

Maternal Beliefs about Children's Friends in Australia and India

Shanit Balda¹ and Kym Irving²

¹Department of Child Development, College of Home Science, CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar 125004, Haryana, India

²School of Early Childhood, Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia

Fax: ¹<01662-34952>, E-mail: ¹<hau@hau.ren.nic.in>

KEYWORDS Maternal Beliefs. Culture. Friends. Australia. India

ABSTRACT The research was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, data were collected in Brisbane, Australia. In the second phase, data were collected in Hisar, India. Mothers of 100 preschool-aged children constituted the sample in Australia as well as in India. A questionnaire was used to explore maternal beliefs about children's friends. The results of this study indicated that although Australian and Indian mothers held similar beliefs about children's friends, cultural differences were also found to exist. Mothers in both cultures expected their children to be friends with well-mannered children and mentioned that ill-mannered and violent children were unsuitable as friends for their children. Cultural differences indicated that Indian mothers valued family background and intellect of children's friends. In line with Western research, a substantial proportion of Australian mothers mentioned not to intervene in exclusive friendship and valued their child's decision to promote self-confidence in their children.