

The President's Perspective CHILDREN ARE A TREASURE



Currently, two of my four grandchildren, Isabelle (2) and Gabriel (3), are visiting with us. Maxine and I enjoy life so much more when they are around even though they cause us to expend twice sometimes three times as much energy as usual. When I look down at my expanding waistline, I am sure that that can only be good for me.

Many have said to me that children help keep you young. If laughter contributes to the formula for feeling youthful, then children have a unique and innocent way of saying things that make you laugh. For example this week we were all sitting in the family room I thought engrossed in a TV show when Gabriel walks over to me so unassumingly, closely followed by his sister, cups both of his hands on two sides of my stomach and says “you have a big tummy Pop! Does it hurt?” Then they both proceed to pat what obviously seemed like an enormous belly to them repeating the mantra “you have a big tummy Pop”, over and over. I love having them around and keeping me tuned into reality. They require a great amount of attention, love, and energy. They give their love and laughter so freely and unconditionally. That is why it is so hard for me to understand why anyone, except for severe mental illness, would ever hurt or abuse a child.

April has been designated National Child Abuse Prevention month. It was ushered in on the heels of the horrific and senseless murders of two sisters, Genesis and Serenity by the hands of their own father. We also have the recent images of the twins from Syria burned into our memories brutally killed during the discharge of chemical weapons ordered to be used against them by their own President. In order to commemorate their deaths the children and staff from the Halifax Community College Child Development Center operated by CADA posted shiny silver pinwheels in the raised flower beds in front of the Dr. Phillip Taylor Complex on campus. Now as students, faculty and guests roll past our main entrance the pinwheels may cause individuals to reflect on the abuses that have occurred and continue toward our children every single day.

It saddens my heart that as a father, a grandfather, and as a professional who has dedicated my life to serving children of all ages that people could be so heartless, cruel, and unconcerned about hurting and abusing innocent children. The Bible advises that whatever we do to the least of these we do also to Him. I shudder when I think of how badly this society has deteriorated to the point of not fearing God. And yet America is still the best place to live on earth. However, if we are to remain so we must not allow atrocities toward children to go un-noticed or to be dealt with lightly. We must speak for and strongly defend those who cannot represent themselves. I do not know what or if you plan to do anything, but I believe that children are a fountain of youth and a treasure so I will do all that I can for as long as I can, whenever I can. I pray that you will do what you can too. Together we can make a difference.