

Statue of Doji

The deity Doji is a protector of children, prominent in early Japanese Buddhism because of the high child mortality rates of the time. Life was precarious before the advent of modern medicine, and parents welcomed the help of a deity in ensuring their children would reach adulthood. The image was once brightly painted, perhaps to highlight its connection to children's welfare, but the colors have faded over the centuries. Doji is petitioned for the protection of children, especially when illness befalls them, but also simply so that they may grow up without incident.