

Third Culture Kids: Why a Cross-Cultural Childhood Matters



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OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Understand the Third Culture Kid (TCK) profile.
- ❖ Understand how the concept is changing in today's world to include cross-cultural kids.
- ❖ Understand the unique benefits and challenges of living a cross-cultural childhood.

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Who are Third Culture Kids?

- ❖ A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background.

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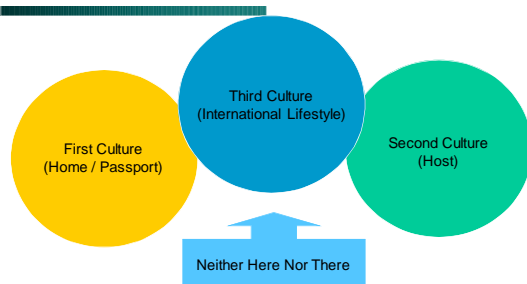
Flavors and Variety of TCK's

- ❖ Missions
- ❖ Diplomat
- ❖ Corporate – International business
- ❖ Military
- ❖ Education
- ❖ NGO / non-profit / humanitarian aid

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What is the “Third Culture”?



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TCK Realities

- ❖ Cross-cultural world
- ❖ Highly mobile world
- ❖ Expected repatriation
- ❖ System identity

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A World of Changing Cultures

Ted Ward, sociologist at Michigan State University stated in 1984,
"TCKs are the prototype citizens of the future."

The Future is Now!!!

WHY?

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Cross Cultural Kids

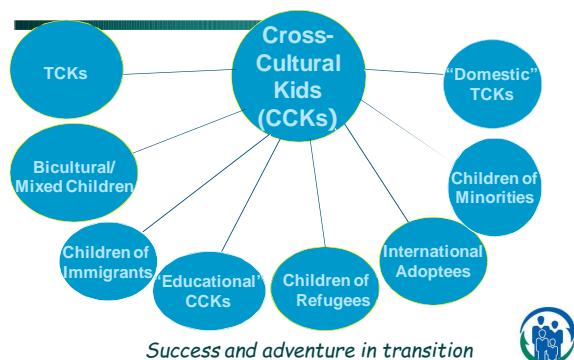
❖ **Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK)** -- a person who has lived in — or meaningfully interacted with — two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during his or her first eighteen years of life.

❖ Your CCKs.

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The CCK Model



Practical Skills/Benefits



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Practical Skills /Benefits

- ❖ Skills / Enrichment – cross-cultural, observational, social, linguistic
- ❖ Adaptable, flexible, confident
- ❖ Tolerant / accepting of diversity
- ❖ Mature
- ❖ Broad world view
- ❖ 3-D view of the world
- ❖ Bridge builders
- ❖ Foundations for being true global citizens

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Leveraging the Gifts

- ❖ Help your students recognize their gifts.
- ❖ Help them build on the gifts and talents.
- ❖ Encourage your students to use them with intentionality.
 - How can you do these?

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Global Nomads Have Unique Challenges



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Global Nomads Have Unique Challenges

- ❖ Personal and cultural identity
- ❖ Unresolved grief
- ❖ Rootlessness – difficulty answering the question, "Where are you from?"
- ❖ Restlessness
- ❖ Are privileged, feel special, feel different
- ❖ Delayed issues of adolescence and rebellion
- ❖ Can only articulate their experiences with others like them.

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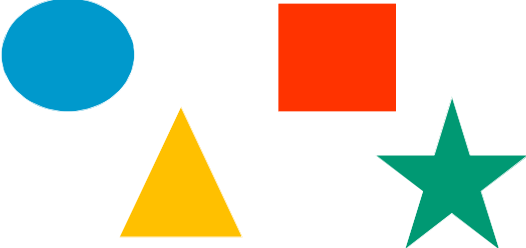
First Greatest Challenge

- ❖ Personal and Cultural Identity
 - Who am I
 - Where Do I Belong?
- ❖ Role of Culture:
 - Identity
 - Belonging
 - Security


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What Does This Mean For You?



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Circle Country and Square Country

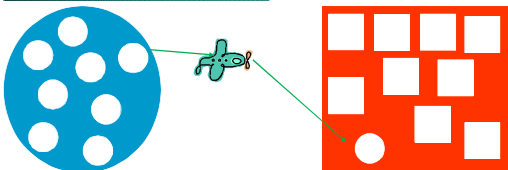


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Circle Country and Square Country



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Circle Country and Square Country

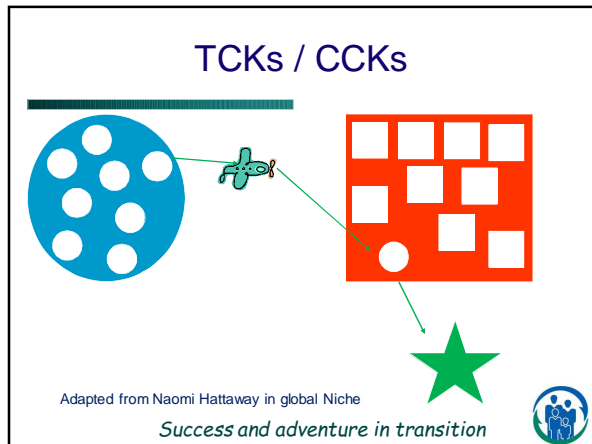
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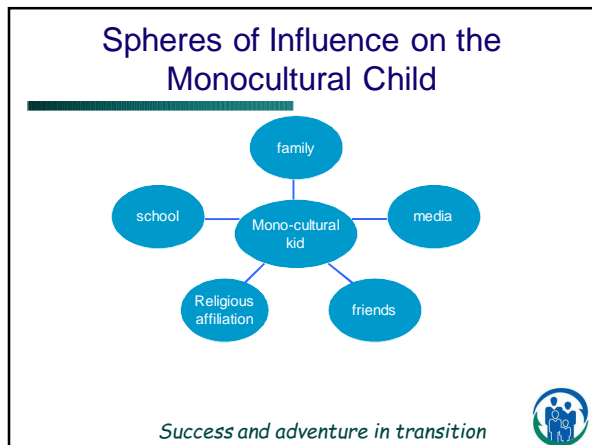
Circle Country and Square Country

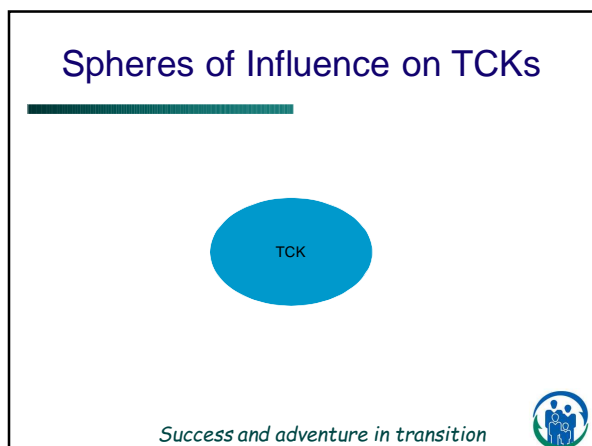
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TCKs / CCKs

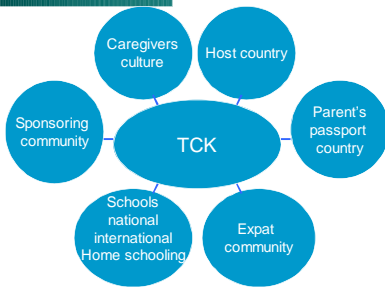
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Spheres of Influence on TCK's



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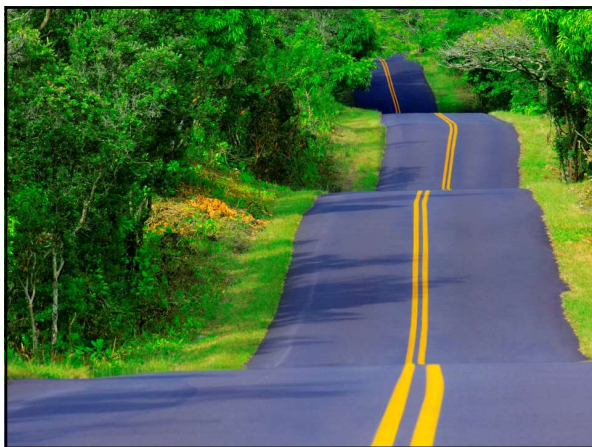


TCK's in Relationship to Surrounding Dominant Culture

Foreigner Look different Think different	Hidden Immigrant Look alike Think different
Adopted Look different Think alike	Mirror Look alike Think alike

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Challenge #2 -Unresolved Grief

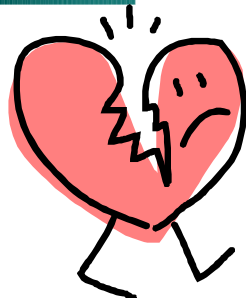
- ❖ High mobility lifestyle – brings about a lot of loss
- ❖ Loss (recognized or unrecognized) = Grief

“For most TCK’s the collection of significant losses and separations before the end of adolescence is often more than most people experience in a lifetime.”

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Losses – Recognized and Hidden



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TCK Grief

- ❖ Grief is:
 - Multiple
 - Simultaneous
 - Intense
 - Unresolved
 - Lonely

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Reasons for Unresolved Grief

- ❖ Fear of Denying the Good
- ❖ Hidden losses – loss of their world, status, lifestyle, possessions, relationships, role model, system identity, loss of the past that wasn't, loss of the past that was.
- ❖ Lack of Permission to Grieve
- ❖ Lack of Time to Process
- ❖ Lack of Comfort

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Dealing with Grief

- ❖ Good grief
 - Name the loss
 - Spend time with it
 - Come to closure – move forward
- ❖ How can you help them mourn?

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'It is my conviction that being a TCK is not a disease, something from which to recover. It is a life healthily enriched by this very TCK experience and blessed with significant opportunities for further enrichment.'

- ❖ Dave Pollock from "Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing up Among Worlds by Dave Pollock and Ruth Van Reken"

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Confronting the Challenges

- ❖ TCKs need to understand there is language for their life experiences.
 - How can you give that to your students?
 - Books, writing assignments, films
- ❖ How can you help ease a child's transition?
 - School transition programs
 - Find out their story.
 - How did you get here?

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What Else?

- ❖ You tell me!



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