



Raffi  
Cavoukian

# Connecting Kids with Mother Nature

A celebrity known best by one name can figure he's pretty much nestled deep in the public's collective consciousness. And so it is with Raffi, the famous "global troubadour" who charmed millions of kids and parents in the 1980s and '90s with his soulful songs about nature and childhood wonder. Can't we all hum "Down by the Bay," "Apple and Bananas," or the signature, "Baby Beluga"?

Raffi now appends his last name—Cavoukian—to his work. While "Raffi Cavoukian" may twist the tongue at first, the message in his music is still strong and vital to him. In fact, he has expanded on it in his first book, the recently published *Child Honoring: How to Turn This World Around* (co-edited with Sharna Olfman). In the book, Raffi promotes "child honoring," his philosophy about how to approach global restoration by putting children first. He writes that our world has become too toxic and that we need to make it as clean and safe as possible for our children, because what's best for them is best for the rest of the world, too.

"Children need to be introduced to nature from birth," he says. "It's their birthright to have this imprint with Mother [Nature] that will house and sustain them, and with the cosmos that will stir their imagination."

The ideas in *Child Honoring* may be big, but the steps for achieving it fit the family. Raffi advises using non-toxic kitchen and bath products and buying locally grown produce, for instance—and helping your children understand why these things are so important.

"The key is to cultivate a feeling for the beauty and mystery of Earth's infinite wonders," he says. "And a sense of self as 'kin' to this abundance."

—Samantha Brody