

Afghanistan

- ◆ Kabul is the capital city of Afghanistan.
- ◆ The official religion of Afghanistan is Islam, and there is no freedom to practice other religions.
- ◆ Afghans traditionally celebrate the birth of a child on its sixth day. On this day the baby is given a name and guests visit with gifts.
- ◆ Pashtu is the official language of Afghanistan, but at least half of the people speak Dari (Persian).
- ◆ There are more than two million orphaned Afghan children.
- ◆ When Afghan children lose their teeth, they drop the tooth inside a mouse hole, saying, "Take my dirty old tooth and give me your small clean one instead!"
- ◆ About one half of Afghan children do not go to school. Boys and girls attend separate schools.
- ◆ A handshake is the customary greeting in Afghanistan. A slight bow or nod while shaking hands shows respect.
- ◆ Flying kites is a favorite pass-time for children of Afghanistan.
- ◆ Many Afghan people are nomads who move from place to place to find water and grassland for their sheep, goats, and other livestock.
- ◆ One in four children will die before they reach their fifth birthday from malnutrition or disease.
- ◆ Tea is the national drink of Afghanistan.



Story: A Family Problem

Zainab, a young mother of 22 years, sat cross-legged, slowly rocking her crying toddler back and forth. She had lived in the treatment center in Kabul with her daughter for two weeks, but had several more to go until they would finally be free of their addiction.

Both Zainab and her daughter are addicted to a drug called heroin. Zainab's husband had taught her how to smoke heroin when she was in pain or had a cough. They also used it as medicine for their daughter. They would blow smoke in her face to calm her down when she cried. Now both Zainab and her daughter are addicted to it. They will spend 45 to 90 days in the treatment facility. Zainab says she will not return to drugs when she goes home. She looks forward to a new and better life.

It is estimated that more than 1 million Afghan people 15 to 64 years old are hooked on drugs. Afghanistan produces 94% of the world's heroin and opium, so it is very easy and very cheap for people to get. They are using it to escape the pain of war and poverty, and it costs them less than a dollar a day. That is why there are so many addicted people. In some villages, over half of the people take drugs.

Story cont...

The United States is helping Afghanistan with the drug problems by giving them money to build treatment centers like the one Zainab is in. They want all of the people who are addicted to be drug-free.

Some people say that Afghanistan is the hardest place in the world to be a child. Not only are children addicted to heroin, but there are over 2 million orphans and thousands that die from disease and malnutrition every year. School is only a dream for half of the children who live in Afghanistan.

Life for children in Afghanistan is a battle for survival and many do not make it.



Recipe: : Firnee

- 6 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 1/2 cups milk
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom seeds
- 1-2 tablespoons finely ground pistachios

Make a paste out of the cornstarch and a bit of the milk. Mix well, and heat the remaining milk in a saucepan until hot. Add the sugar and stir constantly. When the milk is close to boiling, slowly add the paste. Bring this to a boil while stirring continuously, then lower the heat and cook for 3-4 minutes. Pour into a glass pan or dish and decorate it by sprinkling the pistachios over the top.

Activity: Melon Game

Four or more players and one small carpet are needed for this game.

All players sit in a circle, and one of them begins to tell a story. The story can be either a folktale that everyone knows or a made-up story, but it cannot be a story about something that really happened. When the first storyteller has told a short bit of the tale, he stops suddenly. The next player must continue the story, and so on around the circle. If a player says something that does not make sense, contradicts an earlier part of the story, or cannot think of what to say next, he is out of the game.

A player who is out of the game is wrapped in a small carpet and rolled back and forth several times!



Go to www.frontlinekids.net/resources to find lesson supplemental materials such as: prayer points, recipes, maps, videos, printable coloring sheets and more.