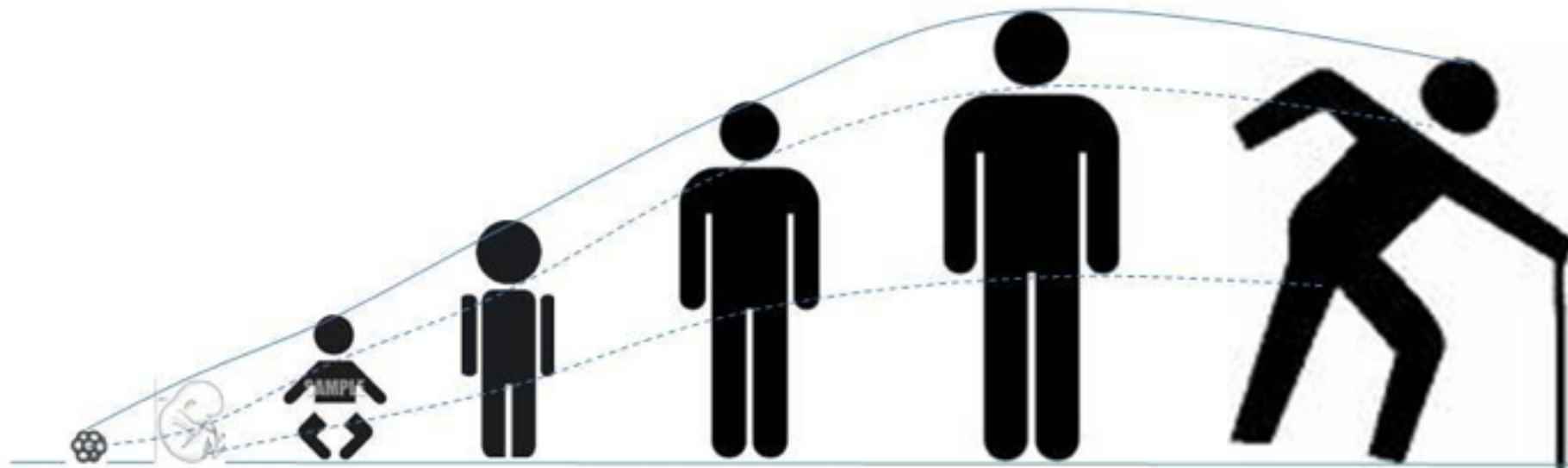




MEDIA AND TARBIYAH OF OUR CHILDREN

January, 2017

Spot the Differences



Importance of Parenting from Qur'an

- O you who have faith! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [assigned] angels, severe and mighty, who do not disobey whatever Allah has commanded them, and carry out what they are commanded. (66:6)

Imam Al-Sadiq's Explanation of Verse

- When the verse, “O you who believe! Save yourselves and your family from a Fire...,” people said, “O Messenger of Allah! How can we protect ourselves and our family?” He said, “Do good, and remind your family of it. So you must train them to obey Allah.”

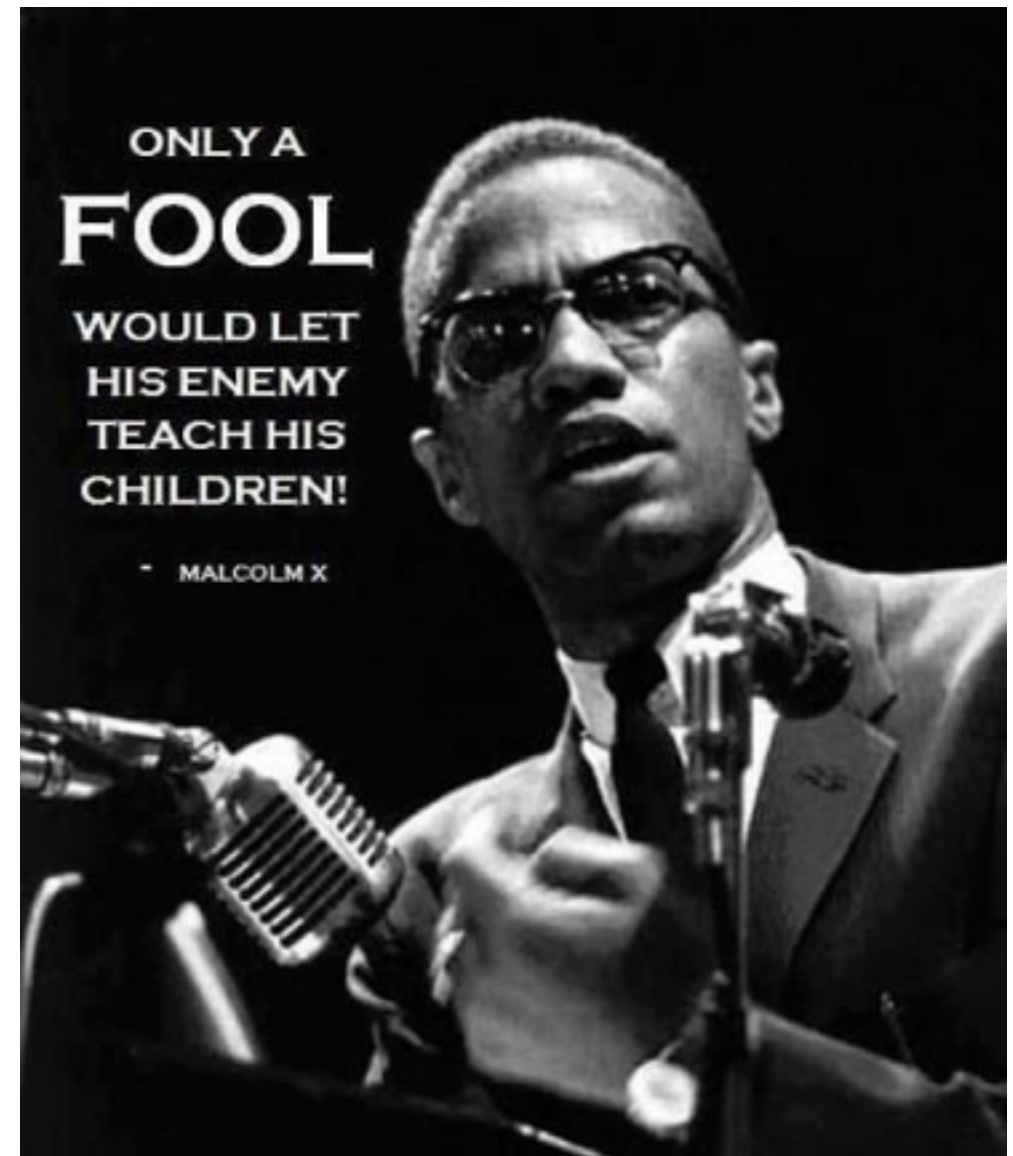
Then Imam Al-Sadiq (a) said, “Do you not see that Allah said to his prophet, ‘And bid your family to prayer and be steadfast in its maintenance. (20:132)’. And He said, ‘And mention in the Book Ishmael. Indeed he was true to his promise, and an apostle and a prophet. He used to bid his family to [maintain] the prayer and to [pay] the zakat, and was pleasing to his Lord.’ (19:54-55)”

Influence of Media

- Parents have less control over our children than in past. We are competing with others:
 - Friends
 - Extended family
 - Daycares, Schools
 - Teachers
 - Media

About the Competition

- Some of these have become so part of even our private lives that we wake and sleep to their tune
- They have their own goals in mind for how to raise our children



Different parenting strategies that parents take towards the Media

- I'm clueless
- I'm clued in, but helpless!
- I will give my children devices, but then monitor what they watch
- I will give my children tablets but won't allow them to use phones
- Video games are okay, but social media, NetFlix, YouTube, etc. are not
- No Instagram or Facebook
- I let them watch only documentaries and Muslim media
- They can use social media but only to keep in touch with relatives

Question

- Is the media (screens, apps, social media, movies, etc.) **good** or **bad** for our children?



- Just like a **saw** and a **spoon** are meant for specific purposes, the media has **specific purposes** as well - it's not neutral!

Characteristics of the Media: 1. Promotes Materialism

The screen is designed to project images of *material* things

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

The Aakhirah goes Beyond the Material



Characteristics of the Media:

2. False solutions for real needs

A human being is created with real needs:

- Need for love and attention
- Need to dispel energy
- Need for socialization
- Need for variety and entertainment

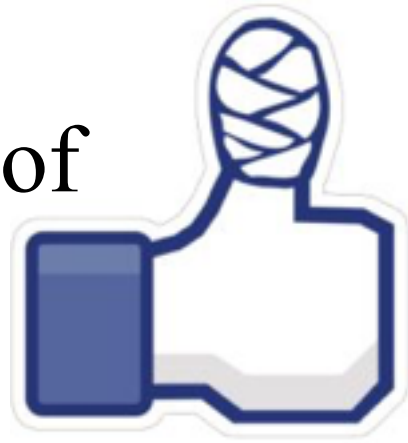
Some needs vary throughout the development cycle of a human being

Media provides false answers to these needs

- To release energy, watch other people do it...
- To be loved, escape into a virtual world or chat using social media...
- To feel like you belong, adore a celebrity...
- To satisfy the need for variety and entertainment, come back to the media!

Why Social Media is a Concern

Many studies have shown the following negative affects of media exposure on children:



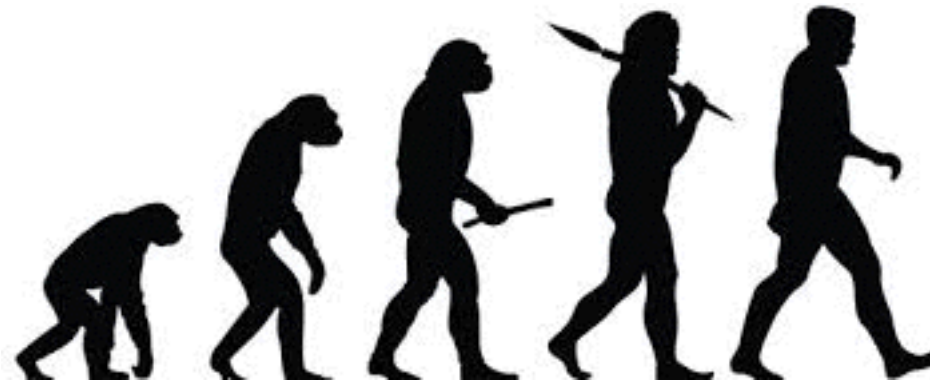
- Promotes selfishness
- Academic abilities
- Thoughts of suicide
- Sadness
- Depression
- Loneliness

Problem with providing false answer to real needs

- Like trying to quench thirst with salty water
- Can lead to addiction, or at least, lack of desire to engage in alternatives
- Can blind us to the real solutions Allah created for these needs

Characteristics of the Media:

3. Promoting the Animalistic Side of Human Beings



Cheese makes Mickey seem like a mouse. He's really not a mouse, you know, he's really more a human.

- Walt Disney



Promoting the Animalistic Side of Human Beings

- What are the most popular genres of films and broadcasts?

- Some examples:

- Comedy

- Music

- Gaming

- Horror

You should know that with His Wisdom and Authority, God Almighty has created certain powers and faculties in the invisible world of the inner self. They are of enormous benefits for us. Here we shall mention three of them: they are, *al-quwwah al-wahmiyyah*-the power of invention or imagination, *al-quwwah al-ghadabiyyah*-the power of passion or anger, and *al-quwwah al-shahwiyyah*-the power of lust or sensuality. (Imam Khumayni, 40 Hadith)

- “Haul” videos - Trying out beauty, fashion, etc.

- Pranks

Promotion of Shahwah: Zootopia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mm6-nqLtd4w>

Promotion of Shahwah: Video games

About improper images

- Imam Ali (a): Stay away from [inappropriate] looking!
For it causes shahwah to be rooted in the heart - and what a trial that is for the one who possesses it!

Game of Thrones

Game of Thrones: 10 most shocking moments from blood and beheadings to rape and incest (Independent, 2015)

3. Cersei/ Jamie rape scene - Season 4, Episode 3

As the two stood by their dead, incestual child Joffrey, Jamie began to sexually attack his sister. The scene became so talked about that the [directors](#) and George R.R. Martin had to defend it.

7. Lysa breast [feeding](#) her teenage son, Robin - Season 1, Episode 5

While sitting on her throne in the Eyrie, Catelyn's sister, Lysa, is seen breastfeeding her teenage son, Robin, causing some viewers to look away in disgust and post about it on the internet.

Stats of sexual use of media

- 90% of children ages 8-16 have seen online pornography.
- The largest group of Internet porn consumers is children ages 12-17.
- Adult industry says traffic is 20-30% children (NRC Report 2002, 3.3)

Stats of sexual use of media

- 39% of teens have sent or posted sexually suggestive emails or text messages. (The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2008)
- 49% of teens believe sending and receiving sexts is very common at their age

Promoting the Animalistic Side of Human Beings



Call of Duty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkBqpFkGIQ8>

Are these good qualities to have?

- Bloodthirsty: Eager to shed blood
- Merciless: Showing no mercy or pity
- Ruthless: Having no pity or compassion to others

Call of Duty Medals



Bloodthirsty: Achieve a 5 kill streak

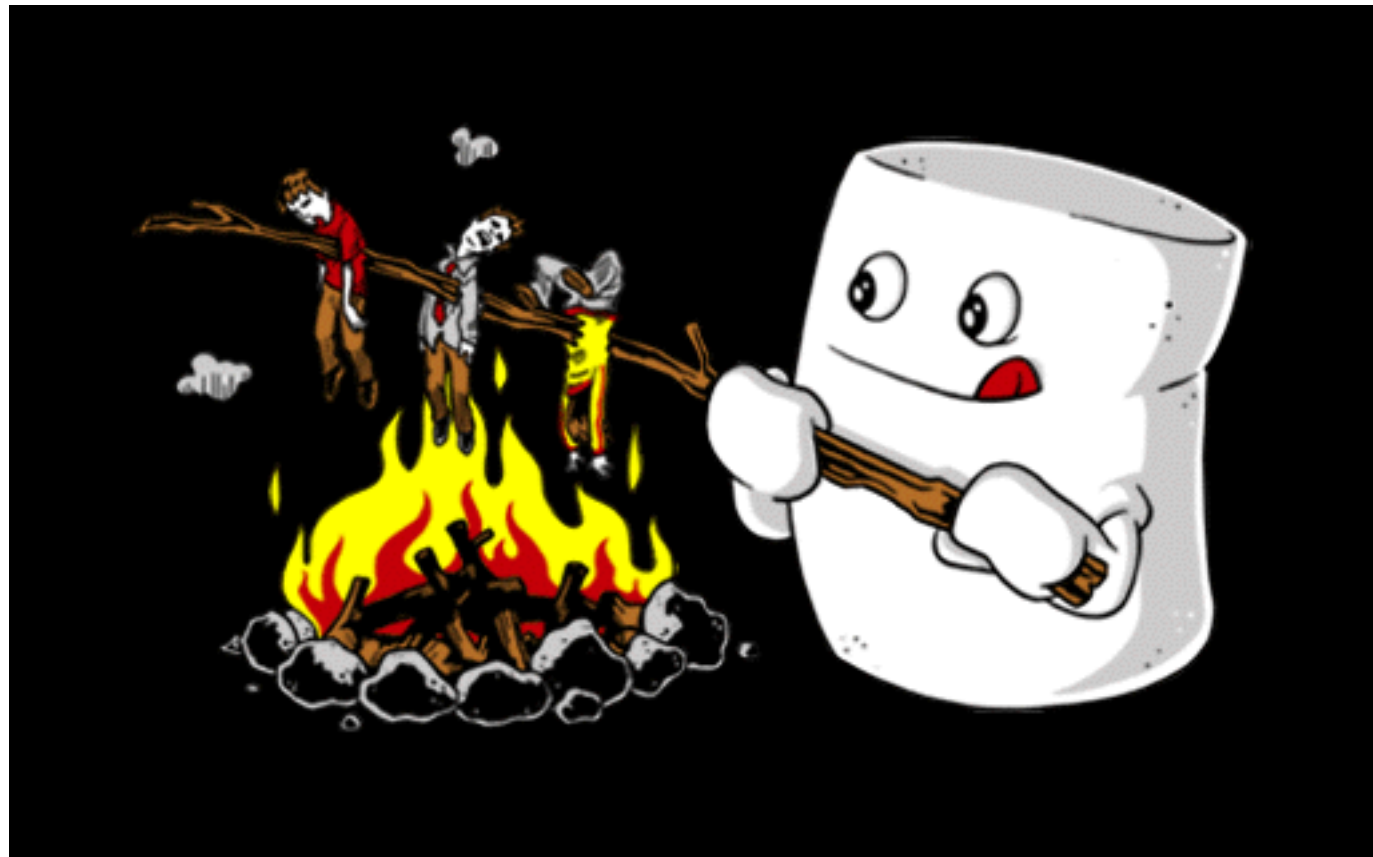


Merciless: Achieve a 10 kill streak



Ruthless: Achieve a 15 kill streak

Roasting / Dissing



- “Allah, the Exalted, says, ‘Whoever troubles one of My servants who is a believer, he has declared battle with me. However honors My servant who is a believer is safe from My anger.’” - Imam as-Sadiq (a)

Roasting

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEKYo6B0EiM>

“Parents Suck” Song by Smosh



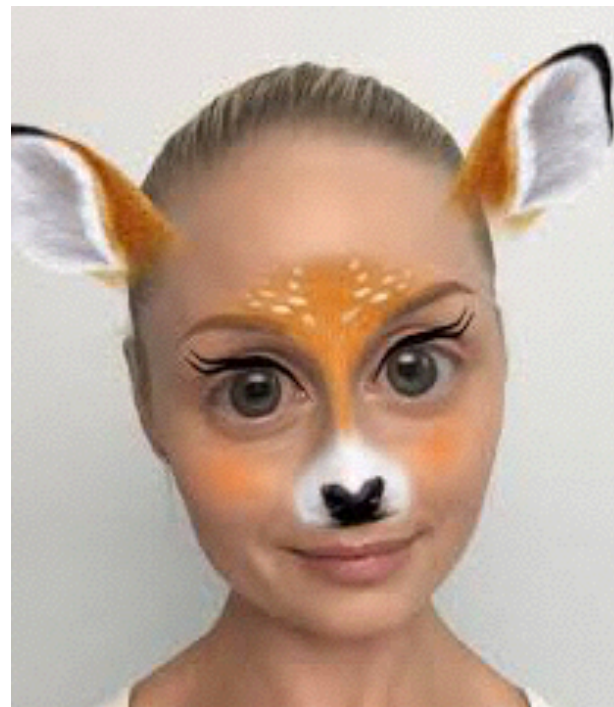
“Parents Suck” Song by Smosh



“Parents Suck” Song by Smosh



Promoting the Animalistic Side of Human Beings



Characteristics of the Media:

4. Individualism



Director? Or dictator?



MEDIA AND THE TARBIYAH OF OUR CHILDREN

PART 2

February, 2017

The eye writes our heart

وَقَالَ ع: الْقَلْبُ مُصْحَفُ الْبَصَرِ

Imam Ali (a): The heart is record-book (mushaf) for the eye

—> What we see directs our center of emotions

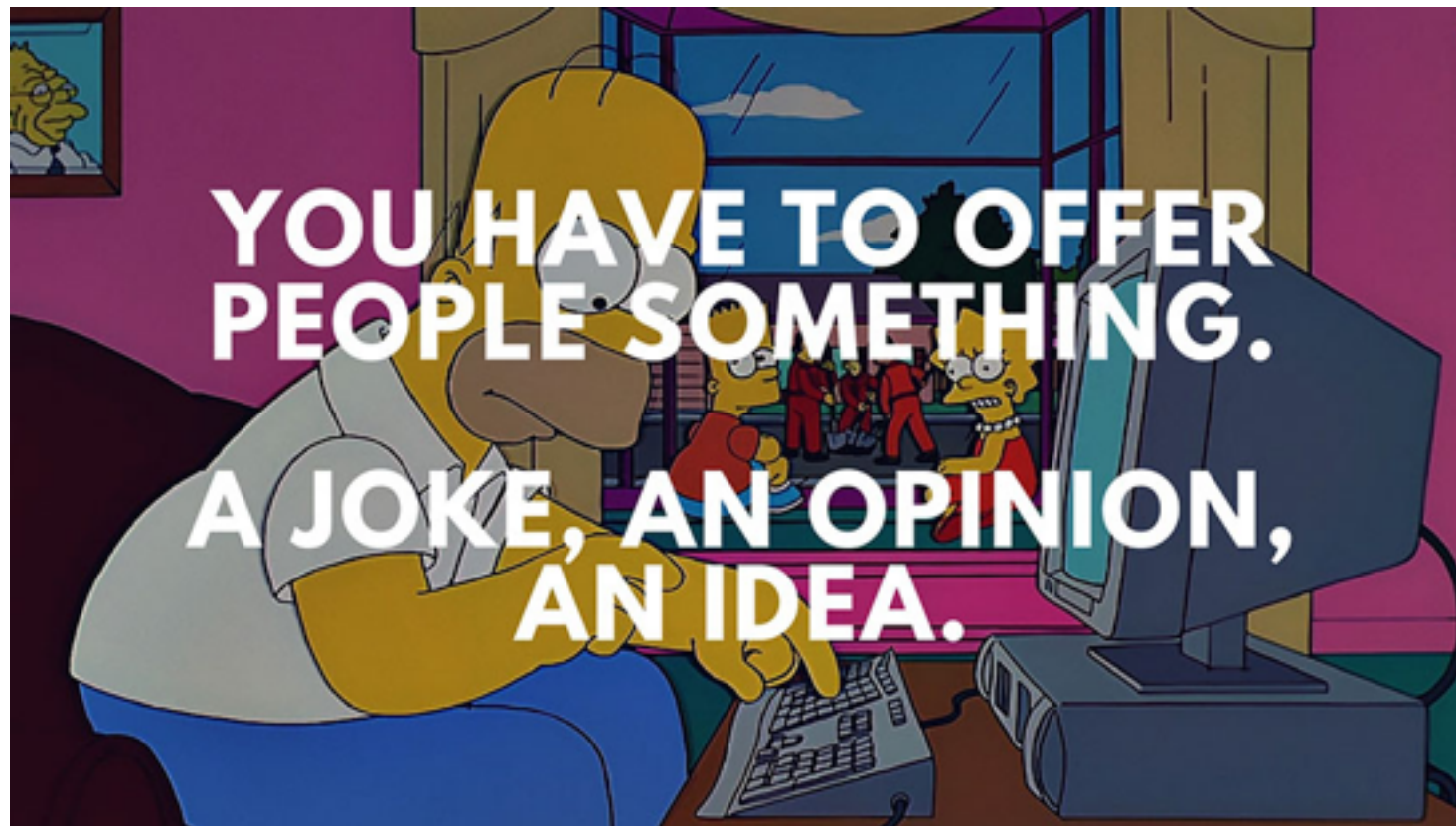
Summary

- The media was create to serve **specific purposes** - it's not neutral!
- Some tendencies of screen media:
 - Promotes materialism
 - Offers false solutions for real needs
 - Promotes the animalistic side of human beings
 - Promotes individualism

Agenda

- Examples of promotion of individualism
- Fatawa of our maraaji
- Parenting strategies

Expressing your Opinion



There are three [qualities] that are breakers of one's back: [the example of which is] one who considers his deeds to be plenty, who forgets about his sins, and is impressed with his own opinion.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a)

It's all about Me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruoiBSOZcQA&t=3s>

- The Telegraph Media, September, 2016

Modest...Fashion??

Quotes from the Video

- If a woman decides to go half-naked, she might feel liberated, she might feel confident...**and it's the same thing with covering up**
- With time and also with the younger generation it turned into a **fashion statement**
- Humans should have the right and freedom **to express themselves**

What the Video tells us

- Wear Hijab if that's **your** fashion statement
- Wear it however **you** find fashionable (half hijab, make up, half sleeves, burka)
- If it's not your fashion statement, no problem! (But just make sure you're fashionable.)



Have you seen him who has taken his desire to be his god? (25:43)

Lilly Singh (Superwoman) - I'm the Worst Girlfriend Ever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5JgTP17M6U&t=2s>

Quotes from Video Clip

I'm too independent to be dependent on you... I don't want to, because I would rather depend on me than depend on you.

When I have a real problem, chances are you are going to try to solve it with romantic BS...Shut the F up and listen to what I am actually saying.

Flowers don't solve problems.

I don't need you..you shouldn't need me...I'm not your respiratory system.

I can show myself the world...I can see the world myself if I want to see the world.

About Marriage and Hayaa

About marriage:

- ...they are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them... (al-Baqarah 2:87)
- And of His signs is that He created for you mates from your own selves that you may take comfort in them, and He ordained affection and mercy between you. There are indeed signs in that for a people who reflect. (Room 30:21)
- About the daughter of a Prophet: Then one of the two women approached him, walking modestly... (al-Qasas 28:35)

LEGAL OPINIONS OF OUR MARAJI

Fatwa about media that affects ethics and values

Question: What is the ruling on looking at Arabic / Iraqi and foreign dramas and serials?

Answer: When these serials and dramas contain haram or unethical (*ghayr akhlaaqi*) scenes, it is haram to look at them with lust or if there is fear of *haram*. **Rather, on the basis of obligatory precaution, it is haram to look at them even when those are not present...**

Source: sistani.org (continued on next slide)

Fatwa about media that affects ethics and values

...It is incumbent upon the believers, may Allah grant them dignity, to adhere to the side of caution and care regarding what is shown in the dramas and serials. It is incumbent about the guardians to bear the responsibility towards the members of their family, and to choose for their children what is best for their life in this world and and the hereafter, **and to keep them away from everything that taints their pure *fitrah* or corrupts their *akhlaaq*...** (translated from Arabic, sistani.org)

Fatwa about media that affects ethics and values

Question: What types of programs and TV shows are prohibited for parents to allow their children to watch?

Answer: Anything that is contradictory to their righteous, religious upbringing, such as shows that contain elements of **inviting to evil**, and **prohibiting good**, spreading destructive thoughts, indecent and lust-provoking, satanic images, and **anything that causes a deterioration in the thought and character of the viewer.**

(translated from Arabic, sistani.org)

PARENTING STRATEGIES:

STEP 1: START WITH OURSELVES

Training others by training ourselves

- Prophet (s): Be good to your parents! If you are, your children will be good to you. Be chaste when dealing with women! If you are, your women will be chaste.
- Imam as-Sadiq (a): Glad tidings be to one whose mother is afifah (chaste)
- What should our hearts really love? Indeed in the remembrance of Allah do the hearts find contentment.

Practical Suggestions

- Be aware of the negative effects of media on ourselves as individuals and in performing our duties as parents
- Cancel subscriptions to Netflix, foreign channel devices, etc., and stop being hypocritical by saying something but doing something else
- Avoid recreational use of devices in family settings

Pass the Salt!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_-xTxP1hD4

STEP 2: DEVELOP A STRONG BOND WITH YOUR CHILD

Importance of a Careful Parenting Strategy

- May Allah have mercy on the parent who helps his child in doing good...he accepts the little that he does, he passes over the difficult things, he does not tire him out by ordering him, and does not disrespect him. (Rasulullah (s))

Principle #1 of Islamic Parenting



Demonstrating Love

- *Love your children and be kind to them*
- Rasullah (s)
- Demonstrate love by **spending time** with them
 - Play with *contact* and *interaction*
 - Be consistent
 - Consider reducing social obligations to allow family time

Principle #2 of Islamic Parenting

Always Show Respect

“May Allah have mercy on the parent who helps his child in doing good...he accepts the little that he does, he passes over the difficult things, he does not tire him out by ordering him, and does not disrespect him.”

Rasulullah (s)

Principle #2 of Islamic Parenting

Always Show Respect

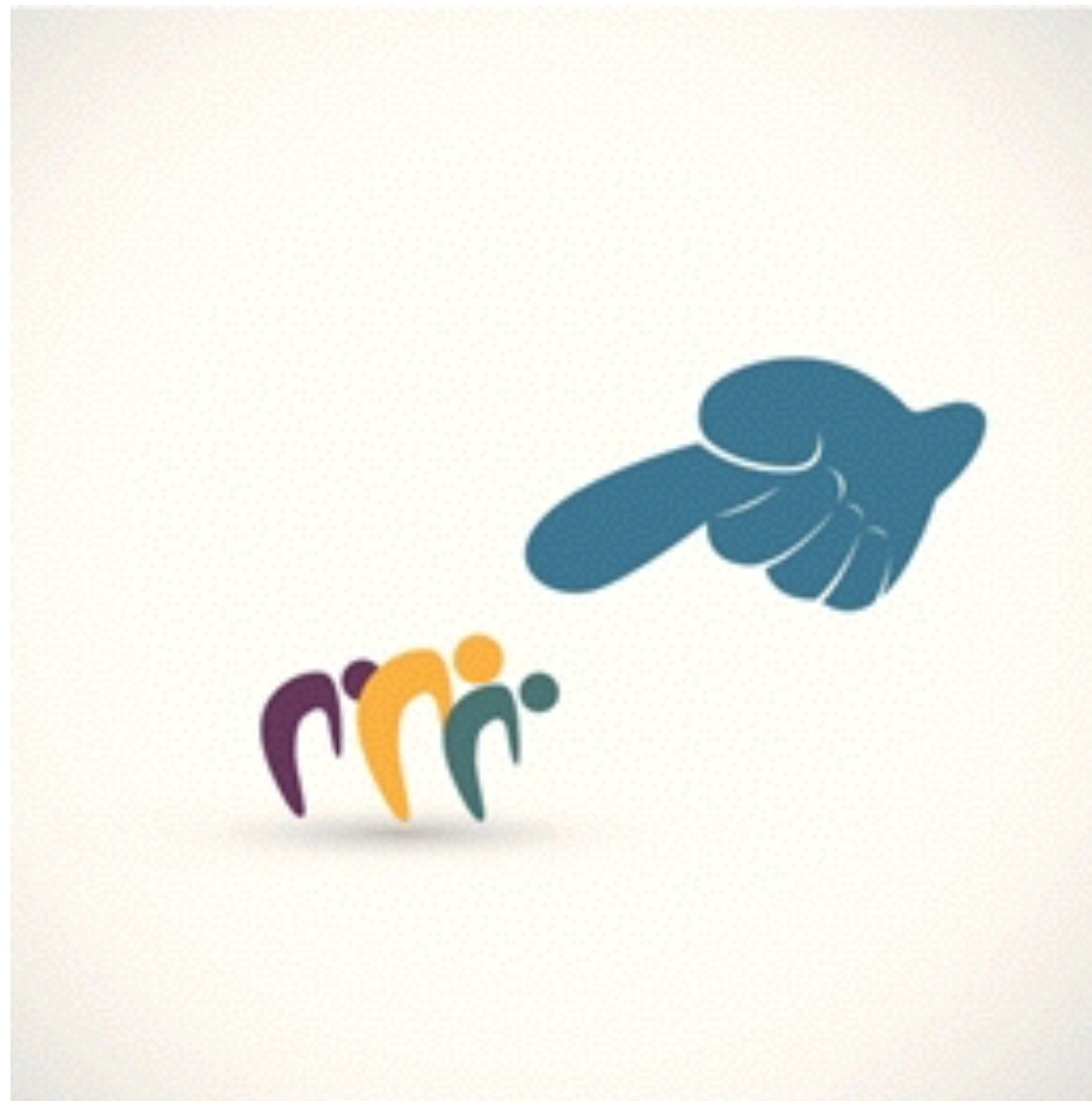
- Respect needed even when pointing out mistakes or disciplining
- Don't rebuke them for their past mistakes
- Don't destroy their self-dignity
- Give them time to reform
 - Can sometimes take a very long time!
- With an environment of respect, rules will not be seen as overly strict or forceful



Setting Rules and Regulations in the Family

Different approaches to Having Rules and Regulations:

Dictatorial Model



Different approaches to Having Rules and Regulations:

Dictatorial Model

Leads to

- Fear
- Lack of confidence
- Running away from responsibility
- Not having healthy relationships with others

Different approaches to Discipline:

Complete Freedom



Different approaches to Discipline:

Complete Freedom

Leads to

- Lack of motivation
- Difficult to control children later on
- Unwilling to conform
- Will not learn how to take responsibility for others (let alone themselves)

Islamic Model



- All members of the family need to play their own parts
 - Father is presented as the major decision maker and leader of the family
- There should be rules and regulations
 - Rules should be presented and enforced at different levels depending on age of child

Stages of Development

- Up to 7 years old
 - Avoid directly ordering them unless the matter is dangerous or inappropriate (given the age)
 - If need to scold, scold with compassion, and don't be strict
- 7 - 14 years old
 - Provide clear rules and regulations
 - Give logic behind what you request
- 14 - 21 years old
 - Youth seek independence and respect from others
 - Take them as counselors and companions . Give serious responsibilities to allow their abilities to flourish. Don't be nit-picky and nagging about their faults and mistakes.

If my child is a “good kid”, do they still need rules and regulations?

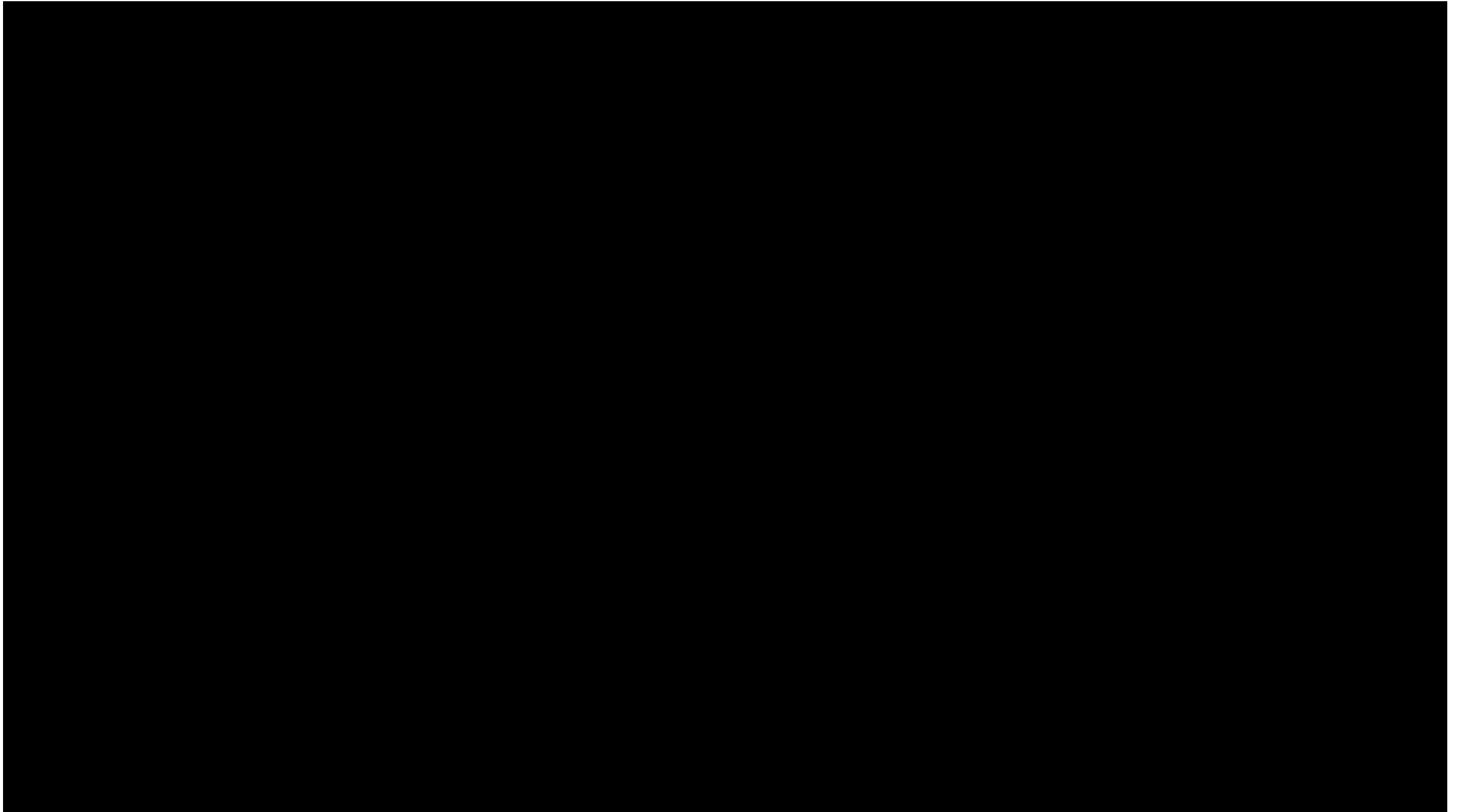
- Yes, children (especially age 7 afterwards) need to realize they are part of a system and that there are certain expectations and responsibilities
- Otherwise, when they get older, they could easily rebel
- Teaching teenager how to obey rules is much harder than teaching a 7 year old!

STEP 3: DISCONNECT

Disconnect from what's unnecessary

- Control media exposure to what's necessary - don't let it control you
- Children should use media in a common room at home

Children don't need to own devices



Importance of Protecting our Children

- Imam Ali (a): If one thinks frequently of committing sins, the sins will invite him towards them.
- Imam Ali (a): If one thinks frequently about the [haram] pleasures, they will overcome him.

Stats

- 70% of kids ages 8-18 have accidentally encountered online pornography, very often by entering an innocent search term while doing their homework.

Using the Internet in a controlled manner

- Installing protective software (NetNanny)
- Signing a contract with our children about Internet usage
- Stats:
 - Only 18% of parents with children under 10 on Facebook are actually "friends" with their child on the site. (Consumer Reports, June 2011)
 - Only 10% of parents of children aged 10 and under had frank talks about appropriate online behavior

What if Children Resist?

- Understand the red line between halal and haraam
- Consider watching with your children and discussing afterwards

**STEP 4: SEEK BETTER ALTERNATIVES
FOR SPENDING FREE TIME**

Non-media options

- Playtime
- Reading
- Outdoor activities
- Sports
- Healthy crafts and hobbies
- Friends who have same values

Promote Culture of Positive Reading

- “Reading is a competitor to [negative] media. However much a family becomes more tuned to media, they will distance themselves from the culture of reading. The more they read, the less media they will use.” [Ustad Abbasi]
- Medium of a book is more prone to appeal to the intellect than visual media

Promote Culture of Positive Reading

- The more we move ahead, the more we will need books. It is wrong to think that books will be sidelined after the emergence of new communication equipment...
- It is necessary to promote book reading in society...I believe one of the worst and most harmful kinds of laziness is the lack of energy to read books...
- Certain people are used to reading books, but books that do not require thinking. Nothing is wrong with this. After all, this is a kind of reading. I would not deny this. But it is better to combine recreational reading - like reading novels, autobiographies and easy historical books - with reading serious books, books that require thinking and careful studying.
(Sayyid Khamenei 2011)

Choosing Worthwhile Reading Material

- Regularly invest in reading material
- Must be chosen carefully
- Books are easier to filter
 - Examples of negative reading material: Diary of a Wimpy Kid
- IQRA book club

Reading Time

- Have times for the entire family to read
- Reading to children at bedtime

STEP 5: UTILIZE BETTER MEDIA OPTIONS

Less Harmful Options

- shiasource.com
- shiatv.net
- Caillou
- Charlie and Lola
- The cat in the hat knows a lot about that (not the Cat in the Hat movie)
- The magic school bus
- Mr. Maker
- Art Attack
- Daniel Cook
- Zooboofamoo
- TVO Science Max
- Wild Kratts
- Cyber Chase (Math)

Please note that all shows should be watched with discretion and along with parents. Just because there are some good episodes does not mean that all episodes are good to watch. For example the Valentine's Day episodes should be avoided.