

Growing Up in Zimbabwe

English translation:

I: How do kids grow up in Zimbabwe in terms of how they interact with each other?

R: The good thing about Zimbabwe is that the kids grow up playing with each other in the streets. Here in the US, the children have TVs and video games which entertain them individually inside the house. Back home we grew up playing in the streets all day, then coming back home in the evening to take a bath, eat dinner, then sleep.

I: So in Zimbabwe when kids meet to play, how many will they be, and how exactly do they organize themselves?

R: Well usually kids meet up from, for example, five different households. The children usually come from the same street or road. They play games such as *dunhu*, a ball game.

I: How do children in Zimbabwe interact with their parents?

R: Well in Zimbabwe if children misbehave they are hit. Here it is illegal to hit children but in Zimbabwe it's very normal and acceptable. As a result, children in Zimbabwe address their parents respectfully. Here, children get away with anything because they know they can not be physically punished.

I: How about children and dating—how do children discuss such issues with parents?

R: Parents generally don't want to hear anything about young people dating. Parents usually make sure that their children understand that they are only allowed to date once they have moved out of their house—*i.e.* when they are working. This applies to both boys and girls. If you disobeyed you'd be in very big trouble.

I: How about dressing? Is there any particular way that children are expected to dress?

R: Well parents allow their children to wear anything that is respectable. Parents buy clothes for their children, and the clothes are similar to what is found in here in the U.S.

I: Let's go back to street games. What kind of games did you play exactly?

R: We would play games like *dunhu*, *pada*, and 'cops and robbers'.

I: How is *dunhu* played?

R: There will be two teams. At any point in time there will be two members of the same team, about two meters apart, throwing a homemade ball to each other. As they throw the

ball to each other they try and hit a member of the opposing team who is between them. Each time they hit someone the person goes out and another opponent comes in. Each time they miss, the other team gets a certain number of points.

I: How about *pada*?

R: *Pada* is like hopscotch.

I: How about soccer, do children play street soccer?

R: Yes they do. Boys usually play soccer using balls that the girls would have made. These balls are usually called *chigwishu*. They were made of paper and plastics tied together into a ball.

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