



Bringing Up Brits is a new book for parents from other cultures who are raising children in Britain, and in addition for family or friends who are touched by this.

Raising and parenting your children in a different country to the one in which you grew up can be difficult, challenging and often lonely and confusing. This book speaks to those parents and discusses issues such as cultural differences, customs and traditions, identity, British systems and language barriers. At the same time, this book offers an interesting and valuable insight into British culture from several different perspectives.

Excerpt from Chapter 2 Isolation: The physicality of raising children in a foreign land

Grandparents can become a real and constant part of a child's life. They form their own unique relationship with each other. This is something my children and parents do not have and in all likelihood will never have. At least my parents will never have that type of relationship whilst they are still young enough to experience them and enjoy them and my children won't spend time with their grandparents during their formative years. Being a part of their everyday life is not an option for them.

"The hardest thing about raising my children here in Britain is being so far away from my own family and all that encompasses."

This was the number 1 response from parents when I asked them what was difficult about bringing up their children here in Britain when they themselves are from other countries. It may be an obvious answer but the implications are huge for both the parents and their children.

For me, one of the hardest aspects about being so far away from my family is that I am not close with my younger sister and her children. I do not know her children and I cannot spend time with them as their aunty. I feel guilty that I wasn't there when she became a mother for the first time, not being able to support her by physically being there. Yes, I could send her letters giving her an insight into what it's like to become a mother and yes I could send her books that she might find useful, but not being able to be there to laugh, cry and support each other is something I'll always feel bad about for both of us.

I think guilt is a significant part of the difficulty of being so far away from our families. And feeling guilty is lonely and isolating because no one understands it. My husband understands why I feel guilty, but it's not his guilt so he doesn't have to live with it. Mollie, an American mother of 4 says

"I do feel like I have hurt my parents by not being close by to share my

children and their lives with them.”

This resonates with me so much. I can audibly hear the pain in my mother’s voice when she comments on how fast the children are growing up and how much Jonah has changed since he was born. She wants to be a part of their lives. Most importantly perhaps, my children want their grandparents to be part of their lives. I often talk about my family, we have lots of pictures and we talk about the trip we had to America (the one they can remember). The Internet is a fantastic tool for keeping in touch. We Skype and email my family as I’m sure many other parents in my situation do with their families. Nining, mum of two children born here in Britain, uses Facebook to keep in contact with her family in Indonesia. She says

“I miss my family. Fortunately with the Internet, Skype and Facebook, I can still contact my family on a daily basis.”

Is this enough? Whether it is or isn’t, it is a fact that it is all we can do.

To read more, BUY this superb book today!

www.bringingupbrits.co.uk

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