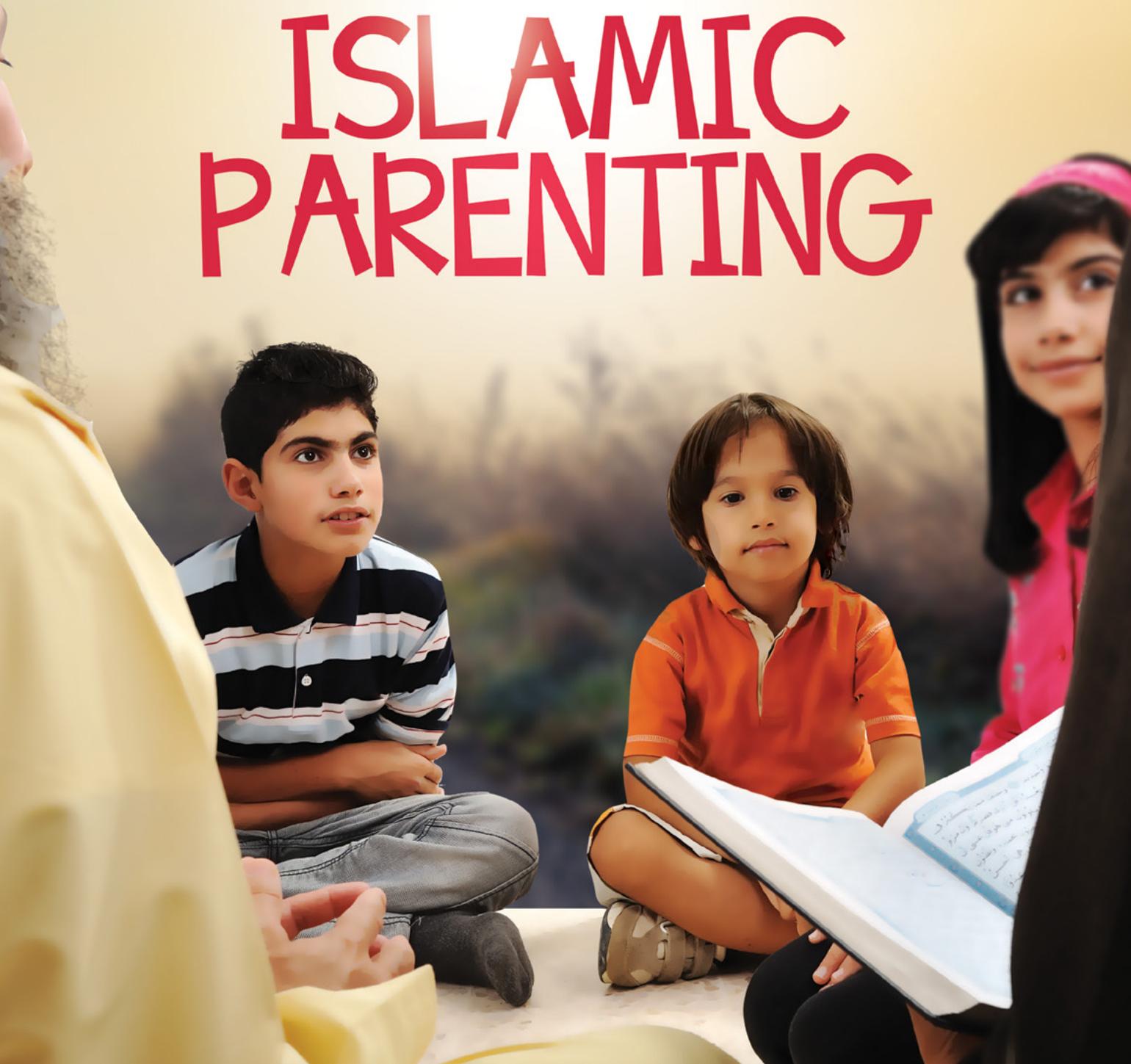




A Guidebook to Raise Our
Little Ummah

ISLAMIC PARENTING





12 Tips for Successful Disciplining

By Grandma Jeddah

Shopping for effective ways of disciplining your child? Here are a dozen valuable tips you can take home today to help make obeying easier and discipline simpler, insha'Allah.

1. Use words of encouragement. Search for situations and behaviors in which you can commend your child. When you notice Abdullah getting along with his younger sibling or completing his homework without being told, let him know how pleased you are.

2. Be fair when disciplining. Being unfair or excessively harsh when correcting your child can sometimes lead to your child retaliating in subtle ways, such as venting his anger on younger siblings. If you find you have disciplined excessively or unjustly, let your child know you're sorry. Parents can apologize too. This can teach your child that he can correct his mistakes as well.

3. Check you stress level. Have you been under extra stress lately? When you are under added

stress, you tend to have less patience. You might snap at your child for things you wouldn't ordinarily scold him for. During these periods, acknowledge your heightened tension, and then decrease your stress by retreating to your room for rest. You can also relax by involving yourself in special personal time such as reading an enjoyable book or listening to Quran.

4. Check your child's stress level. A child that is stressed is less likely to be cooperative. Focus on relieving his or her stress by determining what is upsetting him and doing what you can to help. During these periods, within reason, try to overlook negligible behaviors.

5. Be observant of routine changes. Has your child had an abrupt change in patterns such as school ending or beginning, vacation, Ramadan, Eid, moving to a new home, guests visiting for long periods, etc.? Such disruptions in normal routine can cause your child to be inattentive to instructions, less focused or restless. Be understanding during these periods and focus more on positive reinforcement rather than penalties.

6. Determine if your child is seeking attention. Some children will attempt to seek attention in any way they can—even if it is through improper behavior. Try to spend more time with your child

if you know you've been a bit slack lately. Simply listening more and giving him your full attention when he's talking to you can be a start.

7. Determine if your child is seeking power.

Children have a need to feel in control at times. Sometimes, their actions are a result of this. If your child refuses to take a bath when asked to, try offering him options rather than commands. Do you want to take your bath now, Abdullah, or in ten minutes? Allow your child to make choices and decisions whenever possible.

8. Notice if your child is sleepy or tired.

Ensure your child gets enough rest and sleep. Grouchiness can sometimes be a result of sleep deprivation.

9. Notice if your child is hungry. A hungry child is an irritable child. Try to ensure your child eats regular healthy meals.

10. Monitor your expectations of your child.

Might your child have a hidden disability that makes it difficult for him to cooperate or easily comply? Educate yourself on special needs such as ADHD, learning disabilities, autism and developmental disabilities.

11. Avoid accepting your child's bait to argue.

Allowing your child to express his feelings can be a positive aspect of child rearing. However, if you notice a continuous back-and-forth debate ensuing, say what you have to say then ignore any further comments. If your child retorts with flagrant inappropriate remarks, handle them later.

12. Address your child's feelings. Let your child know you understand how he feels, even when he has misbehaved. If Abdullah comes home with a notice from school admonishing him for speaking disrespectfully to his teacher, listen to his story and frustrations first. Let him know you understand how he feels. Then, kindly follow

up with instructions of how he could handle the situation in the future more appropriately and then dispense whatever penalties you wish to put in place.

Try practicing these 12 discipline tips with your child in your home and you might find managing your child's behavior comes easier by the dozen insha'Alla.





5 Easy Discipline Methods You Can Bank On

By Grandma Jeddah

Some time ago, our masjid had a giveaway after Jumuah. Used toys from an assortment of huge, bulging bags were set out on tables in front of the masjid for any girl or boy to browse through. My children selected a Chinese checkers game, a pottery wheel with clay, markers and crayons, and a host of other colorful and fun looking toys. This was truly a blessing—a collection of free “new” toys in a matter of minutes. Over the next few days, we had a wonderful time playing with the newly found treasures.

Participating in pleasurable activities with your children is an important aspect of raising them. It helps you to bond with them, and it can also help prevent some forms of misbehavior. Children are little creatures that thrive on attention. **If they don't get your notice through positive interactions, they will seek it in negative ways.**

Here's a scenario: Your 11-year-old son Fahad grabs his 5-year-old brother around the chest and

wrestles him to the floor beside your bed while you're relaxing, enthralled in an interesting book. Well, he's certainly grabbed your attention now! A good five-minutes or so of it... “You know better than that,” and “Why did you hit him?” and “I told you about hitting him?” With all of the shouting, scolding and threats he's now receiving, you would think young Fahad would run for cover. Not a chance.

You fed right into his plan. Your son may not intentionally be aware of how calculating his actions are. What he does know is he wants your attention, and making his brother cry out in shrieks is sure to get it.

To prevent inappropriate attention seeking behavior, parents must be proactive. Ensure that you set aside a certain amount of time for your children to receive 1-on-1 personal attention from you. This can be done on a daily basis, even if you have a large number of children, believe it or not. Here are a few ways to give your children their own personal time with Mom:

1. Face your child and look him directly in the eyes when he comes to talk with you. This let's your child know that you have an interest in him. You've stopped the important work that

you were doing solely because you want to hear and understand what he has to say.

2. Tell your child you love him. Being told you are loved can create a warm, tingly feeling that rushes through your body and just feels good.

According to hadith the Prophet ﷺ said: ***“If a man loves his brother in faith, he should tell him that he loves him” (Abu Dawud).***

3. Kiss and hug your child. Who doesn't need a warm, snuggly hug every now and then to help push you along throughout the day? It has been narrated that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ hugged his grandsons Hassan and Hussein. In fact, when a man in the presence of The

Prophet's ﷺ saw this act of affection, he

informed The Prophet ﷺ that he'd never kissed any of his 10 children. The Prophet's

ﷺ response was: “Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully.”¹

4. Play fun games with your child. Even a simple game such as tic-tac-toe can be a form of entertainment for your 5 or 6-year old. How about pulling out a quick and simple puzzle from under the bed and putting the pieces together. What about that deck of cards that has been sitting on the shelf for months? Line the cards up face down on the floor and play matching game. The last two games can be played with one child or more. Often times, the more the merrier.

According to reports, The Prophet ﷺ allowed children around him to play and simply be children: *The daughter of Khalid ibn Said narrates: “I went to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ with my father and I was wearing a yellow shirt. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Sanah,*

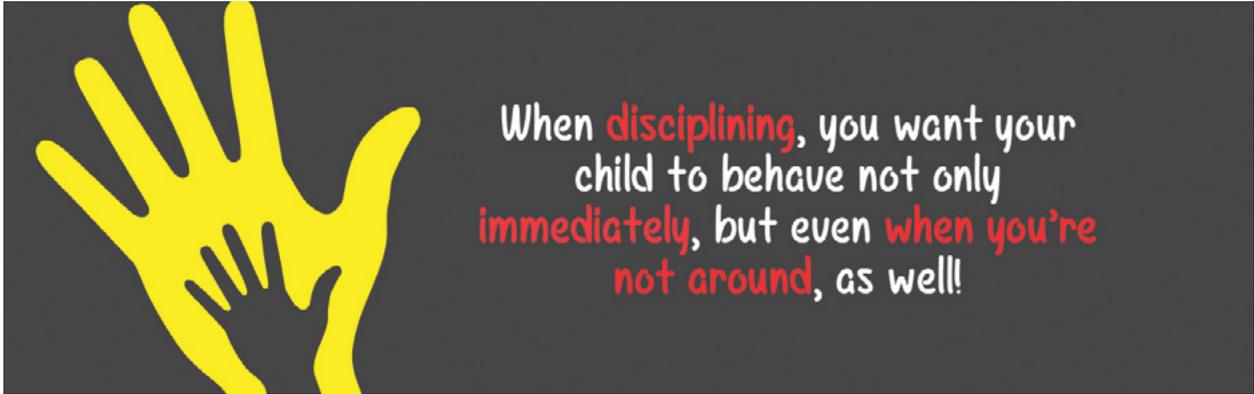
Sanah!” I then started playing with the seal of prophethood (between the Prophet’s shoulders) and my father rebuked me harshly for that. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Leave her.” and then Allah’s Messenger ﷺ (invoked Allah to grant me a long life) thrice.”²

5. Take one child with you on your next outing to the store and leave the others with Dad. While you're in the store, listen attentively as your child talks about what he sees all around, what foods he likes to eat and the like. Answer his questions with enthusiasm and interest. This is his special time with Mom.

Finding personal time to give to your child can sometimes be a challenge. This is even more so when you have a large number of children. With a little bit of planning and effort, you can work the time in, insha'Allah—a bedtime story with one child on your lap, a bubble bath with toys to squirt and splash or a review of your older child's homework to find out how things are going in school, always remember to fill up your child's “attention” bank—so he won't have to dig into his “attention seeking” reserves.

References:

1. Sahih Bukhari; 2. Sahih Bukhari



5 Common Discipline Mistakes Parents Make

By Grandma Jeddah

We can all probably spurt out a list of mistakes our parents made with us when we were young. For some reason, faults are often more memorable and vivid than the numerous sacrifices our parents made for us. Even though as parents we will make mistakes now and then when raising our children, it's helpful to know which mistakes we should try to avoid when trying to raise them up to be good Muslims. Here are 5 discipline mistakes to avoid when directing your child toward proper behavior.

1. Getting enraged when disciplining.

One of the biggest mistakes parents make when disciplining their children is getting enraged when correcting them. Expressing your rage when disciplining your child is problematic for several reasons. First, it directs your child's attention away from his mistake and causes him to focus on your wrath instead.

The object of discipline is to guide your child towards proper behavior for both short term as well as long term period. If your child is more worried about how you will react in your anger rather than what he did that was wrong, he is unlikely to benefit from your counsel or choice of discipline. Rather, he will become irritated himself and resentful. This doesn't mean the child won't comply in the short term. To the contrary, many children respond to an angry parent. What it does mean is that the lesson you are trying to teach may not sink in. It might even get completely lost depending on the extent of the anger shown. When disciplining, you want your child to behave not only immediately, but even when you're not around, as well. Responding to your child's misbehavior with shouting and aggression does not help him learn to self-manage his behavior. It merely teaches him how to respond to you when you're angry.

The second problem with expressing anger when correcting your child is that it provides the opportunity to be excessive when punishing. This can lead to abusing your child. Often times, when a parent is angry, she vents the anger onto her child. She does this by using

hurtful words or by correcting with excessive and harsh smacking. To effectively discipline your child, try your best to avoid correcting them when angry.

According to hadith, The prophet ﷺ has said: Whoso suppresses his rage, while he has the power to show himself, God will call on him on the day of resurrection before all creation, and reward him exceedingly. ¹

2. Comparing Children

One of the least effective ways of achieving compliance from your child is by comparing him to his brother or sister. “Hason always does his homework, why don’t you ever do yours, Jamal?”

The problem with comparing your children is that rather than causing the child to want to comply, it makes him resentful of the other child and you. Sibling rivalry is common between children. There are many factors which contribute to such quarrelsome behavior. Comparing children to one another can accelerate disagreements between siblings, which only contributes to additional discipline problems in the household.

Instead of comparing children, a better method would be to reward and complement the child when he performs as desired. This is more likely to cause the child to repeat the desirable behavior.

3. Do as I say, not as I do.

Demanding of your children what you do

not do yourself is bound to result in failure. Parents are children’s first role models. Even older children who model after their peers, continue to look up to their parents for exemplar behavior. “If Mom isn’t making Fajr regularly, why does she expect me to make salat on time?” your child might ponder. Being a parent is an enormous responsibility. **An important part of parenting is being the type of person that you encourage your child to become.**

Of course no parent is flawless. And this is okay. In fact, periods of failure can be a learning experience for your child. Let your child see you take responsibility for your errors—apologize to others in your family when you know you’ve treated them improperly. This will give your child an example of the proper way to correct his mistakes with family and friends.

4. Not respecting your child

As Muslims, we have an engrained understanding that children should obey their parents. Allah SWT tells us in Quran about being kind to our parents. The Prophet Muhammad SAW has instructed us to be especially kind to our mother. A child who is not respectful to his parents is certainly behaving in a way that is contrary to our religion. But not only should children be obedient and kind to their parents . . . parents should also be kind to their children.

When interacting with our children and even when correcting them, we should remember to be gentle and kind with them. People are more inclined to pleasing those they have a positive

relationship with. Speaking in a calm, respectful tone to your child does not convey a sign of weakness. To the contrary, it lets them know that you are indeed in control—not only of the situation but also your emotions.

5. Expecting perfection

Often, when we catch our child misbehaving, we wonder why he's acting in such an unpleasant way. We must remember that none of us is perfect. We aren't, and neither are our children. It can be helpful to remember that we want AllahSWT to be merciful and patient with us when we make mistakes. We should try to enact these same virtues when managing our children. When we accept the fact that our children will err and disappoint us at times, this helps us accept them as fallible humans and not view them as simply bad children. We are here to guide our children to be God-fearing Muslims, but they have their own mind, desires, and temperament—it's not easy to avoid sneaking into the cookie jar for one more of Mom's delicious chocolate chip cookies.

Patience should be our motto when disciplining our children. This will help us accept those disappointing times when our children don't live up to our expectations. It will also help us become a more superior parent to help us avoid the 5 common discipline mistakes parents make.

References: 1. Tirmidhi

5 Common Discipline Mistakes Parents Make

1. Getting enraged
2. Comparing children
3. Do as I say not as I do
4. Not respecting your child
5. Expecting perfection



One of the most rewarding
and loving relationships
one can have is
the mother & child
relationship.



What is Child Physical Abuse

By Grandma Jeddah

One of the most rewarding and loving relationships one can have is the mother and child relationship. But what happens when this bond goes awry? What can happen when a mother tries to parent her child while under the stress of depression, domestic abuse, marital problems, little or no support networks, or substance abuse? What if the mother has a child that is difficult to manage, or one that has a mental, physical or behavioral handicap? What about the mother who was brought up learning that the only and best way to train her child is to use beatings that leave welts and bruises? The awful outcome can be child physical abuse.

According to the American Humane Association, child physical abuse is the “non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child.” The association adds that child physical abuse is often caused by parents using “inappropriate or excessive physical discipline”

when angry. An incensed parent is less likely to be aware of the magnitude of her hitting, explains the American Humane Association.

Knowing what child physical abuse is can be the first step in identifying whether this affliction has become a part of your family. But knowing what it is and avoiding it do not always go hand in hand. Often, mothers need to be taught that there are alternative ways of disciplining their children that avoid hitting completely. They also need to know what they can do to help stay in control of themselves during discipline episodes.

Here are 5 ways to discipline your child without hitting or shouting:

1. Complement or praise your child when you see her cooperating or obeying. This is one of the best ways to get your child to repeat proper behavior.
2. Spend quality and quantity time with your child to develop a loving relationship. When your child enjoys your company and cares about how you feel about him/her, she will be more inclined to follow your instructions.
3. When your child is upset, let her know you understand how she feels. Once you

acknowledge her feelings, she will be more willing to comply with your demands.

4. Learn the stages of development for your child. You might find that what you consider misbehavior may simply be normal childhood behavior.
5. Remember to teach by example. If you want your children to talk out their problems with their siblings rather than fight them out, do the same with your spouse and children.

Here are 5 ways to discipline yourself when you feel you are losing control:

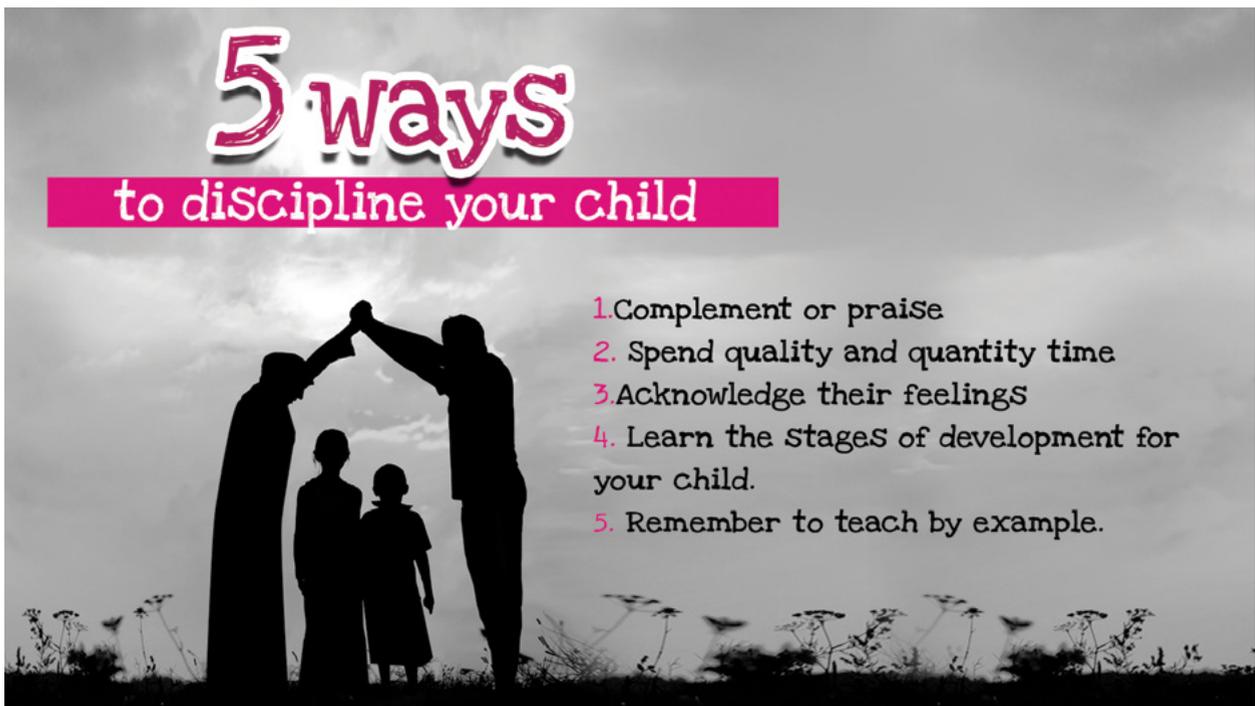
1. Phone a friend or family member for comfort, advice or merely to blow off steam.
2. If your children are already supervised, take a walk.
3. Browse through a magazine or newspaper;

surf the internet.

4. Put yourself into your child's position and think about how you would feel if someone responded to you in a violent and hostile manner.
5. Retreat to your room to read or listen to Quran.
6. Seek refuge in Allah from Shaitan.

No household is immune from experiencing child physical abuse. It occurs in Muslim homes as well as non-Muslim families. Knowing how to minimize the risk factors and enacting preventive behaviors can be a successful approach to preventing child physical abuse in your family.

For more information on preventing child physical abuse, visit the following website: www.childhelp.org



5 ways **to discipline your child**

1. Complement or praise
2. Spend quality and quantity time
3. Acknowledge their feelings
4. Learn the stages of development for your child.
5. Remember to teach by example.



PARENTING IS EASY,

You don't have to work upon your children but you have to work upon your selves to see results in your children.

Parenting Cannot Be Delegated

By Nisaar Nadiadwala

I was a guest at one of my friend's place. This was a very rich man and he had a young son. While we were sitting, his son offered me a glass of water. The father retaliated: "Can't you even greet with Salams!" I could clearly see the man's eyebrows frowning and the little kid shivering. The child mumbled 'Assalamualaikum' in a shivering voice. Later, I corrected my friend that he was wrong in insulting his son and he should read the biography of the Prophet SAW on how he taught children, tolerated their mistakes and corrected them without getting angry.

Like any skill, you need to put in effort to develop the art of parenting with immense passion, tolerance and cheerfulness. If you want to establish good qualities like generosity, hospitality and helpful nature in your child, you have to master them yourself and then demonstrate the same in front of your child in order to teach them. The results will be quicker and pleasing. An angry and short tempered father cannot train his child to be cheerful and tolerant. Even if he dictates these lessons, the subconscious mind of the child will reject them

because he did not see those lessons in his own father.

Had a math teacher not demonstrated the method of solving problems, the students would have surely found it difficult to solve them. That is why good schools are not graded on the basis of good furniture and decorated walls but on the basis of how kindly the teachers teach. Similarly, good parenting cannot be graded by the qualities of dining tables and furniture in your house but by how you demonstrate good values as a form of teaching. If you want to teach math, then you have to master mathematics. If you want to teach good manners, then you have to be a master in manners yourself.

Had a math teacher not demonstrated the method of solving problems, the students would have surely found it difficult to solve them. That is why good schools are not graded on the basis of good furniture and decorated walls but on the basis of how kindly the teachers teach. Similarly, good parenting cannot be graded by the qualities of dining tables and furniture in your house but by how you demonstrate good values as a form of teaching. If you want to teach math, then you have to master mathematics. If you want to teach good manners, then you have to be a master in manners yourself.

Good habits in a child cannot be cultivated by

scolding them with frowning eyebrows. It has to be applied with motivation. The Daddy of today wants his boss to encourage him and motivate him to be more productive. He has to realize that he has to invest the same motivation back home on his family. If he needs motivation, then so does his wife and children. The productivity of a family includes akhlaq, top graded behavior and correct attitude towards people around them. It comes in the form of encouragement, not insult.

Children are like customers. They will respond to your offers and suggestions only if they have that trust in you and find your presentations appealing. How you present a Sunnah is just as important as the Sunnah itself. If we have Sunnah to teach, then we should have certain methods to teach them as well, which sadly, many parents ignore. There is a difference between knowing something and knowing how to do something. If we reflect upon our school memories, most of our favorite teachers were those who made learning easy and engrossing.

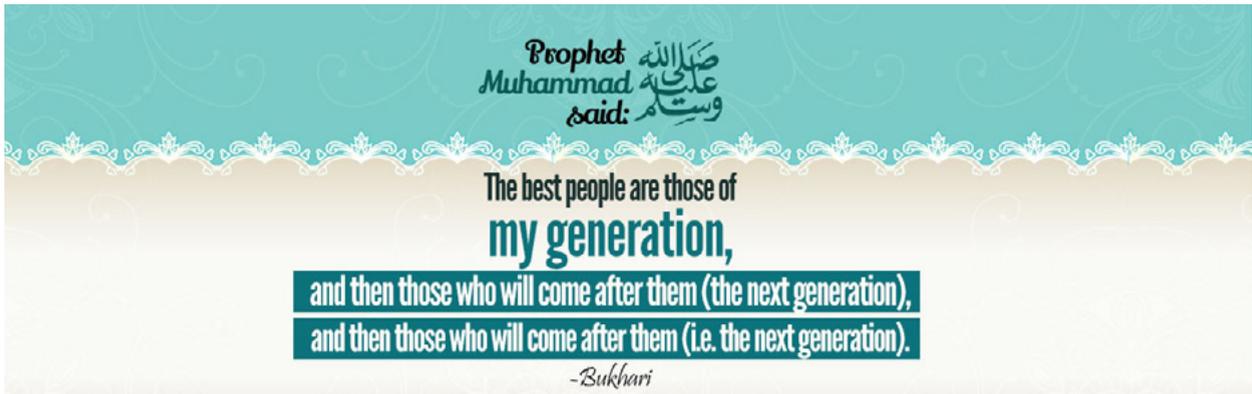
Teaching values to children is also an art as it involves thoughtful communication and convincing replies to issues that bother teenagers. The contemporary children are sagaciously aware of their spiritual and emotional requirements. Anything inadequate or lesser than their Emotional Quotient is not acceptable to them. There is an acute dearth of quality teaching of Tarbiah in growing kids. This is a global deficit felt everywhere from Malaysia to America.

One of the biggest reasons for the widening gap between children and parents is the absence of communication. Parents don't talk to their children for more than half an hour in a day. Today's children are more demanding and intelligent. Even their emotional quotient has gone up along with a boom in information technology. While parents of today have been focusing only on providing academic

education and luxury, the emotional needs of children are often neglected. Many parents are failing to identify their children's problems. Many do not even realize that the child is asking for an emotional attention. Many parents are failing to read their children's emotional language.

Successful parenting is not about accomplishing big projects like arranging a whopping amount of fees for your children's education or providing cars and branded commodities to them, but it is about succeeding in inculcating small traits like good habits and self-management in your child. You have to diversify your efforts in various fields of parenting. It could be regarding your own modesty and observing hijab amongst the non-Mahrams of your family and friend circle. It could be your disposition or manner of talking to others that needs attention. Don't forget to nourish your children with halal means, no matter how meager it is. Demonstrate an excellent behavior towards your parents, grandparents and other elderly relatives. If you are hygienic, then it is probable that your children will also observe this and adopt a hygienic lifestyle. They will model themselves in the way you keep your wardrobe clean and fix up the bookshelves. But, if you yourself intermingle with the opposite sex, frequently backbite about your own relatives, not mind haram income or don't have time to accompany your parents to the doctor, then, unfortunately, you are on the negative side of the parenting graph.

The important concern is not whether you are performing parenting or not, but it is whether you are carrying it out properly or not. Do not delegate this vital responsibility to your babysitters or to your own parents or to some school and local teachers. It is your job and you have to deal with it. If done correctly, PARENTING IS EASY, you don't have to work on your children. All you have to do is work on your selves to see results in your children.



Connecting our Children to the Best of Generations

By Umm Salih

The celebrities of our Ummah are of a different, pure kind. They are the outstanding elites that were chosen by Allah SWT.

“And remember Our servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – those of strength and [religious] vision. Indeed, We chose them for an exclusive quality: remembrance of the home [of the Hereafter]. And indeed they are, to Us, among the chosen and outstanding. And remember Ishmael, Elisha and Dhul-Kifl, and all are among the outstanding.” (Surah Sad 38, 45-48)

From all the thousands of people that came to pass this world, these prophets were certified by the Lord of the worlds with His pleasure; radiallahu anhum. Yes, our heroes are the Prophets of Allah, AS the last prophet Muhammad SAW and his righteous companions, the Sahaba small - radi-allahu-anhum. Our heroes are those who followed them in goodness and piety, the

tab'ieen and those that came after them, the taba' tab'ieen, for these were declared as the best of generations by the tongue that never lied. Our heroes are those who served the religion and strove for its life in every era.

Prophet Muhammad SAW said: “The best people are those of my generation, and then those who will come after them (the next generation), and then those who will come after them (i.e. the next generation).”

A Dilemma

In a Muslim country, a professor asked the students appearing for an admission test in his medical college about the names of the first four caliphs of Islam and unbelievably many of them answered him wrong! Similarly, when asked simple questions like names of Prophet Muhammad's SAW children or the ten given glad tidings of Paradise, they were clueless. Not that they had never heard about them, for they had all passed twelve years in educational institutions with Islamic Studies as a compulsory subject. However, they were never made to connect with them emotionally; only a few facts had been rote learned to pass the exam.

As a whole, the Muslim Ummah has been slyly

cut off from its past. Our youth can easily relate to players, singers and actors because they are projected by the media. They not only know their names but elaborate information like their favorite celebrity's favorite color, and aim to imitate them in every way possible. If you were to mention a Sahabi in front of them, he'll just be an ancient holy figure that they don't know much about.

The question arises: what can we do? How can we undo our mistake and make the best people come alive for our children? How can we make them likable to our youth?

Parents: Pay Attention!

This responsibility lies heavily on your shoulders. Parents are not only accountable for providing their children with the best food and clothing but also for presenting to them the best role models. No school, no television program, no media and no society today is going to teach your offspring about Sa'd bin abi Waqas RAu or Imam Bukhari.

To raise exemplary leaders of tomorrow, YOU have to strive to become an exemplary parent; invest double the time (Hint: time, not money!) and double the energy.

First and foremost, we must straighten out our own role models and equip ourselves with the love of the best generations. We can only inspire our children if we ourselves are inspired. Following is an exercise for both parents and their children, to learn and grow together in faith.

A Celebrity a Week

Every week, choose a celebrity. You may follow some sequence i.e, starting from Adam Alayhi

salam, then the rest of the prophets, Prophet Muhammad SAW, his companions and then the tab'een. Or, you may choose according to the personalities and likes of your children. For adding some fun element to the activity, you can also write the names of some celebrities on little pieces of paper and draw out a name each week. These celebrities can be people from the best of generations or other Muslim personalities like the Imams of fiqh, the scholars of hadeeth (e.g. Imam Muslim) and Muslim commanders (e.g. Salahuddin al Ayyubi)

After the celebrity has been chosen, dig out information and stories that inspire awe and love in the hearts. If the children are old enough to read, parents can provide them interesting books about these figures. And if they are young, then parents should read and re-tell in their own words, keeping in mind the mental level of their child. Discuss about them as a family and share the inspiring events or words that you may have come



across. Highlight their prominent characteristics (for e.g. courage, wisdom, patience etc.), their struggles and their services for Islam. The purpose is not to learn each and every 'fact' about them, it is to instill their love in our hearts and aim to be like them.

Also, introduce these Muslim personalities in your daily conversations. If your girl is being inquisitive and asking good questions, you can complement her like this: "Masha'Allah! You are asking questions just like Aisha FEMALE Radi Allahu Anha!" and definitely she would like to know more about Aisha FEMALE Radi Allahu Anha and her questions.

A few days ago, an acquaintance found her little son being particular about his appearance and especially his hair. So, she took out some Seerah books and read to him the appearance of Prophet Muhammad SAW and some of his companions and how their hair looked like. When they read that Prophet Muhammad SAW had long eyelashes, she told him that he too has long eyelashes and this made him really pleased. We just have to grab the opportunity to capture our children's hearts.

When they are knowledgeable enough, games about these figures can also be played. For e.g. asking 20 questions to guess the personality.

Aim High!

Let us all aim high; our ummah needs rebuilding. Let us all re-connect to our past glory. Let our hearts fill with the desire to regain it. Let us raise the future of tomorrow with great care. However, don't forget, we can get nowhere without the help and permission of Allah SWT. So keep the oars of Dua in your hands, making sure that the last part

of your nights are dynamic and your tears flowing in abundance; seeking His mercy and guidance till the last breath, for yourself and your children.

And be of those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous." (Surah Al-Furqan, 25: 74)

Please share your views about this article in the comments section below. What kind of fun activities can we introduce to our children?



4 Steps to Becoming an Outstanding Assistant CEO of Your Household

By Grandma Jeddah

Received any good customer service lately? It certainly is hard to come by these days. But it does exist – and when you experience it, you can immediately tell the difference from the professionals and those who just don't have the talent. Don't be lulled into thinking that good customer service just happens. Companies that have exceptional customer service train their employees to be superior customer service agents. As the Assistant Chief Executive Officer of your household, you can move up from being a mediocre disciplinarian of your children to an outstanding disciplinarian by implementing the following techniques that CEOs of major corporations utilize. Here they are:

1. Set Goals: Don't just assume your child knows how to behave, let him know what you expect of him.

"I want you to be in bed by 9:00."

"I want your homework completed before you get on the computer."

"I want you to find other ways than hitting to let your younger brother know that you're angry with him." When setting goals for your child, limit goals to no more than two or three. Too many goals can be overwhelming and reduce how successful your child will be in accomplishing his goals.

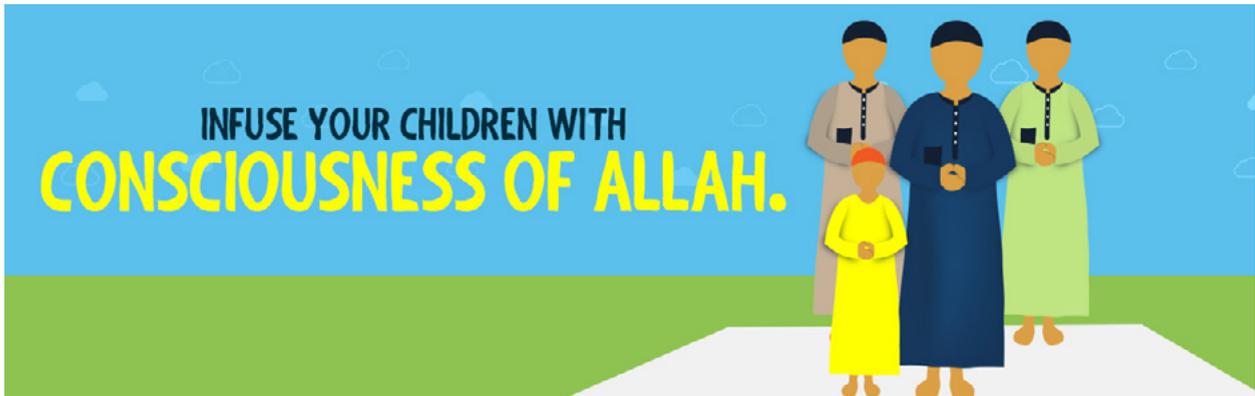
2. Reward Accomplishments: When your child performs a desired goal or even attempts to accomplish a desired goal, reward him. Give him a smile, a pat on the back, or a verbal compliment. "I see you finished your homework before getting on the computer. You are being very responsible." Or, try one of the most effective reward systems around—the star chart system. Write your child's name on a sheet of paper. Whenever he accomplishes an established goal, give him a star on his chart. When he receives 10 stars, give him a treat, buy a new toy or take him somewhere special. Letting him join in on deciding what the reward will be can be even more effective in helping him strive for his goals.

3. Provide Feedback: Make certain your child knows when he has accomplished his goals. This can be done by selecting from the suggestions

mentioned above in step 2. Your child will also need to be reminded when he is not achieving his goals and when he needs improvement. Feedback needn't be harsh; it merely needs to be consistent. If penalties are needed, get in the habit of using methods that avoid corporal punishment. As an alternative, remove desired privileges such as computer use for a period of time, phone use, electronic game use, special outings or other desired activities. Also, try time-outs; the time should be commensurate with the child's age. With all forms of penalties, avoid expressing anger or shouting. Always try to remain calm when implementing penalties. This helps prevent unnecessary or unrestrained lashing out with your tongue or hands.

4. Continue your Program: It's easy to get bored with alternative discipline methods that avoid hitting and shouting. You might get tired of returning to the star chart to put up stars. You may become restless in coming up with ideas for rewards or penalties. Don't give up. Research parenting sites online for lists of rewards and penalties for your specific child's age. Stay motivated with the star chart system by remembering that when you cease taking the time to put up stars, you often end up having to spend your time resolving discipline offenses instead. Rewards encourage good behavior—without a doubt. So keep it up!

Now, the next time you make a phone call and receive a real live person at the other end who responds with impeccable courtesy and manners, you know why: because you do the same in your own corporate office.



How to Deal with Technology Like a Believer: Pro Tips for Muslim Parents

By Amina Edota

We all love gifts. But, can the gift of parenthood be compared to others?

Surely not. It is a special and invaluable gift unlike many others. For the Muslim parent, it is a gateway to paradise.

And just as with every special gift, parenthood comes with much responsibility and accountability.

"O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded." (Quran, At-Tahrim, 66:6)

In today's world, Muslim parents and technology are inevitably linked as technology is an integral

part of our daily lives.

Parents play an important role in having these technologies in their homes and in supporting its usage by their children. However, they cannot simply dismiss such technologies, but rather look closely at their bane and boon as discussed in an earlier post, then take appropriate action.

Such technologies, whether they are gaming devices, smart phones or tablets are capable of various functions – from the usual calling, texting, chatting and playing games; to browsing the internet and social networking; and also taking photos, videos and watching TV. These functions could have both positive and negative impact on Muslim minds and homes.

The attitude of the believers should be that of empowering themselves with the appropriate knowledge they need to support their children's use of technology safely and responsibly.

Muslim parents and technology: 5 Pro Tips to Utilize

Here are 5 pro tips to help you start acting purposefully with your children's use of technology from today:

Tip 1. Connect your children with Allah SWT

It is your duty to infuse your children with consciousness of Allah SWT. Along with that is having correct understanding of the true purpose of their existence. Just as with the example of Luqman the wise in the Quran, when he directed his son to Tawheed, saying “O my son...!” (Quran, Luqman 31:13-39)

And similarly in a hadith found among the 40 hadiths of an-Nawawi;

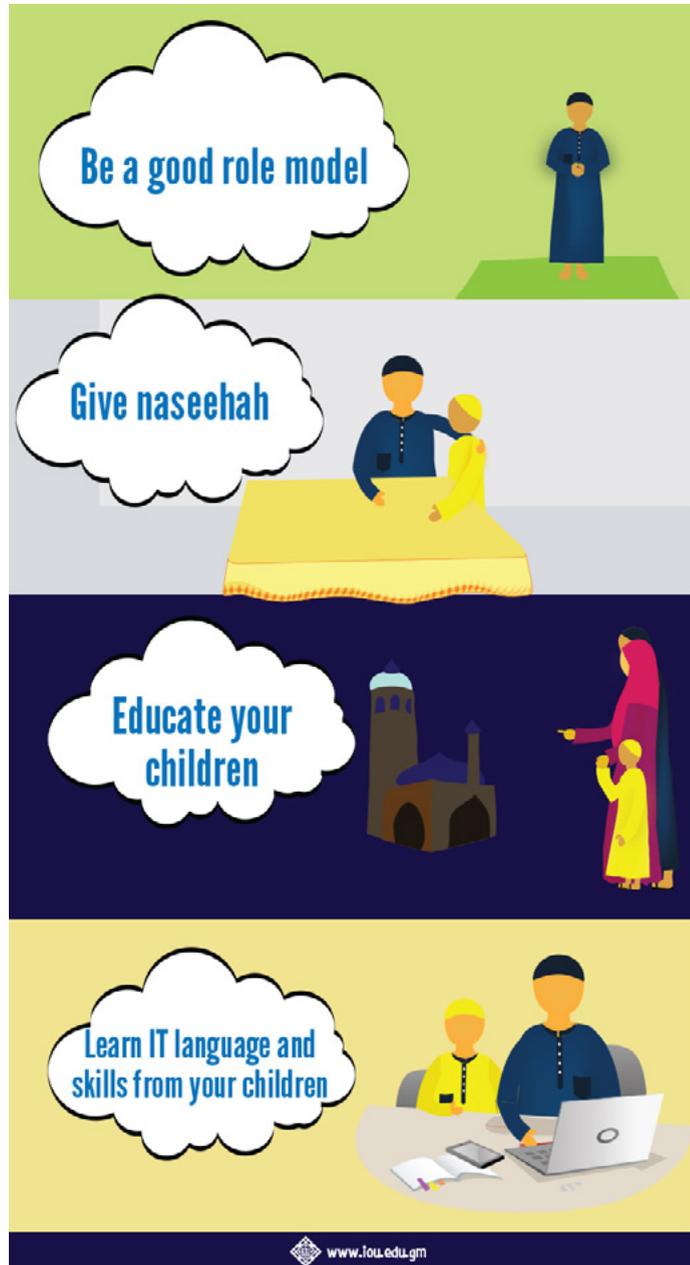
On the authority of Abu Abbas Abdullah bin Abbas MALE radi-allahu-anhu who said:

One day I was behind the Prophet SAW [riding on the same mount] and he said, “O young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice]: Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, then ask Allah [alone]; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah [alone]. And know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”

Tip 2. Be a good role model

Act responsibly with technology in the same way or even better than you expect your children to. Practice what you preach and be a great example. They are watching you even

when you do not realize it. And most importantly, the recording angels are taking records for which you will be questioned about.



Remaining calm
shows your child you're in control--
you have the reigns.



Patience is a Virtue when Disciplining Children

By Grandma Jeddah

“So be patient with gracious patience.” (Quran Surah 70:5)

“Make things easy for the people, and do not make it difficult for them, and make them calm with glad tidings and do not repulse them.”

There are several reasons why as a parent, you should remain calm when disciplining your child. A primary reason is because you want to develop a loving relationship with your young one. A child who feels loved and respected is more inclined to want to please her parents. This makes things easier for the parent in her role of parenting.

Your child looks up to you!

You are your child's primary teacher. You don't want to lose that connection between you and your child. Even though your child will go through

periods in which peer pressure reigns, your child will still be open to your suggestions if you have an understanding relationship. This helps you continue exercising your influence into the period of adolescence and beyond, insha'Allah.

You are in control!

Another reason to maintain your composure when disciplining is because when you become angry when correcting your child, rather than emphasizing that you want her to behave, you are instilling in your child that she has the power to control your emotions. Let's say your daughter is angry because you're not letting her use her phone for three days because she neglected to complete her homework three days in a row. She is angry and feels vindictive. Even if she has to sit in her room for 30 minutes, it might be worth it to her if she can ruffle your feathers and make you feel the frustration and anger she's feeling right now for missing out on using her phone.

Remaining calm also shows your child that you are in control of the situation. For some high-spirited children, your anger and shouting are likely to escalate and intensify the child's resistance and encourage a battle of wills. She might start a

tantrum or some other aggressive behavior that you will feel helpless to control. Usually when you feel helpless and at a loss as to what you should do with your child, you tend to resort back to what you're comfortable and familiar with—hitting. Controlling your anger can stop this power struggle before it starts in the first place.

Remaining calm shows your child you're in control—you have the reins. The strong-willed child needs to know you're the director. This actually helps her feel more secure. She wants to know what her limits are, and she wants to be guided.

Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet SAWScounseled a man who asked for his advice and told him three times “Don't get angry.”

You need to check your emotions too!

Sometimes, parents themselves need to calm down and deal with their own feelings first before they attempt to handle the behavior of their child. If you are in a bad mood or your child has done something that really ticks you off, do not immediately react. Take a breather. Go to your room for a few seconds—or minutes. Count to ten. Along with counseling to avoid getting angry, the Prophet SAWS recommended 3 that when you are angry, you should sit down. If you are already sitting, then lie down. Sitting down or lying down can help you avoid acting upon your anger. Be still until you have calmed down. You will be in a healthier state of mind to make the proper discipline decisions for both you and your child.

Your child learns from observing you:

When your child observes your actions during your episodes of frustration and anger, she learns from you. If you tend to become physically violent with her when you're angry, your child will learn this as an acceptable behavior. If you rant, curse and shout, she will learn this as acceptable behavior during her periods of anger too. You are her role model, her teacher. Your actions are what she will emulate.

So the next time you feel like shouting, slapping, or going on your own rampage around the house when your older daughter punches her younger brother in the head, stop and think about the negative impression you will make on both children. Calm yourself down, and be an example of how you want them to behave when they are angry.