



Shocking New Video Shows ISIS Training ‘Cub Fighters’

By Erica Wenig

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Young boys are right this very moment training to be Islamic State jihadis. They’re referred to as cub fighters, dressed in camouflage and wearing headbands with the Islamic State flag, in a recent video released by the organization.

At the Islamic State’s apparent Faruq Institute for Cubs, boys learn about religion and memorize sections of the Quran and Hadith, Islam’s holy books. According to the video, this institute is located in the Islamic State-held city of Raqqa, Syria.

In the beginning, the boys are lined up and performing actions or shouting responses as directed by their leader. Partway through, the boys kneel in a circle while the leader speaks about what this generation will do, alluding to reclaiming Jerusalem and liberating Rome.

Near the end, the boys wash their hands and face with water from a spigot before performing prayers.

The term “cub” appears to emphasize these boys will grow up to become fierce, says Ted Galen Carpenter a senior fellow at the Cato Institute.

“ISIS is trying to mobilize everyone that they can control to fight the war that they are waging,” said Carpenter. “It shows the brutality of ISIS leadership.”

There have been numerous reports of the “integral” role of child soldiers in Islamic State ranks. The organization released a video purportedly showing a boy executioner killing two Russian spies in January. Western powers could wind up fighting these soldiers for years to come, according to an article in Foreign Policy.

Although the U.S. leads the coalition currently fighting the Islamic State, there is ambiguity about the exact scope and length of the operation.

“It is a mistake for the U.S. to get deeply involved in that conflict,” said Carpenter. “It is imperative that other Muslim forces defeat ISIS, not that it’s an outside intervention. That will feed into the victim narrative.”