

UPBRINGING OF AHMADI MUSLIM CHILDREN

A booklet for Parents

By

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Preface

In the National Majlis e Shura Sweden, following suggestion was discussed

“Parents of children under the age of 7 face various challenges with upbringing of children, according to the Islamic morals and values in this age. This is affecting the Tarbiyyat of our next generations and also creating other issues within the families. Shura should suggest proposals to address this issue.”

One approved action related to this was

“A booklet shall be created to support the parents addressing these challenges”.

In the light of this Shura decision, by the grace of Allah the National Tarbiyyat department has prepared this booklet.

The booklet covers a wide range of topics. The focus is on the parents of small children, but the contents are useful for the the parents of all ages. Children of 10 years and above, especially waqfe nau children, are also advised to benefit from reading this booklet.

The following members have contributed with the contents.

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Readers are humbly requested to remember them in your prayers.

Wassalam

Zaheer Ahmed

National Secretary Tarbiyyat Sweden

Introduction

Purpose of the booklet

This booklet provides comprehensive guidance for Muslim parents on raising children from birth to early school age, emphasizing Islamic traditions, spiritual upbringing, and navigating challenges in Sweden.

Importance of Spiritual and Moral Training from an Early Age

Children are the architects of a nation's future. When they are nurtured with the right values, a strong and righteous society is built upon a firm foundation. Early childhood is a critical stage in human development; it is during this formative period that beliefs, habits, and character are shaped. If children receive sound spiritual, moral, and ethical training in their early years, these values remain with them into adulthood. Conversely, neglect in upbringing often leads to moral decline, social disorder, and regret for parents both in this world and the Hereafter.

Islam places special importance on beginning moral and spiritual education in early childhood. The child's heart at this stage is pure and receptive, making it the most suitable time to instill faith in Allah, love for the Prophet ﷺ, respect for elders, compassion for others, and a sense of responsibility toward society.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ set a powerful example by emphasizing mercy toward children and respect for elders:

“He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young and respect to our elders.”
(Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Hadith 1919)

This teaching establishes mercy, respect, and balance as foundational values in Islamic character-building. Children who grow up in an environment of love, discipline, and spiritual awareness develop emotional stability and moral clarity.

Neglecting a child's upbringing—physically, mentally, or spiritually—can result in long-term harm. Islam therefore instructs parents to ensure proper nourishment, emotional care, education, and moral guidance. Failure in this duty may lead to psychological, moral, and spiritual illnesses that affect both the individual and society at large.

When the Companions asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the rights of children, he replied:

“That a good name be given to him and that he be given good upbringing.”
(Sunan al-Bayhaqi)

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar (ra) elaborated on this responsibility by stating that on the Day of Judgment, parents will be questioned about what moral values and knowledge they imparted to their children.

Islam does not delay spiritual education until formal maturity. Rather, it emphasizes starting from the earliest stages of a child's development. The Holy Prophet ﷺ advised:

“When your children begin to speak, teach them ‘Lā ilāha illā Allāh,’ and when their milk teeth fall, command them to observe prayer.”

(Zād al-Ma‘ād)

Parental Responsibility in the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

The Holy Qur'an clearly commands believers to safeguard not only themselves but also their families from moral and spiritual ruin. Allah Almighty states:

“O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones.”

(Qur'an, 66:6)

This verse establishes that protecting one's children from spiritual destruction is an obligation, not a choice. Explaining this verse, Hazrat Ali (ra) stated:

“Teach them knowledge and discipline them with good manners.”

Thus, Islamic teachings make it clear that education and moral training are the primary means of protecting children from harm in this life and the next.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ repeatedly emphasized that good character and manners are the greatest gifts parents can give their children. He said:

“No father can give his child a better gift than good manners.”

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

This hadith highlights that material wealth, inheritance, or worldly success cannot replace the lasting value of moral upbringing. Character, once firmly rooted in childhood, becomes a lifelong asset.

The Prophet ﷺ further reminded the Muslim community of accountability in upbringing by stating:

“Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you will be questioned about those under your care.”

Islam elevates the act of moral training to the level of continuous charity. The Holy Prophet ﷺ stated:

“For a man to discipline his child is better for him than giving a measure of charity.”

(Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Hadith 1951)

Prayers by the parents for their children

“My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer.”

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

Surah Al-Imran 3:39

This was the prayer of Prophet Zakariya (as) for pious children. It's highly recommended during pregnancy.

رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي

Surah Aal-e-Imran 3:36

“My Lord, I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your service; so do accept it from me.”

Used for children dedicated to Waqf-e-Nau or simply those you want to grow up in service of faith.

Mothers should increase in Durood, Qur'an recitation, and prayer during pregnancy. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) has said in addresses to Lajna and Waqf-e-Nau mothers that the moral training of a child starts during pregnancy.

Guidance by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deUE7JiM7G8>

Islamic guidance related to the child's birth

Adhan and Iqamah

It is Sunnah to recite the Adhan (call to prayer) in the right ear and the Iqamah (call for start of prayer) in the left ear immediately after birth. This was practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa).

This can be performed by anyone and is usually whispered into the ears of the baby. Adhan, is the Call to Prayer which invites the Muslims to the obligatory Prayers while Iqamah is the notice that Prayer is about to start. The purpose of the ceremony is to emphasize upon Muslims that the main object of human life is to worship God and from the time of birth a child should be made aware of this. (1)

Tahneek (first oral feed)

Tahneek is the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, where:

- A small piece of chewed date (or something sweet) is rubbed on the palate of the newborn.
- It is usually done by a righteous elder, often by a parent or respected elder.

Hadith:

“The Prophet (sa) chewed a date, then rubbed it in the mouth of the child...” (Sahih Muslim)

Halq (Shaving the head)

According to the Islamic traditions, seven days after the birth, the head of the baby is clean shaved. If that cannot be done on the seventh day, it can be performed on the 14th or 21st day. If not possible on those specific days, then it is recommended to do it as soon as possible. (1)

Aqiqah

Usually on the seventh day after the birth of the baby an animal is sacrificed and a feast follows wherein friends, relatives and neighbours are invited and some of the sacrificial meat is distributed among the poor. The animal sacrificed can be a goat, sheep, lamb, cow or camel. One animal is sacrificed for a girl while two are required for a boy. (1)

In country like Sweden, where animal sacrifice is difficult, one can donate the amount equivalent to the price of the animal/s. Through jamaati financial system, through this amount sacrifice gets done in the needy countries.

Circumcision

For a male child, circumcision is another ceremony which is essential dating back to the time of Prophet Abraham(as). (1)

In response to questions about circumcision (via alislam.org's Ask Islam and MTA programs), Huzoor (aba) has clarified:

“Circumcision is not fard (obligatory), but it is an established practice of the Holy Prophet (sa), and therefore it should be carried out if there is no valid reason to avoid it.”

"If there are medical concerns, parents may postpone or even avoid it. Islam does not demand something harmful to the child."

Male circumcision is legally permitted in Sweden, including for religious reasons, but it is subject to specific regulations designed to ensure safety.

Under Sweden's 2001 law on the circumcision of boys (Lag 2001:499), circumcision must be carried out by a licensed physician or a person specially authorized by the hälsomyndighet. In most kommuners vårdcentral does not provide that service, but there are private clinics who do it. To find a trustworthy place, contact your friends who have done it before or ask jamaat for guidance.

Breast feeding

“Mothers shall breastfeed their children for two whole years for those who wish to complete the term...”

— Qur'an 2:233

Islam teaches that if a mother is breastfeeding her child, it is for both her and her husband to decide together when is the right time to transition away from breastfeeding. (2)

Challenges of Raising Children in Swedish Society and the Importance of Being a Good Role Model

Muslim children in Sweden encounter different values in the mosque and at home compared to those in school. This can create confusion or even lead to distancing from one's religious traditions. An important question for us as parents therefore becomes: how can we convey our religious traditions and values to our children in a positive and effective way? How can we be good role models for our children and create a secure home environment for our family?

This is a question that Hazrat Khalifat Masih V has been asked many times by members of the Jama'at, and the answers have been published both in writing and in the program **"This Week with Huzoor."** Below are excerpts from those responses.

1.

During a virtual meeting of khuddam of Netherlands on 30 August 2020, a khadim asked Hazrat Amirul Momineenaa as to how one should conduct the tarbiyat (moral reformation) of young children.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaa said:

"The fact of the matter is that Allah the Exalted states that the tarbiyat of a child should start **as soon as he is born**. [...] When a child is born, we call the azan in his right ear and the takbir in his left ear so that he may hear the name of Allah the Exalted and he may adhere to tawhid, the belief in the unity of Allah. So, Allah the Exalted has said that the tarbiyat of a child should start from day one. Do not think that the child is young and that he will not understand." (Al Hakam, 9 April 2021)

<https://www.alhakam.org/developing-our-children-to-bring-about-a-better-future-islams-advice-on-the-upbringing-of-children/>

2.

At Jalsa Salana France 2019, Hazrat Amirul Momineenaa elaborated on the roles of parents and said:

"In today's world, people are **abandoning faith and denying the existence of God** at an alarming rate. Muslims who live in this society – and their children – are also being influenced by this view. Therefore, Ahmadi Muslim parents have the great responsibility to safeguard themselves against the negative influences of society and do the same for their children. [...]"

“One of a **woman’s greatest responsibilities** is the **moral training of her children**. Any moral weakness in a child can affect the entire family. Particularly in a secular society, the good moral training of children can be a highly sensitive matter. **Mothers** should aspire to reach the highest standards in the moral training of their children and turn them into polished jewels. Their children should be models of purity and piety, focused on God and excelling in knowledge and understanding so that they can then guide and lead the world. In particular, mothers need to be role models for their daughters in terms of modesty, since the values and practices of Western society do not safeguard the modesty of women. Only the teachings of the Holy Qur’an provide women with this protection. [...]

“**Fathers**, too, have a responsibility in supporting mothers in the moral training of their children. They should cooperate with them and neither criticise their wives in front of their children nor undermine them. In Asian societies, many times a **barrier develops between fathers and sons after the age of 15 or 16**. This is wrong and should be prevented. Fathers should cultivate friendly relationships with their teenage sons and guide them through the challenges of navigating this society at this vulnerable age.” (The Review of Religions, 5 October 2019)

3.

In a Mulaqat with Khuddam from Sweden in November 2025, following guidance was given about both parents having profession:

A *khadim* sought guidance on the modern trend where both husband and wife work to meet household expenses and whether this negatively impacts the upbringing of children.

Huzoor^{aa} stated that every individual knows their own circumstances best regarding their expenses and needs. However, his advice would be to adopt **contentment or qana‘at** if basic expenses can be met. The moral training of children is the primary duty and responsibility of parents given by Allah and this should not be compromised for the sake of work.

Huzoor^{aa} clarified that if a **mother** is in a profession that benefits humanity, such as a doctor or a teacher, it is good for her to work. However, she must organise her time effectively. While young children require time, once they start school, it is crucial that at least one parent is present at home when they return. Otherwise, children will come home to an empty house, find something to eat on their own and without supervision, may wander out and fall into bad company.

Therefore, if both parents must work, they should organise their schedules so that one of them is available for the children after school. Huzoor^{aa} advised cutting down expenses rather than letting worldly desires grow without limit. He quoted the hadith, which teaches that in worldly matters, one should look at those less fortunate to be grateful, but in spiritual matters, one should look at those above to be inspired to

progress. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab ar-riqaq, Hadith 6490) This mindset helps keep worldly desires in check.

<https://www.alhakam.org/khuddam-sweden-9-november-2025/>

4.

A lady asked Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaa for advice regarding her children. The very first instruction Huzoor^{aa} gave was that we must instil in our children's minds that they are **Ahmadi Muslims**. Huzoor^{aa} has repeated this guidance many times. In psychology and behavioural science, this is known as identity-based habit formation. The idea is that our habits are shaped by the identity we hold in our minds.

Huzoor^{aa} further explained that young children can often be careless or even tease others. For example, if they tell their friends that they are going to pray, their playmates might make fun of them out of ignorance. Because of this, he emphasised that parents should **make their children confident** and teach them not to worry about such reactions or feel embarrassed.

He then went into detail about how parents should raise their children. He said:

“So, **spend some time** at home with your children, even half an hour, and focus on their moral upbringing while also creating a friendly environment, so that they listen to what you say and implement it as well. All of this depends on the relationship you have with your children. If you only give them something to eat and then tell them to go to bed, or you only scold them, or sit with them for a very short time, this will not benefit them.

“When you sit with them, it is the parents' duty to have a **friendly conversation** – ask what they did at school, what they learned, how the atmosphere was, who they played with and what they played. Take part in their activities, encourage them in the good things they do, and appreciate them. In this way, they will develop a friendship with you, they will tell you everything, and they will also listen to you.”

We see that some **parents are too strict**, while others let their children do whatever they want. Huzoor's^{aa} guidance represents a perfect balance, and this also reflects modern psychological research. For example, in the book *Atomic Habits*, it is noted that “motivation is overrated; environment often matters more,” meaning that our surroundings strongly shape our behaviour.

In the same way, Huzoor^{aa} often reminds parents to build a friendly and supportive home environment, so that good habits naturally develop in children without force.

<https://www.alhakam.org/khilafat-wisdom-that-transcends-time-culture-age/>

5.

A question was asked on how to stop children from constantly using their phones during family time.

Huzoor^{aa} advised that parents must first teach their children the **Islamic etiquette of a gathering**. Islam teaches that one should not even whisper in a group, as it can create suspicion; therefore, using a phone in someone's company is a breach of this etiquette. Phones should be put away during family gatherings.

At the same time, Huzoor^{aa} placed a responsibility on the parents to make their conversations **engaging** for their children. If parents only discuss matters irrelevant to a teenager, the child will naturally turn to their phone out of boredom. Parents should discuss current affairs, academic topics, or other subjects of interest to their children. When the conversation is interesting, the child will participate. Therefore, parents must first assess their own role in the matter.

<https://www.alhakam.org/lajna-imaillah-germanys-nrw-mitte-region/>

6.

The core principle, Huzoor^{aa} said, is to acknowledge and **overlook each other's flaws** for the sake of a peaceful home. When this is done, the environment in which future children are raised also benefits. Once children are born, he said, both parents must be prepared to make sacrifices and to refine their own moral conduct.

He emphasised the importance of establishing a strong relationship with Allah, particularly through prayer. He urged both husband and wife to not merely perform the daily prayers in haste, but to offer them with heartfelt supplications. In their prayers, they should ask Allah to instil mutual love and affection between them and to guide them in the upbringing and *tarbiyat* of their children. They should pray that their children grow up on the right path, away from the negative influences of society and instead be nurtured in righteousness.

<https://www.alhakam.org/lajna-imaillah-germany-20-april-2025/>

7.

Another *khadim* sought Huzoor's^{aa} guidance on whether it was better to live closer to the mosque, even if it meant being unable to give enough time to one's children due to high living costs, or to live further away and dedicate more time to their upbringing.

Huzoor^{aa} explained that if one could reasonably afford to travel to the mosque for Friday prayers and attend classes or other Jamaat events on weekends, then living further away may be acceptable. However, he advised that other factors should also be considered, such as job location and commuting costs.

Huzoor^{aa} emphasised: “The primary objective should be that we ourselves and our children, remain connected to the centre, the Markaz, and the mosque.”

<https://www.alhakam.org/over-reliance-on-ai-may-impact-cognitive-abilities-khuddam-from-the-usas-northwest-region-meet-huzoor/>

8.

Another *khadim* asked Huzoor^{aa} what prayer parents should offer to instil the love of Allah in their children’s hearts.

Huzoor^{aa} advised that parents should first set a personal example. He explained:

“When you display your own righteous models before your children and are yourselves engaged in prayer – offering a couple of *nafl* prayers in front of them – they will notice, ‘My father is weeping and praying in this manner,’ or ‘My mother is praying like this,’ and thus they will also develop a connection [with God].”

He further emphasised the importance of active engagement with children:

“Sit with them and discuss matters at home. When you return from work in the evening, talk to them, sit with them. On weekends, spend time with them, or on any day off, sit and converse with them. In this way, you will interact properly with your children, and they will improve. In your prayers, supplicate for them; regularly **offer two *nafl*** prayers for them.”

<https://www.alhakam.org/khuddam-virginia-usa/>

9.

Taha Ahmad Sahib from Willingbro raised a concern regarding the **role of fathers** in the upbringing of children, specifically noting that fathers often have a laid-back attitude, leaving the burden of children’s moral and educational development on mothers. He highlighted the challenges this poses, especially as boys grow older and may not listen as attentively to their mothers.

Huzoor^{aa} addressed the issue by emphasising the critical role of fathers in actively participating in their sons’ upbringing.

Huzoor^{aa} also called on the broader Jamaat structures, including Majlis Atfalul Ahmadiyya, Majlis Ansarullah and Lajna Imaillah, to collaborate in supporting mothers and engaging fathers in their children’s lives. He stressed that while the challenge is significant, concerted effort and commitment from both parents and Jamaat are essential for the effective moral training of the next generation.

“Help the mothers. Ask the mothers what type of help they need from you and then extend that help to them,” Huzoor^{aa} said.

<https://www.alhakam.org/mka-usa-east-region/>

10.

On 7 November 2021, while guiding the national *amila* of Finland in a virtual meeting, Hazrat Khaliifatul Masih^{aa} said, “Do not lose your own children while attempting to reform others. That should be our foremost concern.” (*Al Hakam*, 12 November 2021)

11.

A member asked for guidance regarding **fathers who do not observe the five daily prayers** and thus negatively affect their children.

“In relation to this, I have said in many speeches to both women and men, that men should show their example, and this [responsibility] should not solely fall upon women. Women should say to the children that we must obey Allah, as it is His commandment. This is why we offer prayers. You should also ask the father why he is showing the wrong example in front of the children. We can only explain, so explain it to them to pray. There is no need to look for an opportunity to argue with the fathers, lest they say the next day to you to leave their homes and return to your own home, which may affect the *tarbiyat* of the children. Explain to your children with wisdom and explain to the fathers too. [...]

“The Promised Messiah^{as} states that the religion in which there is no worship, is no religion at all. Hence, teach these things to children and adults. Fulfilling the rights owed to Allah is obligatory.”

<https://www.alhakam.org/ponder-over-why-you-are-ahmadis-members-of-lajna-imaillah-norway-receive-guidance-from-huzoor/>

12.

The questioner asked how a mother can safeguard her children from the **negative influence of social media**.

Huzoor^{aa} said that one can only make efforts in this regard and give their children time and company. Alluding to tablets, and screens, Huzoor^{aa} mentioned that some parents give these to their children to keep them occupied so that they may go about their day. Huzoor^{aa} added that children should not be watching programmes that can have a negative impact on their upbringing. Parents ought to monitor the programmes their children watch and communicate clear limits, ensuring they do not exceed one hour of screen time.

Huzoor^{aa} further added that one should also explain the ill effects of spending too much time on screens, such as the impact it has on the eyes, the negative effects on concentration levels, and the impact on studies. “Thus, like this, make them understand. Befriend them, and they shall understand. And, most importantly, pray that Allah protects them from the harmful effects.”

Huzoor^{aa} added that while it may not be possible to completely prevent children from using screens, parents should limit their usage to one hour per day. He mentioned that many mothers have written to him, sharing that when they implemented this rule, their children understood and adhered to it.

<https://www.alhakam.org/cologne-bremen-lajna/>

13.

Emphasising the broader responsibilities within a marital relationship, Huzoor^{aa} mentioned, “If you keep in mind that you have to treat your wife well for the sake of Allah, behave with good manners, and then for the upbringing of your future children, it is essential that both husband and wife take care of each other, act with good conduct, and speak well, presenting a good example before the children – these are the signs of a good husband and a good wife.”

<https://www.alhakam.org/students-mka-germany-meet-huzoor/>

In addition to the above guidance, there are several short video clips available, in which khulafa-e-ahmadiyyat have guided the parents

[Vägledning för föräldrar – Islam Ahmadiyya Församling](#)

Role of Prayers and the Holy Quran

The Central Role of Prayer in a Child's Spiritual Development

Prayer is the pillar of Islam and the strongest means of maintaining a relationship with Allah. It nurtures discipline, humility, moral awareness, and God-consciousness. A child who grows up accustomed to prayer learns from an early age that life has purpose and accountability before the Creator.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave clear and practical guidance regarding the gradual training of children in prayer. He said:

“Command your children to observe prayer when they are seven years old, and discipline them concerning it when they are ten years old, and separate their beds.”
(Sunan Abū Dāwūd)

This hadith establishes a **gradual, compassionate, and consistent approach** to religious training.

The Wise Counsel of Hazrat Luqman to His Son

The Qur'an presents the beautiful example of Hazrat Luqman, whose advice to his son serves as a timeless model for parental guidance. Allah states:

“O my son, observe prayer, enjoin good, forbid evil, and be patient over whatever befalls you.”
(Qur'an, 31:17)

This verse places prayer at the heart of moral and spiritual life. Hazrat Luqman's counsel shows that prayer is not merely a ritual but the foundation upon which righteousness, moral courage, and patience are built. By instructing his son to establish prayer, he ensured that his child remained connected to Allah while engaging responsibly with society.

Prophetic and Qur'anic Emphasis on Family Prayer

The responsibility of guiding children toward prayer lies squarely with parents. Allah commands:

“And enjoin prayer upon your family and remain steadfast in it.”
(Qur'an, 20:132)

This verse highlights the need for **consistency, perseverance, and patience** in family religious life. Teaching prayer is not a one-time instruction but a continuous effort that requires personal example and dedication.

The prophets of Allah consistently demonstrated deep concern for their children's faith. Hazrat Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) prayed:

“My Lord, make me an observer of prayer, and make my offspring so as well. Our Lord, accept my prayer.”

Similarly, Hazrat Ya‘qūb (peace be upon him), before his passing, ensured that his sons remained firm in the worship of the One God. These examples show that **righteous parents prioritize the spiritual future of their children above all else.**

The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained that even after death, certain deeds continue to benefit a believer. Among them is:

“A righteous child who prays for his parents.”

Teaching the Holy Qur’an in Early Childhood

In many Muslim families, children—by the grace of Allah—complete the recitation of the Holy Qur’an at a very young age. Mothers, in particular, devote remarkable time and effort to ensuring that their children learn to read the Qur’an fluently. Qur’an completion ceremonies are often held, and parents take pride in presenting their children to recite before elders and scholars. While this achievement is commendable, Islamic guidance makes it clear that **completing the Qur’an once is not the final goal; rather, it is the beginning of a lifelong relationship with the Book of Allah. Completion is a Beginning, Not the End**

His Holiness (aba) once shared a powerful piece of advice from his respected mother. When a parent proudly mentioned that their child had completed the Qur’an at a very young age, she replied that the real achievement was not early completion, but whether **love for the Qur’an had taken root in the child’s heart.** Without love, regular recitation rarely continues.

Teaching the Qur’an in an Age of Distractions

Allah Almighty warns against neglecting His Book:

“And the Messenger will say, ‘O my Lord, indeed my people have taken this Qur’an as something abandoned.’”³

In today’s world of digital media, entertainment, and countless distractions, this warning is more relevant than ever. His Holiness (aba) explains that developing a habit of daily Qur’anic recitation—especially in the morning—helps children recognize the importance of the Qur’an amid competing interests.

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), also emphasized that as new forms of knowledge and distractions increase, **the need to hold firmly to the Qur’an becomes even greater.**

Parents must ensure:

- Regular recitation even after completion

- Supervision and encouragement
- Gradual understanding of meanings
- Reflection appropriate to the child's age
- **Encouragement**, not pressure

The Promised Messiah (as) gave a profound reminder regarding the centrality of the Qur'an:

“Do not abandon the Holy Qur'an as something forsaken, for in it lies your life. Those who honor the Qur'an will be honored in heaven... For mankind, there is now no book on the face of the earth except the Qur'an.”

Child's growth in the school

School Curriculum

One can access comprehensive information about Sweden's school curriculum from Skolverket.se. They provide detailed curricula for various educational levels, including preschool, compulsory school, and upper secondary school.

[Curriculum for the Preschool \(Lpfö 18\)](#)

[Curriculum for Compulsory School, Preschool Class and School-Age Educare \(Lgr 22\)](#)

As a parent it is good to familiarize oneself with the content, so that the children can be guided appropriately and at suitable time about several issues that are included in the school syllabus, like gender equality, sex education, religious education etc.

When children reach the age of **10–12**, schools in Sweden begin introducing sexual education. As they move into the ages of **13–15**, the content becomes more detailed. Keeping this in mind, and following the guidance of our beloved Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper), it is extremely important for parents to maintain a **close, friendly, and trusting relationship** with their children. This helps children feel comfortable asking questions about topics that concern or confuse them.

It is also beneficial for parents to **regularly ask their children about their studies**, so they remain informed about what is being taught in school. By doing so, parents can identify early any areas where the child may need guidance or clarification from an Islamic perspective.

In our society, the concept of **freedom** is highlighted in many aspects of life. Because of this, it becomes the responsibility of parents to correct their children gently and wisely whenever they share information or ideas that conflict with the beautiful teachings of Islam. Some parents make the mistake of assuming that whatever children learn at school is harmless, or that they will “figure it out themselves.” They do not realize that schools may sometimes teach principles that are not fully aligned with Islamic values. This can have significant consequences later in life.

It is always easier to guide children **at a younger age**. The older they become, the more challenging it may be to help them unlearn ideas that are deeply rooted.

Besides topics such as sexual education and personal freedom, the school curriculum also includes **religion**. While other religions are usually presented in a general and respectful manner, information about Islam may sometimes be incomplete or not fully aligned with the teachings of Islam Ahmadiyyat. Once again, this makes it important for parents to maintain a close relationship with their children so they can help them distinguish between correct and incorrect information and guide them with wisdom and

love. Children should have such a bond with their gaurdians that they see their parents as a main source that they can come to for information and guidance.

Selection of friends at school

The selection of friends in school is a much more vital decision in a child's life than what it may seem. It could have a massive impact on the upbringing and thoughts of a child. So much so that there is a famous incident that might prove beneficial for the readers.

A concerned father once came to **Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I, Hazrat Hakeem Maulana Noor-ud-Din (ra)**, and said:

“Huzoor, my child has started expressing atheistic ideas. He says he no longer believes in God. I am very worried.”

Hazrat Khalifa Awwal (ra) smiled gently and asked:

“Where does he sit in the classroom?”

The father was surprised by the question but replied:

“He sits in the front row, close to the teacher.”

Hazrat Khalifa Awwal (ra) said:

“Move his seat. Change where he sits.”

The father was confused and asked why such a simple change would matter.

Hazrat Khalifa Awwal (ra) explained:

“Often a child's thoughts are influenced not by books, but by the company and the environment surrounding him. Move him away from those who are influencing him. His mind will clear.”

The father followed the instruction and, after some time, returned to say:

“Huzoor, Alhamdulillah, the atheistic thoughts disappeared. Changing his environment was enough.”

Hazrat Khalifa Awwal (ra) replied:

“A child's heart is soft clay, whoever sits beside him leaves an imprint.”

This obviously does not mean that a Muslim child should avoid having non-Muslim friends. Rather, it emphasizes that if a child has a friend with negative character or harmful influence, parents must be mindful of the impact this could have on the child.

Offering prayers at school

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) once said:

“Your child should play and interact with everyone, but he must remember - and you must tell him - that even though he can play with everyone, he is a Muslim. And as Muslims, when it is time for prayers, we offer prayers, because this is the commandment of God.”

He further said:

“We should make sure that our children also tell others that while we play and do everything, when the time for prayer comes, we worship God. They should immediately leave their play and go to pray. They should not feel embarrassed about this. This will leave a positive effect on other children as well.”

Sometimes parents feel hesitant or overly sensitive about advising their children in this way. They fear that if their child shows that they are religious, they might struggle to integrate. Parents must remove such thoughts from their minds. These guidelines are extremely important for the proper moral upbringing of our children

Washroom cleaning issue

A common issue that arises in school for children is that the concept of cleaning oneself after using the washroom is not taught in western schools. As a result, schools do not have water pots (*lota*) or bidets. For young children who cannot yet clean themselves, it is important that after the child comes home from school, the first thing that is done is that they are taken to the washroom and cleaned properly and that they change their clothes. This is the only way one can ensure that their child is properly clean and this will also instill a habit of cleanliness in a child from a young age. For older children, they can take with them wet wipes or a small refillable water bottle to school and once home follow the same routine as mentioned before.

Collective shower and swimming

After having sports/physical education in school there are facilities to shower. In some cases, schools make it obligatory for students to shower after the lesson and where a child sweats a lot, a shower might become necessary for the student. In other cases, it can be done after reaching home.

When it comes to showers in schools there are usually collective showers with no doors. Children shower there naked as if there is nothing wrong with it. This behavior is immodest and against the Islamic teachings. It is very important for parents to guide their children regarding this matter. If showering in school becomes necessary, the parents or the child can ask the home teacher or Headmaster in school for a separate shower which is available in some cases. Even if separate showers are not available, the child should in no case shower amongst other children who are fully naked. If this were

to happen it would slowly remove *Haya* (modesty) from the child's heart. Having modesty is a very big part of our religion.

When it comes to mixed swimming lessons the situation is looked upon in a different aspect. Boys and girls wear swimming clothes and are taught swimming to develop their survival skills. Though these are important lessons to partake in, modesty should still be applied.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (ABA) has given us exceptional guidance on different occasions to be careful and modest when it comes to small girls participating in these lessons.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (ABA) stated in the Friday sermon on January 13th 2017:

“If for young children swimming is mandatory in the school then small girls should wear full swimming dress so that they know that they must wear a modest dress. Huzoor (may Allah be his helper) said that this permission is only for small girls. Parents should teach this to their children and both parents and children should try for separate swimming pools for girls.”

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (ABA) stated on October 11th 2017:

“ God's blessings come your way when faith is given precedence over worldly matters. It is not essential to adopt everything of the West. Adopt their good points but avoid their bad points. Girls are not forbidden from swimming. They should swim but not in a mixed situation. Girls should only swim with girls. Swimming is good and everyone should know how to swim.”

Nasirat in Sweden have in the past taken certain steps and avoided swimming in places in which other boys are present. For example, in some cases it is possible to seek permission from the school to perform the obligatory swimming exams outside of school. You would need to acquire the exam forms from the school and get graded by a personal (but qualified) swim teacher. Some cities have Muslim Women Sports organizations who have certain days where only woman and girls can come to learn how to swim and here one can see if there is someone qualified who can take the exam.

Considerations for parents pledging a child to Waqf-e-nau

The scheme of Waqf-e-Nau is one of the most profound spiritual initiatives in the history of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at. Dedicating an unborn or newborn child to the Waqf-e-Nau scheme is a solemn vow of service to Allah. This is not a casual or symbolic act; it is a serious religious commitment, similar to Hazrat Maryam (as) historic pledge.

Parents who contemplate dedicating their child must therefore do so with deep reflection, understanding, and sincerity. The Holy Qur'an records the exemplary prayer of the mother of Hazrat Maryam (as):

“My Lord, I have vowed to Thee what is in my womb to be dedicated to Thy service; so accept it from me.”

(Al-Qur'an 3:36)

As Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) reminds us, **merely having a Waqf-e-Nau child does not deem any merit on its own.** Just as Hazrat Maryam devoted her unborn child to God, parents must dedicate themselves to raising their child with sincere intention. This article outlines key considerations and the blessings associated with this noble act.

Waqf-e-Nau: Meaning and Significance

Waqf-e-Nau literally means “new devotee” and refers to offering a child as a “gift” to Allah's cause. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) described it as “a magnificent army of Waqifeen children... willing to relinquish this world.” This gift must be presented “beautifully,” adorned with faith and piety.

Parents make this pledge before birth, committing that whether a son or daughter is born, they will be raised to serve Islam and humanity. The child is regarded as a “trust of the Jama'at” and is expected to serve the Divine mission. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) emphasizes that Waqf-e-Nau children “are not special just by being Waqf-e-Nau,” but become special in Allah's eyes through faithfully upholding this trust.

Parents should reflect deeply on the seriousness of this vow. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) warned:

“Dedicating children to Allah is a very serious matter. It is not a trifling matter.”

Like presenting a prized gift to Allah, waqf requires that parents prepare the child spiritually and morally, so they may become an “extraordinary sacrifice” for God. Practically, this means acknowledging from the outset that the life of a Waqf-e-Nau child will focus primarily on religious service. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) explains:

“From the beginning... they [the parents] dedicated them [the children] purely to serve the Faith, and this is the purpose of their [children’s] lives.”

Parents should lovingly instill in their child the understanding that worldly pursuits are secondary, and their life’s focus is on faith.

Parental Responsibilities in Upbringing

Because Waqf-e-Nau children are raised with a special purpose, parents bear heightened responsibilities. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) and Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) repeatedly stress that parents must carefully train and nurture their Waqf children. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) teaches that each Waqf-e-Nau “is a trust of the Jama‘at [community]” and parents must ensure the child becomes “the best part of the Jama‘at and the society” through both secular and religious education. In a Friday sermon, he stated:

“The training of every Ahmadi child depends on parents... every child, especially a Waqf-e-Nau child, is a trust of the Jama‘at... [parents must ensure] secular and religious education with special attention... so that ... the mission of Islam [may be fulfilled].”

Similarly, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) emphasizes that these children must be enveloped in love of Allah (“Taqwa”) from the very beginning.

Key responsibilities for parents include:

- Strengthening Faith and Piety
- Instilling the Waqf-e-Nau Identity
- Leading by Example
- Balanced Tarbiyyat (Training)
- Education and Career Preparation

The guidance of the Khulafa emphasizes that parents must work diligently to prepare these children. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) insists that before “these children are old enough to be put under supervision,” parents must groom them in a “befitting manner” to present an “extraordinary ‘sacrifice’ to Allah.” This requires nurturing spiritual excellence from the earliest stages.

Practical and Moral Considerations

When deciding to dedicate a child, parents should consider practical realities:

- **Family Commitment:** Both mother and father make the vow together. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) notes that when a mother vows “Ma fi batnee” (as Hazrat Maryam’s mother did), it implies both parents intend the child for Allah’s service. The father’s support is equally important in training.
- **Long-Term Sacrifice:** Choosing Waqf-e-Nau often entails a life of modest material comforts. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) explains that Waqf-e-Nau “should not think how they are going to survive materially.” Families may need to support the child’s needs, teaching the child to value spiritual rewards over worldly wealth.
- **Financial Planning:** Waqf-e-Nau children are expected to serve full-time (e.g., at Jamia or similar institutions). Parents should plan for education accordingly. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) advises confirming the child’s intent at ages 15 and 21 (rededication).
- **Ensuring Genuine Intent:** The decision must arise from pure devotion, not parental pressure. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) warns against instilling a sense of entitlement:

“Some people plant the idea in Waqf-e-Nau children that they are very special... resulting in them feeling they are special... making the purpose of their life the mere title of Waqf-e-Nau.”

Parents must teach that Waqf-e-Nau is a responsibility, not a social status.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) emphasizes:

“Just the name of Waqf-e-Nau is not enough... Waqf-e-Nau is an important responsibility. It is the responsibility of the parents until [the child] becomes an adult, and thereafter it becomes his own responsibility.”

Parents must be ready for lifelong commitment, not merely for celebratory recognition.

Spiritual Outlook and Attitude

Parents must cultivate the right spiritual mindset:

- Instilling Humility and Contentment:
- Prioritizing Worship:
- Embracing Sacrifice:
- Maintaining Faith over Worldly Life:

Rededicating and Lifelong Commitment

Waqf-e-Nau is a lifetime pledge. Parents should plan for regular reaffirmation of the child's commitment. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) instructs that **at ages 15 and 21, each Waqf-e-Nau must “rewrite the pledge,”** confirming full-time service. Families should discuss this in advance so the child understands the process. Formal procedures exist if a child later wishes to pursue marriage or a different path.

Parents should maintain connection with the Waqf-e-Nau Department, attend local gatherings, and track progress through personal files. This ensures guidance, community support, and inspiration for the child.

The Blessing of Waqf-e-Nau

After considering responsibilities, parents should reflect on the blessings of Waqf-e-Nau. Both Khalifatul Masih al Rabeh (rh) and Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) describe it as an honor from Allah. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) calls Waqf-e-Nau children “very special,” meaning Allah grants them elevated spiritual status, though this must be proven through devotion.

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) emphasized the scheme's necessity and reward, noting that Islam's next century requires “millions of trained slaves” of Allah. Parents contributing children to this mission play a role in Islam's future.

Scripture reinforces the blessing: complete devotion (waqf) is the essence of piety. The Promised Messiah (as) taught that only those “lost in God” truly live, calling Waqf “the sole purpose of my [mission].”

Allah's favor is evident in examples like Prophet Zachariah and Maryam: when parents sincerely prayed to offer a child, Allah granted special progeny (Yahya/John and 'Isa/Jesus). Parents can pray similarly:

“O Allah, whatever is in my womb, we present it to You.”

Many parents experience the joy of childbirth as a direct blessing of sincere intention.

In summary, pledging a child as Waqf-e-Nau is a profound privilege and test. It demands spiritual earnestness, exemplary conduct, and readiness for sacrifice. Yet it also brings immense blessings: a child guided by Allah, participating in a divinely mandated mission, and eternally associated with the mujahideen of Islam. Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) assures:

“Allah... will not leave anyone without His reward.”

May Allah enable all Ahmadi parents who make this pledge to fulfill their responsibilities, raise pious and devoted Waqf-e-Nau, and reap the blessings of their sacrifice.