



Ansar Connection

A biweekly e-newsletter of Majlis Ansarullah, USA

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How Can We Overcome Parenting Challenges While Living in America?

Khurram Ahmad, Oshkosh, WI

"Every child is born innocent. It is the parents who convert this child to Judaism, or to Christianity, or to Paganism." (Bukhari)

We tend to be more careful with our possessions than we are with the innocence we bring into this world. The excuse that we do not know how to raise our children is not well founded. When as parents we are faced with questions such as: "Should I get my child a cell phone?" or "Should I allow him or her to have a Facebook account?" we should know that we are already on the losing end of this quagmire. Children are following us in every respect and most often it will be like looking in a mirror when faced with these questions. However, we are also faced with the challenge of fast-paced technology advances keeping us—the parents—wondering what parenting question to deal with the next day.

Parenting starts even before we are planning to be parents. We pray every day in our Prayers the prayer of Hazrat Ibrahim (may peace be on him):

"My Lord, make me observe Prayer, and my children too. Our Lord! bestow Thy grace on me and accept my prayer. Our Lord, grant forgiveness to me and to my parents and to the believers on the day when the reckoning will take place." (The Holy Qur'an, 14 :41-42)

Prayers are the fundamental tool available to us for raising our children. After prayers is the model we present to our children and in doing so ensuring that we are not providing mixed messages to them. Children are very intelligent and observant at an early age. That is why when we look at all the teachings around raising children—both secular for the sake of raising more successful children and religious for attachment with God—we find that importance is given to the early years. Islam is the only religion that asks the father to recite the name of God in a newborn's ears. Emphasis on cleanliness is from the early age. Caring for the environment we keep the child in—from the womb to early years—is stressed upon by the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him), the Promised Messiah (may peace be on him), and his Khulafa.

It is an easy argument to make that we will never intentionally teach our children to lie. However, we fail to often recognize the subtle lies that we tell our children that they are taking as an acceptable behavior. In his book *The Way of Seekers* Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) states:

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“Do not lie to a child nor be peevish or arrogant with him or her. The child will certainly imitate you. It is the parents who teach a child lying. The mother does something in the child’s presence but denies having done it when asked by the father. Thus the child learns to lie. I certainly do not mean that parents are permitted to misbehave in the absence of the child. What I mean is that if they cannot help doing such things, they should try to be circumspect, at least, in the presence of children to save the younger generation from such evils.”

All of us understand that our children are our future and we as parents are solely responsible for their upbringing. Yet, we are complacent about it and do not want to make any needed sacrifices for this.

I have been blessed with the opportunity of raising three daughters. Based on many established criteria, we probably did not do enough for our children. But there were a few things that I can share that may be helpful for others:

- Offering Prayers in congregation at home (if not at the mosque), especially Fajr—allowed the children to learn the value and also remove any concerns on the model we as parents were projecting.
- Offering Prayers at the prescribed time—allowed children to understand that Prayers always come first.
- Not over-indulging our children—allowed them to be independent, yet remain attached.
- Speaking Urdu (the language of the Promised Messiah) at home—even though they were quickly adopting English, they remained adapt to Urdu.
- Frequenting all Jama’at events: Ijtima, meetings, Jalsas, etc.—allowed them to make new friends and provided positive influences.
- Encouraging volunteering at Jama’at events—allowed them to learn at an early age the responsibilities they will bear in their future.
- Reflecting on our own behavior towards our parents and our relationships with our siblings.
- Inculcating the love for Khilafat.
- Praying for them a lot and telling them at an early age to pray for themselves.

Abundant literature exists on raising children, but if we look at it closely, there will be a common theme to all: our positive influence as parents is the most important one. We cannot substitute that role with television, school, nanny, baby sitter, etc. That role is ours and ours alone and we are answerable to Allah on how we performed this duty. May Allah bless all our children and allow us as parents to fulfill our duties in the best possible manner. Ameen.

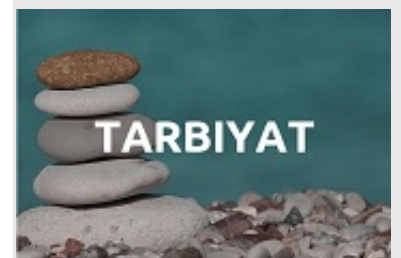
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2015 Ta'lim Test II

The 2015 Ta'lim Test II is available online, in [English](#) and [Urdu](#).
The deadline for taking the test is Sunday, December 13, 2015.

Please make every effort to take the test online
at www.ansarusa.org/TalimTest. The [PDF version](#) of the test is



also available if you prefer to take the test on paper.

Are You an Ahmadi?

Rashid Arshed, LA Inland

One of the significant characteristics and blessings of Ahmadiyyat is the affinity that grows naturally among the community members and draws them closer to each other. This affinity is spotted all around the globe.

Some time in the late eighties I pulled over to a gas station in New Jersey. The attendant at the gas station was a young man in his late twenties who appeared to be from the subcontinent. While filling my gas tank he asked me if I was from Pakistan. On my affirmation he further asked, "Are you an Ahmadi?" My answer was 'yes' again. At this point he disclosed that he was also an Ahmadi and had recently arrived in the USA from Rabwah. He did not have a permanent resident status but looked confident and hopeful. Judging from his confidence I assured him that he would not be working at the gas station very long.

Some years after this incident, I moved to Long Island, New York and became affiliated with Queens Chapter of the Jama'at. I saw the same young man in the mosque actively running around and supervising Jama'at programs. This man had been elected Qa'id Khuddamul-Ahmadiyya, married to a pious professional lady, and was father of two children now. He was also running a small business and had obtained resident status.

The bond that connected me and the young man at the gas station was not a unique experience. We see this spirit wherever the Ahmadis gather, whether in a small or large group. This demonstration of brotherhood is more visible at Jalsa Salana where no one needs any introduction. To further this spirit and to strengthen the bond of brotherhood I try to meet as many new people of all ages as I can. I tell them about myself and learn about them and their background.

In have experienced the same spirit of affinity in each Jama'at I have been a part of. Since 2009, I am a member of Los Angeles Jama'at. Almost all faces were new and unfamiliar initially but it took one hand shake with Assalamu Alaikum and all barriers of unfamiliarity came down tumbling.

I pray that this spirit of brotherhood continues to grow and expand among all mankind. Ameen.

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Department of Publications
Majlis Ansarullah, USA



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