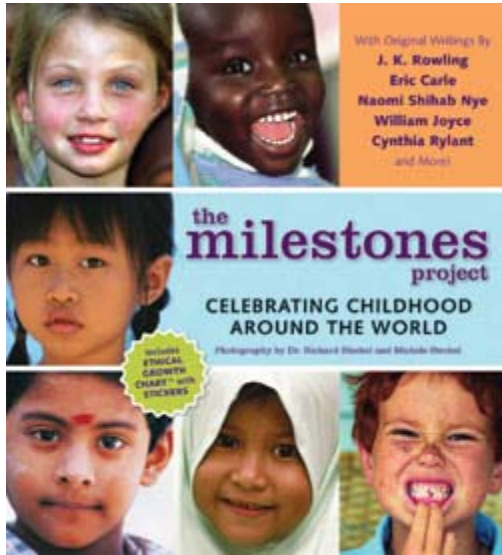


Tricycle's Milestones Project Gives a Glimpse at the World

By Bridget Kinsella, *Children's Bookshelf* – *Publishers Weekly*, 12/20/2007

In their travels around the world, photographer Richard Steckel and his wife Michele observed that children everywhere experience the same life milestones—like birthdays and first day of school—even if they don't celebrate them in the same ways. The result was *The Milestones Project: Celebrating Childhood Around the World*, a full-color book published by Tricycle Press in 2004 that included color photographs of real children across the globe, with essays about childhood by writers and artists including J.K. Rowling and Eric Carle.



Inspired to do something to help advance the idea of shared humanity after the attacks of 9/11, the Steckels traveled the world for a year, taking pictures of children. When they proposed the book based on their project to Tricycle, the publisher was eager to jump on board. And when, shortly after that, the United Nations awarded the couple its annual Tolerance Award, the company became even more enthusiastic about the project and the book, according to Tricycle publicist Hayley Gonnason.

The Milestones Project pubbed in 2004, and has sold over 30,000 copies; Tricycle issued a paperback edition last month. The new edition contains an "Ethical Growth Chart" and stickers, so children and their parents can track height as well as such behavioral development issues as sharing toys or learning to be a good friend.

Also timed for the paperback release, Tricycle is introducing a line of "Chewable" board books for toddlers with pictures of children, centering around a single milestone per book. The first Chewable book, which was released last month, is *Happy Birthday!*, with *My Teeth* and *Go Baby!* (about babies crawling and learning to walk) scheduled for release in June and September, respectively.

Luan Stauss, owner of Laurel Bookstore in Oakland, Calif., has been a fan of *The Milestones Project* from the beginning, and thinks the Chewables are a great idea. "We're in a neighborhood that is incredibly diverse—families are of every color and stripe around here," she says. "Everyone everywhere loses their teeth." Stauss also likes the fact that, while she had always referred to board books as chewables, Tricycle put the term right there on the cover.



Michele and Richard Steckel.
Photo credit RayNgPhoto.com.

"I love any board books that have actual children's pictures in them—I am always looking for more of those," says Jan Dundon, children's book buyer at Anderson's Bookshop in Naperville, Ill. Dundon observes that *The Milestones Project* continues to be popular with teachers, a fact corroborated by many children's booksellers.

With addition of stickers and the growth chart, Tricycle hopes the paperback version of *The Milestones Project* will be a more interactive experience for readers. Gonnason says that Tricycle often hears from booksellers and librarians about how *The Milestones Project* is a useful tool in teaching children about "shared humanity" and the similarities shared by people worldwide. "We are bowled over by Richard and Michele's passion to bring children from around the world together," Gonnason says.

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From Tricycle's new Chewables line.