

10 Things You Should Know About Haitian Culture

Family Life

Q1: *What is the hierarchy of authority in the family?*

A: Authority in a traditional Haitian family starts with the father, then the mother and goes down from the oldest child to the last child.

Q2: *What are the rights and responsibilities of each family member? Do children have an obligation to work to help the family?*

A: Parents are responsible to take care of the children. In most families the dads are the breadwinners; although some moms stay home to educate the children, nowadays women are active members of the workplace. Children have to job of going and being successful in school. Typically children do not join the workforce not until after they finish high school.

Roles

Q3: *What roles within the group are available to whom, and how are they acquired? Is education relevant to this acquisition?*

A: Roles within the family is naturally set and is commonly known. Regardless of education respect and responsibilities still remain with the roles.

Interpersonal Relationships

Q4: *How do people greet each other? What forms of address are used between people in various roles?*

A: Handshakes are the most polite way of greeting between adults. Children are expected to greet adults with a kiss on the cheek (which kids don't like to do). Unless being in a romantic relationship, hugs are very limited as a way of greeting.

Q5: *Do girls work and interact with boys? Is it proper?*

A: Although the percentage of gender specific (all boys or all girls) schools is higher than mixed gender schools, boys and girls work and interact with each other, and it is totally fine. However, during the teen years parents tend to set boundaries for boys and girls, but it is not very strict or reinforced.

Decorum and Discipline

Q6: *What is discipline? What counts as discipline in terms of the culture, and what doesn't? What is its importance and value?*

A: Over the years corporal punishment was the main mean of discipline; however in the last few years time out and consequences have been adopted. Discipline is very important because it is the backbone of "respect" which is valued in Haiti.

History and Traditions

Q7: *What individuals and events in history are a source of pride for the group?*

A: Haitians hold the heroes of independence to a very high standard which in return makes "Independence and Flag days" the pride celebrations of the nation.

Q8: *To what extent does the group in the United States identify with the history and traditions of their country of origin?*

A: People born in Haiti but live in the United States are still connected in some way or another to the country. They still follow the traditions even though they live here. They cook typical Haitian food, follow the news on Haiti and sometime get involve in the politics of the country. However, people who are born here are connected with the country through major celebrations "Independence and Flag day".

Education

Q9: *What methods for teaching and learning are used at home (e.g., modeling and imitation, didactic stories and proverbs, direct verbal instruction)?*

A: At home parents assist students by making sure that they do their homework. Depending of their level of education and income, parents help or provide tutors to students to assist with their schoolwork.

Work

Q10:

What kinds of work are prestigious and why?

A: The ranking for the type of work start with being in the medical field. All Haitian families dream of having their kids become

#1 a doctor

#2 a lawyer

3 engineer

4 a nurse

5 a teacher

Parents believe that these kind of work them with climbing up the social ladder that exists in Haiti.