



Alaafia Kids Tidbits

Multicultural Gift Giving Ideas

Looking for a gift that is perfect for *your* multicultural child this holiday season? *Alaafia Kids Company* has it for you!



Multicultural Doll, Habiba, from Alaafia Kids Company

We started *Alaafia Kids Company* because of the lack of products on the mainstream market that were suitable for our own multiracial children. We didn't want to provide them with toys, games, and books that were full of pink-cheeked, white children. So we designed our own dolls, puzzles, coloring-story books, and educational flip charts where our brown-skinned, kinky-haired children would see themselves reflected. We added Heritage clothes to give them the feeling that they were special children of the world. And we included multicultural books, music and arts and crafts supplies to top it all off.

It's all about constant reinforcement of their multicultural identity, in many different ways, everyday of their lives.

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Letter from



Hello Everyone!

FREE Holiday Gift Wrapping: Everyone loves to receive gifts and children are certainly no exception! This holiday season, why not purchase a handmade multicultural gift? It's different, it's unique, and it's perfect for the little ones in *your* life. *Alaafia Kids Company* specializes in handmade multicultural gifts for children. *(Contd. p. 3)*

Alaafia Kids Company

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Special Points of Interest:

- ☺ Gift Giving Ideas
- ☺ FREE Holiday Gift Wrapping!
- ☺ New Heritage Coloring-Story Book!
- ☺ Spotlight on Paula Abdul
- ☺ MAVIN foundation
- ☺ We All Sing with the Same Voice

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What's special about *Alaafia Kids* Products is that they are handmade and custom-designed as well as perfectly suited to the multicultural child. For example, our dolls come in four distinctly different skin tones. Their hairstyles are typical of mixed race children, too. They are dressed either as World's Rainbow Children (our theme) or as African children. Our dolls make great gifts for little people learning to love and care about a younger sibling, a friend or cousin, or just people in general!

We designed our puzzles and coloring-story books to capture the imaginations and the reality of young mixed race or transracially adopted children. The art was created by another work-at-home mother, a native Russian living in Canada. Elena Stebakova, the graphic artist, has a gift for capturing the essence of mixed race children in black and white drawings. She also let her own imagination go wild while illustrating the Reusable Alphabet Art Flip Charts filled with fun and fantasy in many different forms. In our products you'll find a multicultural playground, an African American fairy, and some mixed race children in Africa, just to name a few. Take a look! You'll be pleased...and relieved to finally have found the perfect toys and educational items for your children.

Clothes make the person, and children are no exception. Developing a sense of their cultural identity is important early on in their lives. Boost their self-esteem and make them feel extra special with our Heritage African Clothes for Children. These outfits are handmade from Benin, West Africa. They're made of the highest quality cloth, making them authentic yet affordable. Our children love to get dressed up in their African clothes and we predict that you children will, too.

This holiday season, think of *Alaafia Kids Company* as you search for the perfect multicultural gift for that special little one. We are offering **FREE** gift wrapping for our dolls, clothes, and Flip Charts until January 1, 2006. Choose either an African print paper or a rainbow print. You can include a personalized message on the gift card, too! Contact us at Jeanne@AlaafiaKids.com for more information.



Letter from *Jeanne*, continued



Alaafia Kids Company is happy to offer a FREE gift wrapping service to everyone who purchases a handmade multicultural doll, a handmade African outfit for that special boy or girl in your life, or our multicultural and educational Reusable Alphabet Art Flip Charts. We will enclose a gift card with *your* message on it, too!

You can choose from an African print gift wrap or a rainbow print. This offer lasts until January 1, 2006. After that, the gift wrapping service will cost \$6.50 per item (dolls, clothes, and Flip Charts, only, although we'd be happy to put other items from the *Alaafia Kids* store in the gift box if possible!)

Coloring-Story Book Activity Guides Now Available: Activity Guides to accompany our Coloring-Story Books are now available at no extra cost with the purchase of an *Alaafia Kids Company* Coloring-Story Book, either *I Am a Rainbow Child* or *Wanna Play?* Each Activity Guide is over fifteen pages long and full of interesting and exciting activities. Detailed instructions, topics for discussion, and analogies with the Coloring-Story Book are elaborated for each activity.

The Activity Guides and Coloring-Story Books are perfect for schools, too! We've included National Education Standards in Language Arts and Civics and Government that make lesson planning easy. The Coloring-Story Books fit in well in units on *All about Me*, *My Family*, or *Social Living*. In fact, the activities are categorized this way.

The Guides also contain a supplemental book list that's much more than a book list! It contains book summaries, activities, topics for discussion, and analogies between the books and our Coloring-Story Books that makes integrating our Coloring-Story Books into any educational program, conventional or at home, easy, fun, and educational in a multicultural way.

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New Product: Stay tuned at *Alaafia Kids Company!* In celebration of upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January and Black History Month in February, we will soon be introducing our *What's My Heritage?* Coloring-Story Book and Activity Guide accompaniment. This book will make learning about heritage understandable and fun to preschool age and early elementary age children.

Happy Holidays to All!



Anansi

Answers

Dear Anansi,
The holiday season is fast approaching and I'd like to know how I can avoid a problem we face every year at this time. My parents (I'm white) always give our children books, dolls, and toys filled only with blue-eyed, blonde-haired white children. Our children are mixed race (my husband is from Haiti). I'd like them to possess things that reflect who *they* are, not somebody else. What can I do?
Michelle M. in Philadelphia, PA



Dear Michelle,
The holidays don't have to be stressful in this way! Have you ever invited your mom to go gift shopping with you? It could be in a mall or on the Internet. I know that the multicultural selections are still pretty limited but you can scout out some real finds with her. This way, you're not "lecturing" to your mom about how she "should" be culturally sensitive, but indirectly you're getting your goal achieved: your children will get some great multicultural gifts suited just for them!

Remember that your mom wants to make you happy, but she probably doesn't know how to in this case. Or maybe she just needs an education about multicultural gifts for children. Don't forget that you mom may have been exclusively part of white culture all of her life and may not know how to get out of it or where to go. You can make this a win-win situation for everyone! Good Luck!

Anansi

SPOTLIGHT on an ALAAFIA KID...*Paula Abdul*

During the season of Ramadan, the month of fasting for Muslims, we thought it appropriate to feature an Alaafia Kid with Arab roots. Although we know of several mixed race individuals of partial Arab descent, one person stands out from all the rest: Paula Abdul.

There are many different cultures represented in Paula. Her father is Syrian-Brazilian. Her mother is French-Canadian. The cultures came together in Paula, born in 1962 in California's San Fernando Valley.

Paula loved dancing from an early age. As a toddler, she'd dance around the house to Gene Kelley's *Singin' in the Rain*. She started dance classes at age 4, too, which she loved to attend despite her differences from the other little girls: namely, her shortness and her skin color. Paula took the disapproving looks all in stride. "When I would get rejected like that, it just made me more determined to go out there and prove everyone wrong," she said. And that she did. Her natural talent made her stand out above all the rest and made her be in demand as a dancer for local shows and events.

Paula did extremely well in high school, getting involved in all kinds of activities, but cheerleading was her passion. She even turned down a dance scholarship to Julliard, the world famous performing arts school in

New York, in order to stay local and hopefully become a cheerleader for the L.A. Lakers. Indeed, Paula eventually revolutionized Lakers cheerleading by introducing some great choreography besides the traditional pom poms.

Before that, Paula was still trying to come to accept who she was as a mixed race individual. While in high school, people were often not sure what to call her because of her unique appearance. She looked kind of Hispanic, black, and white all in one. Paula considered this to her advantage, however. "People were not sure what I was so I feel as if I related to many different races because of my background," Paula states. Despite or because of her unique physical appearance, she eventually got noticed and began to choreograph the music videos and world tours of several famous musicians including Janet Jackson, Duran Duran and George Michael.

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Paula Abdul Spotlight *(continued from page 5)*

Paula went on to become an extremely versatile entertainer as a dancer, choreographer, singer, and actress. In fact, Paula was awarded a star with her name on it on the Hollywood Walk of Fame along with many famous entertainers who inspired her to perform. Currently, she is well known in her role as a judge on *American Idol*, a popular television reality show that features rising stars. She also made a dance video on Sesame Street with Elmo and Zoe. Paula recently started her own line of jewelry called Innergy and a line of dance and cheering clothes called Skirtz. It seems that the sky's the limit for this amazing *Alaafia Kid*.

Surfing the.....
*Multicultural
Web*



MAVIN Foundation www.mavin.net

The MAVIN Foundation is a national non-profit organization that "builds healthy communities that celebrate and empower mixed heritage people and families." "Mavin" is a Yiddish word that means "one who understands" and reflects the Foundation's commitment to making mixed race people feel understood in a world that is predominantly monoracial. (MAVIN has no religious affiliation, however.) MAVIN advocates for mixed race people and reaches out to this community through its numerous events. It was started in 1998 by Matt Kelley, a 19-year old *Alaafia Kid* attending Wesleyan University at the time.

MAVIN provides a lot of great resources for mixed race people and their families such as their *Multiracial Child Resource Book*, *MAVIN magazine*, and products geared to the mixed race community including fabulous t-shirts. They have a speaker bank if your group is in need of someone to speak on mixed race issues at your next event.

Members receive *MAVIN magazine* and lots of other great benefits. Check out their bright and appealing, easily navigable website today! You'll find out about all of MAVIN's innovative projects such as the Generation MIX National Awareness Tour and the Adoptee Empowerment Project.

Alaafia Kids Company

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World's Children Celebrating Our
Diversity and Heritage



Alaafia Kids Company was founded in 2004 by Jeanne Yacoubou, freelance writer, former educator, and now homeschooling mom to three children. Jeanne is married to Malik Yacoubou from Benin, West Africa.

Alaafia Kids Company specializes in multicultural gifts for children. We sell items that mixed race and transracially adopted children will love including handmade **multicultural dolls**, **handmade African clothes for children** and our own line of educational products with multicultural themes including **Reusable Alphabet Art Flip Charts**, **coloring-story books**, and **puzzles**. We also carry **multicultural books**, **music**, and **arts and crafts supplies**. Our web address is <http://www.AlaafiaKids.com>

Book Nook *We All Sing with the Same Voice*

by J. Philip Miller and Sheppard M. Greene, illustrated by Paul Meisel © 1999

We All Sing with the Same Voice was originally a song recorded by the Sesame Street House Band in 1982. The free CD accompaniment makes it easy to sing along with it as you share it with your little ones. We love this book not only because of its rhyme that makes for easy reading and singing, but also because of its simple, universal message: despite differences in appearance, people are all the same where it counts the most: at heart. The book contains lots of vivid and vibrant images of children from around the world, so it really offers a multinational world tour. Our children use it as a starting point for library searches into how children live in other countries. *We All Sing with the Same Voice* is a top-notch multicultural book!



Featured book: *We All Sing with the Same Voice*

Alaafia Kids Company recommends this book as a great holiday gift. It is available in hardcover with accompanying CD through *Alaafia Kids Company* on its [Multicultural Books Page](#).