

Third Culture Kids
David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken

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Everything you wanted to know about children raised in the expatriate life. Pollock is considered the guru in understanding third culture kids (TCKs) and adult TCKs. Both Pollock and Van Reken have studied, experienced and written about the TCK world, its benefits and its challenges.

This book goes into intimate details about understanding what makes a TCK, and what makes them unique as a culture. A TCK 'is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside their parents culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures while not having any 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'.

This book offers a specific outline to culture shock and transition that each child experiences when living in a highly mobile world. The steps of transitioning into a new culture are described as: involvement, leaving, transition, entering, and re-involvement.

The authors go on to describe in detail the TCK profile: personal characteristics; practical skills; and relational patterns typical of growing up as a TCK and the benefits and challenges to this profile. For example, a TCK usually develops a wide range of relationships as they, or people around them, come and go, but at the same time are quick to create deep and valued friendships with others. As well, Pollock and Van Reken discuss the delayed adolescent rebellion that can occur from living in a variety of cultures. A paradox exists for TCKs, possessing a high level of social, worldly, and adaptable maturity on one hand, but on the other be slow to develop a personal sense of identity and independence.

This book offers an in-depth look into what it is like to be a TCK and as a parent of a TCK gives great insight into ways to understand and better help your son or daughter, of any age with growing up in a highly mobile world. This book is lengthy, but well worth the read if you want a deep understanding of third culture kids.