

# Parental culture and disposition in tcks



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Parental Culture and Disposition in TCKs Pearce says that third-culture kids are only created when children accompany their parents when relocating abroad, and as such the study of parents is key to the study of TCKs. The number of variations on the parents' culture and disposition is as high as the number of TCK families in the world itself: however, it is often true that TCKs come from a small subset of wealthier, more highly educated and more close-knit families. Of course, parents could be of the same culture or different cultures; they could be brand new to the process of moving one's life abroad, or seasoned world travellers. That said, what is really important is the fact that the occupation and education of parents are a huge factor in whether a child becomes a TCK. Between 36 and 89 percent of American TCK families have at least one parent with an advanced degree, depending on the family's reason for moving abroad – even the lower end of this (which represents military families) is much higher than the rest of the population. This is because it is generally highly-educated people whom companies choose to post abroad. This has a huge knock-on effect: TCKs are usually richer, and accustomed to having peers of the same class; they are more likely to follow their parents' footsteps educationally and to get a higher education than their non-TCK peers. However they are less likely to follow their parents' career choices, meaning that only a small percentage of adult TCKs work in large corporations or in government. The motivation behind the parents' choice to relocate can also influence the experience of a TCK. Parents of third-culture kids can struggle to deal with the multiculturalism of their children whether they are adult TCKs themselves or have never lived abroad before: for example, a non-TCK parent will find it difficult to understand the mindset of TCKism, although they may bond over having to

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adjust to their new environment alongside their children. A TCK parent may remember only their good experiences in their youth, and be unable to understand the troubles which come inherently with moving abroad at a young age. Parents of TCKs can return to their home country, but TCKs by definition never have a home country. International relocation is a tough choice, and as such one which can unite a family or divide it. Ultimately, whether a child becomes a TCK is in the hands of its parents, and so it is very important to look at the wider effect that parents can have on TCKs.

Works Consulted Baker Cottrell, Ann and Ruth Hill Useem. "ATCKs maintain global dimensions throughout their lives." TCK World. Web. 21 March 2011.

Pearce, Richard L. D. "Children's International Relocation and the Development Process". Military Brats and Other Global Nomads. Ed. Morton Ender. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2002.