

Dreamguider: Open the Door to Your Child's Dreams

Denyse Beaudet

Hampton Roads (Dec 5, 2008)

Unknown \$16.95 (208pp)

978-1-57174-593-4

The Senoi people of Malaysia have an ancient tradition of teaching their children not only how to behave in their waking lives, but also in their dream lives. Children routinely describe dreams to their parents, who instruct them what to do when a similar dream recurs, including techniques for overcoming fear and acting responsibly towards others. They view dreams as gifts that need to be implemented in daily life.

In contrast, Western parents have traditionally viewed dreams as mental movies that are sometimes interesting, but of little consequence or value. Denyse Beaudet, Ph.D., argues in her latest book that the Senoi have set an example that parents everywhere would do well to follow. She posits the theory that parents who work with their children by helping them face their dreams and take action within them, help children understand their imaginations, the way their brains work, how dreams and daily life intersect, and how to prepare for frightening or intimidating situations.

Beaudet is a researcher who worked in the fields of developmental psychology and children's dreams for thirty years. Early in her career she was a kindergarten teacher, and she has become a parent herself, giving her the opportunity to see dream development from both a psychologist's and a parent's perspective. The text of the book reflects both perspectives, with some of the research-based chapters tending to be more academic in tone, while the hands-on chapters are more casual and friendly. She provides specific advice for parents on how to talk to their children about dreams, including suggested scripts and descriptions of how children view the world of dreams through the different ages and stages of their lives. Her research demonstrates that those who receive guidance through their dream-lives learn how to face their fears, with the added bonus of enriched creativity through the practice.

This book will resonate with parents who value holistic practices of child raising, enhanced creativity, and alleviating children's fear. Her methods are not just feasible, but practical for parents.

AMY REA (December 15, 2008)

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