

How Are The Children?

Among the most accomplished and fabled tribes of Africa, no tribe was considered to have warriors more fearsome or more intelligent than the mighty Masai. It is perhaps surprising then to learn that the traditional greeting that passed between Masai warriors was “Kasserian ingera”, which translated means “**and how are the children?**”

It is still the traditional greeting among the Masai, acknowledging the high value that the Masai always place on their children’s well-being. Even warriors with no children of their own always give the traditional answer. “All the children are well.” Meaning, of course, that peace and safety prevail, that the priorities of protecting the young, the powerless are in place, that Masai society has not forgotten its proper functions and responsibilities. “All the children are well” means that life is good. It means that the daily struggles of existence, even among a poor people, do not preclude proper caring for its young.

Rev Patrick T. O’Neill, Senior Minister of First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware told this story in his sermon in 1991 and he posed an interesting question.

He asked, how it might affect our consciousness of our own children’s welfare if in our culture we took to greeting each other with this same daily question: “**And how are the children?**” Would it begin to make a difference in the reality of how children are thought of or cared for in this community?

What if every adult among us, parent and non-parent alike, felt an equal weight for the daily care and protection of all the children in Mesa County? Would we then be able to say without any hesitation, “the children are well.”

What would it be like if the President, the Governor, the County Commission, City Council or School Board began every meeting by answering the question, “**And how are the children?**”

The Mesa County Commissioners have committed to asking the question “**How Are the Children**” at the beginning of each of their Administrative Public Hearing. This question will be answered by various entities that are involved with strengthening families and protecting children. Answers will include the current state of children from their perspective and specific information about what they are doing to strengthen families and protect children.

If you would like a free “**How Are the Children?**” wrist band to wear each day as a reminder to ask the question daily, “**How Are the Children**”, contact Janet Rowland at 244-1606 or janet.rowland@mesacounty.us