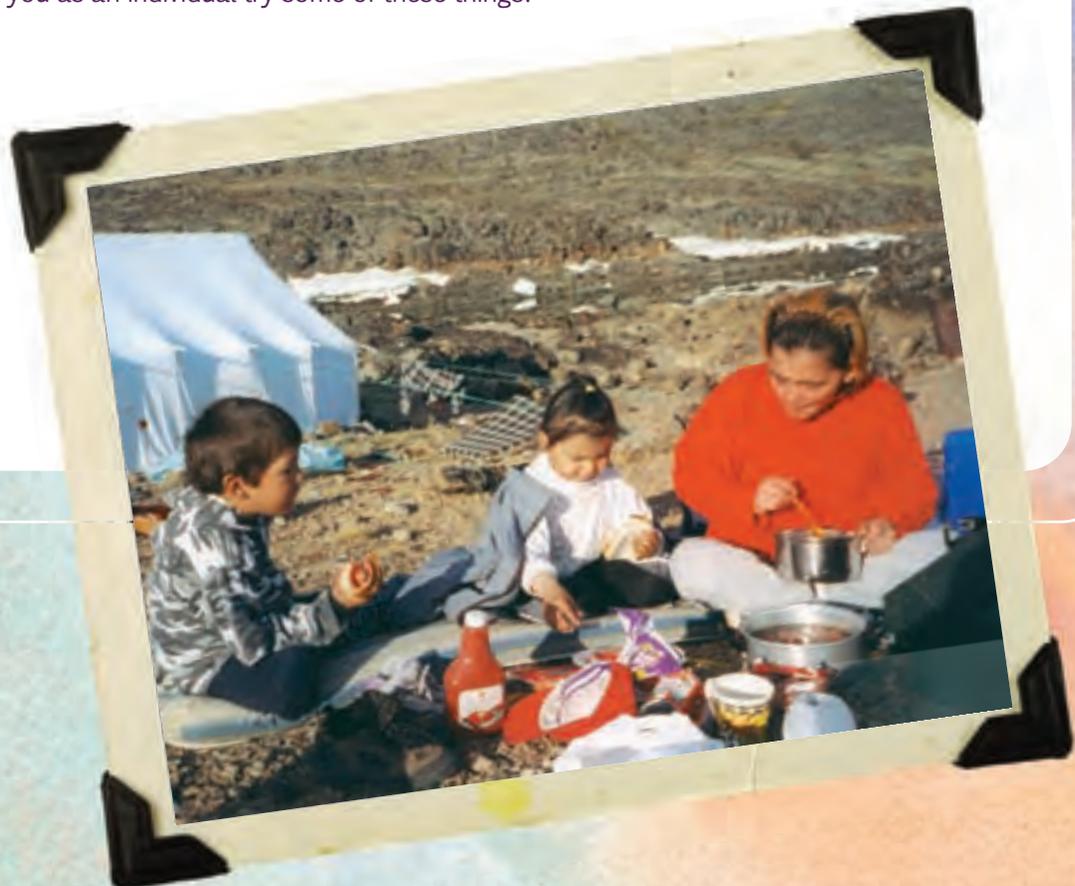
A dwelling is needed everywhere. If they are out on the land for just one night, people need to set up camp. It's a wonderful place to be, even if it's built using different things. Even when there is nothing else around, people make a camp that's welcoming. A child will love its home, and the land where they first started to have memories.

In the years gone by, homes were built differently. Sod houses were made from stones and mud, with a roof made out of molting seal skins. Snow blocks are used to make an igloo, which could be made for overnight camp. Homes are built differently today.

Today children will have recollections of their home being a beautiful house.

Small children love being in a tent that Inuit use while camping. A child really does enjoy going out camping and a child will start mentally creating things that are beautiful.

Why don't you as an individual try some of these things?





A child will start to associate certain noises with different things that amaze them. They even start to enjoy being outdoors when the adults don't make the jobs look so tedious.

Children are drawn to the comfortable, peaceful feeling and want to learn more about it. Stories about life back then are told to them. Inuit have always travelled towards good weather and stay outdoors along with the children.







Children love being outdoors in the spring time, and become the best of friends while at camp. They can stay outdoors all day long doing things they enjoy while breathing in good fresh air. There is no unpleasant smoking smell to it.

Children do enjoy playing in rough terrain and constantly need to be reminded by their parents not to play in dangerous areas. Older children have the job of watching out for the younger children who need to be paid attention to, especially when they are not yet aware of dangers.

It's wonderful and lovable to hear them play acting certain things outdoors. It's serious business to them.

Other People who Children are Attached To

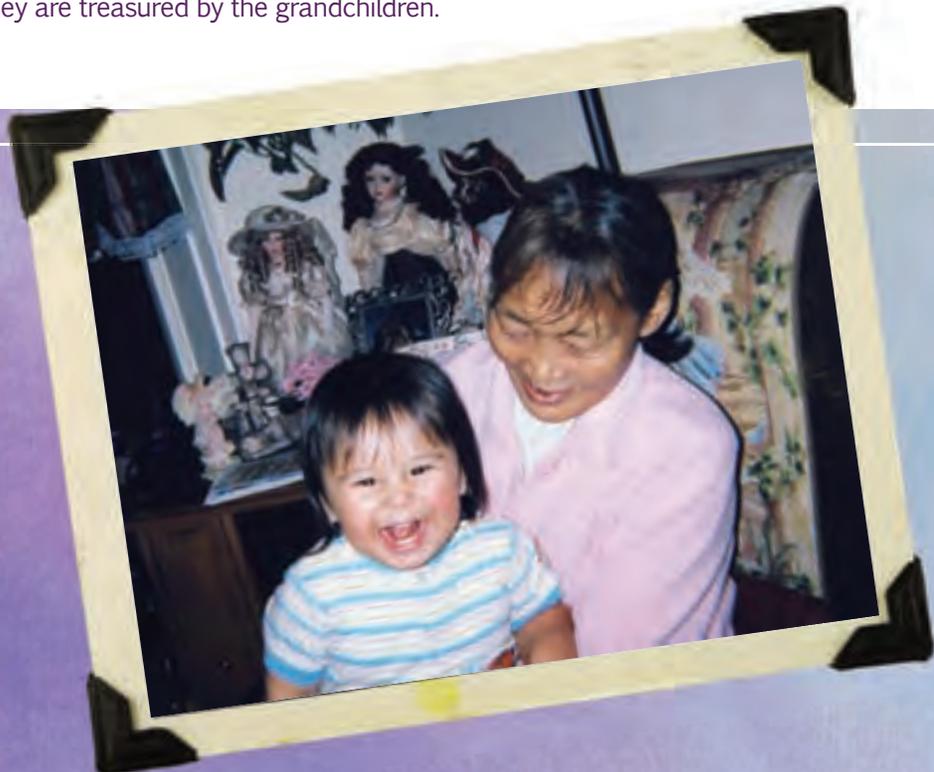
Elders and Grandparents share a very special relationship with children. For instance always saving them certain foods.

Children also enjoy listening to their past, their stories, and they will learn from their wisdom. The amazement towards their grandfather is endless.

The grandmother's ways are very useful to grandchildren, their love for them and their admonishing will never be forgotten.

They visit their grandchildren, their adult children and their daughters-in-law to help them out and they are a blessing, because these things show the grandchildren and adult children the way of life. They don't make life difficult, but help them in having a healthy lifestyle.

They make gifts for their grandchildren. These are some of the things that grandmothers should do, and they are treasured by the grandchildren.



It's Wonderful to Watch Children

Children learn by watching and listening. What they grasp mentally, they will also learn to do physically. It's deep the way a child will absorb things and the way they relate to others. Once they have a desire to learn something it is visible to other children that it's fun. They also begin to recognize happy times like gatherings and what it means to celebrate.



Inuit hold a Healing Conference at Paallavik, an outpost camp from which they were forced to move away. The Inuit who used to live there traditionally were taken there by boat. It was such a momentous time to go there in quite a lot of boats, carrying a bunch of Inuit together. The only snag to that trip was that the path they were taking was still frozen. All arrived at the same time. There were so many tents pitched up at Paallavik.

The Inuit did healing work together. This sets an example to the children that Inuit can do some brainstorming together to learn a healthier lifestyle. Inuit traditionally have always been able to make decisions about what needs to be done, and what they talk about with each other is heard by children, so they can learn from the actions taken that people can come to terms with all things.

Children should want to use these examples set out for them and to remember such occasions with having been there too, and how they can benefit from them for their future.



What will we do with our children?

How do we view our children?

How long should we be responsible for our children?

Do you find that it's too long a time to be responsible for children?



Travelling Leisurely by Canoe

Children watch as their parents or others in their community are going about the tasks involved in going on a trip, so they can be able to do the same things once they are older. This is part of what lies ahead in their future and once they grow up they'll get to understand that travelling isn't as simple as it seems. It's only through hard work that you can get the equipment needed in order to be able to travel anywhere. Children are taught to help so they can learn to aid in the tasks involved. The canoes used for

hunting are used to search for wildlife. The animals that they hunt for are for sustenance only, and whatever they catch is shared with the community members. Some are given without cost, to be shared and some are useful if they are sold. These are some of the things growing children learn and will do once they are older.

Choosing the Place to Travel To

You choose any area in the land to go to, good land, a land that has been occupied for many years. It remains unspoiled by the Inuit who use it and it is cleaned up regularly so it remains clean. People don't remain in these lands for too long. The Inuit men go there often to hunt and know what kind of animals and how many are in that area.

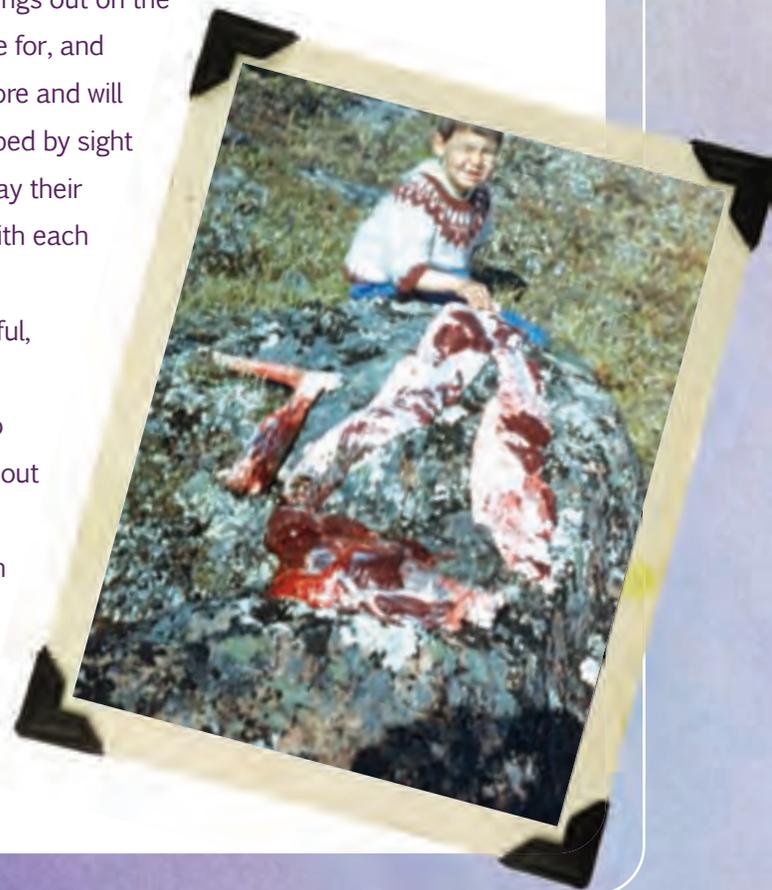
These are some things that small children can learn to do once they are older. These are the dreams of one day being able to do these things, perhaps for the rest of their lives.

Little Boys' Abilities are Worthy of Pride

Little boys learn the body parts of an animal. They are taught these things from their fathers teaching them how to handle animal carcasses, starting with smaller pieces. Fathers being primary trainers know exactly how to teach their sons. They have the wisdom of how to train their children in skills they know. Fathers are able to teach their sons slowly, and not push them too hard. The one who is being trained will understand the instructions and once the lesson is over, the boy knows he can get back to playing. It makes him proud of the fact that he had helped his father to complete a task. He's proud of his abilities and his father in turn feels pride for his son.

It's Wonderful how Children can Adapt while out on the Land

Children love to be at camp, and understand that at certain parts of year there will be different things happening and need to be done during the winter, spring and summer. They understand when it is time that they can travel by canoe, and wait with excitement and anticipation. Children really enjoy being in a tent and discovering new things out on the land. That is only a part of what little children strive for, and they know what is fun to do. They start to learn more and will always remember them. "What he or she had grasped by sight or smell." They grasp the carefree and a friendly way their family members and other people communicate with each other, while out on the land, and also learn how to hunt. A small child's life is surrounded by beautiful, wonderful things. Being around different groups of people is a new experience that adds substance to life. Every single day they eat nutritious food while out on the beautiful land. They just need to choose a camp site and wildlife is in abundance, where even the wildlife is relaxed in its environment. Small children are also taught by their parents that wildlife is to be treated and used with respect.



Small Children Use Things Any Way They Can

Small children are inexperienced in all things, so we forgive them for what they do because of their innocence. They don't even realize what they're doing isn't how it's done. They don't eat graciously – don't even pay too much attention to how they're handling food. It just makes them more adorable, to allow them to make a mess for a little while.

But those days will pass as they start to understand certain rules. By watching their family members, they'll learn not to make a mess. It's a sad feeling for an adult to see that their little one is leaving their babyish ways. Memories from those times leave a strong impression regarding their babies. Indeed, small children are adorable. And though each baby's character is different, they're all understandable because love for them remains. All children deserve to be cherished, even the way they do things. They do not yet understand everything that people do.

Small children should not be treated as an adult, but protected and shielded from certain things. This photograph shows how much of a mess boys can create, just like a man will get filthy from handling and butchering his catch. Men don't mind to do these kinds of chores even if it's cold and windy outside. It shows what the little boy's future holds for him.



A Man's Role

1. Head of the household
2. Provides strength
3. Provides foundation
4. Knits the family together
5. Provides protection
6. Is a good defender
7. Lightens the heaviness of load
8. Does not strong-arm household members
9. Does not cause shame
10. Does not act out of control
11. Goes out to provide for his family
12. Settles quarrels
13. Loves his family unconditionally
14. Is intelligent
15. Has wisdom
16. Will admonish family members on certain issues



A Woman's Role

1. Provides a home
2. Provides things for family members
3. Does the correcting
4. Takes care of tasks to be done in the home
5. Provides an ear to listen well to family issues
6. Looks at things clearly/provides clear understanding of issues
7. Loves family members unconditionally and is kind to other people
8. Is patient
9. Stands with her husband
10. Shows mercy
11. Can reduce her family's anxieties and fears
12. Has wisdom
13. Is readily available and approachable
14. Is open to husband and children/
or keeps things quiet that need to be quiet
15. Is desirable for her husband
16. Not given to shocking her husband or children





