

Parenting Challenges facing Muslims Today

Week 4: The parent's role in
children's education

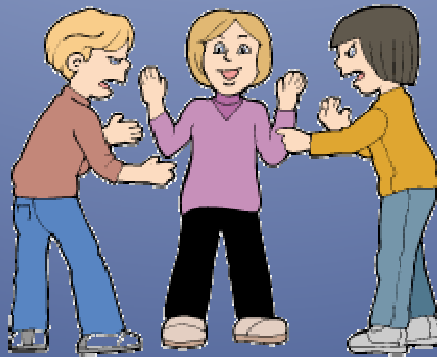
Review

- Strategies to deal with sibling rivalry
- Acknowledge their negative feelings
- Do NOT compare your children either favourably or unfavourably
- Give up trying for equality between the children
- Do not box your children into roles
- Deal with 'problem children' and 'special children' effectively

Agenda

- Strategies to deal with sibling rivalry – continued from last week
- The parents role in children's education
 - Helping your child love reading and learning
 - Homework help – what to do and not to do
 - School involvement

Strategies for dealing with sibling quarrels



- 6. Learn when and how to intervene effectively when children fight



Your response depends upon the situation

- *Level I: Normal bickering*
 1. Ignore it. Think about your next vacation.
 2. Tell yourself the children are having an important experience in conflict resolution.

Your response depends upon the situation

- *Level II: Situation heating up. Here, adult intervention might be helpful.*

1. **Acknowledge their anger**

“You two sound mad at each other!”

2. **Reflect each child’s point of view**

“So Sara, you want to keep on holding the kitten, because he’s just settled down in your arms. And you Bilal, feel you’re entitled to a turn too.”

3. **Describe the problem with respect**

“That’s a tough one: Two children and only one kitten.”

4. **Express confidence in the children’s ability to find their own solution**

“I have confidence that you two can work out a solution that’s fair to each of you . . . and fair to the kitten.”

5. **Leave the room**

Your response depends upon the situation

Level III: Situation possibly dangerous

1. Inquire:

“Is this a play fight or a real fight?” (Play fights are permitted. Real fights are not.)

2. Let the children know:

“Play fighting by mutual consent only.” (If it’s not fun for both, it’s got to stop.)

3. Respect your feelings:

“You may be playing, but it’s too rough for me. You need to find another activity.”

Your response depends upon the situation

Level IV: Situation definitely dangerous! Adult intervention necessary.

1. Describe what you see.

“I see two very angry children who are about to hurt each other.”

2. Separate the children.

“It’s not safe to be together. We must have a cooling-off period. Quick, you to your room, and you to yours!”

- 7. Help children resolve conflicts by using family meetings effectively

Helping children resolve a difficult situation

- **1. Call a meeting of the concerned parties and explain the purpose of the meeting.**
“There’s a situation in this family that’s causing unhappiness. We need to see what can be worked out to help everyone feel better.”
- **2. Explain the ground rules to everyone.**
“We’re calling this meeting because something is bothering Sakina. First we’ll be hearing from Sakina —with no interruptions. When she’s finished, we want to hear how you see things Amir, and no one will interrupt you.”
- **3. Write down each child’s feelings and concerns. Read them aloud to both children to be sure you’ve understood them correctly.**
“It scares Sakina when we go out. She says Amir is mean to her. Last time he turned off the TV and yanked her off the couch and hurt her arm.”

Helping children resolve a difficult situation

- 4. Allow each child time for rebuttal.

Sakina: I have a black and blue mark to prove you hurt me. And my program had only five minutes to go!

Amir: That's an old black and blue mark. And the program was just beginning.

- 5. Invite everyone to suggest as many solutions as possible. Write down all ideas without evaluating. Let the kids go first.
- 6. Decide upon solutions you can all live with.
- 7. Follow-up.
- *"We'll meet again next Sunday to see if we're satisfied with the way things are going."*

- 8. Minimize sibling conflict by creating a cooperative family culture

Minimizing sibling rivalry - summary

- ✓ *Make sure that each child gets some time alone with you several times a week.*
- ✓ *When spending time with one child, don't talk about the other.*
- ✓ *Don't lock the children into the position in the family constellation (oldest, youngest, middle). Allow each child the opportunity to experience some of the privileges and responsibilities of the other.*

Minimizing sibling rivalry

- ✓ *Let each child know what it is about him that his siblings like or admire.*
- ✓ *Schedule family meetings to set ground rules for handling conflict and discuss ongoing issues.*

- 9. Make peace with your siblings!!!

- 10. Know when to get professional help

Getting professional help

- Seek additional help if:
- Conflict is so severe that it is affecting marital relationship
- Creates a real danger of physical danger for a family member
- Is damaging self esteem or psychological health of another sibling
- May be related to another significant concern such as depression or being bullied

The parent's role in children's education

- Points to ponder:
- Is it important for you that your child “do well” in school?
- What does school success look like?
- What do you do (or can you do) to ensure that your child succeeds in school?

- No matter what your definition of success is, there are some things that you can do (and some things to avoid to support your vision for your child

Parent Involvement

- The more involved you are in your child's education, the more likely your child is to succeed in school.
- Research shows that parent support is more important to school success than a student's IQ, economic status, or school setting.

When Parents are Involved

- Children get higher grades and test scores.
- Children have better attitudes and behavior.
- Children complete more homework.
- Children are more likely to complete high school and enroll in post-high school education.

How can parents be involved?

- Can you think of ways parents can be involved in school?
- Is there such a thing as too much involvement?
- What would that look like?

Parent Involvement Begins at Home

- Ask your child about his or her day.
- Use car time to talk with, and listen to, your child.
- Take walks or ride bikes together.
- Look for things to do as a family.
- Eat dinner together and use this time to talk about the day's events.

Parent involvement

- Parents role and the students role

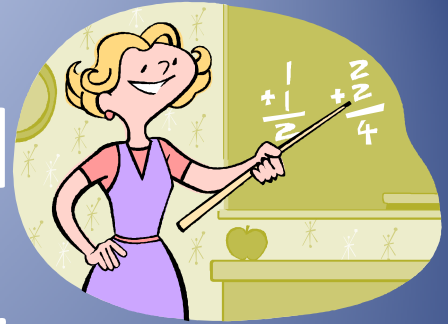
A Parents Role...

- Be “involved” in learning and school
- Encourage love of learning
- Encourage good study skills and work habits (more on this later)
- Be a good role model for learning
- Encourage child to be resourceful and self directed
- Be a reading advocate
- Focus on effort rather than only results

A Parents Role...

- Be available for questions - not answers
- Communicate with your child's teacher
- Encourage your child to seek help
- Help your child organize adequate time to complete homework

Being involved in school



- This can be on many levels, depending on your comfort level
- At the minimum, you should attend school functions and know your children's teachers
- Communicate with the teacher regarding any issues
- Support the school by following school policies and encouraging your child to do their best

In Elementary School

- Introduce yourself at the beginning of the school year.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- If possible, spend time at your child's school and classroom as a volunteer or visitor.
- If you use email, find out if your child's teacher uses email to communicate with parents.

Encouraging a love of learning by turning daily activities into learning

- *Cook together.* Your child can read the recipe and measure ingredients.
- *Do laundry.* Your child can sort laundry by color, read washing instructions, measure laundry soap, and time wash cycles.
- *Go grocery shopping.* Your child can write the shopping list, compare prices, and identify and classify food items.
- *Organize the house.* Your child can sort and arrange items in the junk drawer.

Help Your Child Feel Good about Education

- Help your child focus on his or her strengths
- Use descriptive praise
- Let your child know that he or she is a valuable, capable person and that you know he or she can succeed.

Have high expectations for learning and behavior, at home and at school.

- When you expect the best, your child will rise to those expectations.
- Be a good role model for getting work done before play.

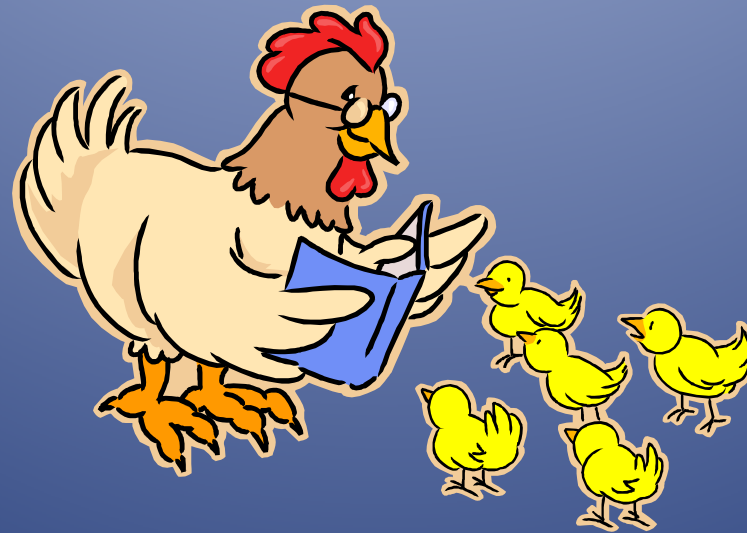
Modeling and expectations

- If school is important to you, it will be important to your child.
- Set high expectations for your child and support your child in meeting those expectations.
- Stay aware of your child's social life, activities, and schoolwork.

Dealing with “I hate my teacher, she is so unfair”

- Listen to your child and validate his feelings
- Resist the temptation to agree with the child’s assessment
- Encourage him to keep at it – it is an opportunity for significant personal growth!

Setting good homework habits for lifelong learning



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Why is homework important?

- Homework affects achievement in school.
- Homework teaches your children responsibility.
- Homework is the key link between home and school.
- Can give you a chance to bond with your children over a love of learning

Getting ready for homework

- Importance of proper nutrition
- A word about sleep
- A set daily homework time, preferably early in the day
- An appropriate environment
 - No distractions
 - Supplies at hand
 - You close by, preferably “studying too”

A child who learns to organize their time and space will carry organization into every corner of their life

During Homework

- Remember descriptive praise
- Be alert
- Resist the temptation to “help” with homework
- Child should look over and proof read own work
- Ask them to teach you

Should homework completion be rewarded?

- Real learning is not based on reward, but on the value your child places on the process itself
- The feeling good about themselves is the best reward

Establishing Daily Homework Time may be the single most important step you take in solving your children's homework problems. No longer will homework be regarded as something to be "squeezed in" between other activities...if there's time. Daily Homework Time takes the guesswork-and the tears-out of getting homework done on time. When you establish Daily Homework Time, you are giving your children the message that homework is the number one priority in your home.



Written by: R. Cottle-Makhene

The Student's Role...

- Attend school and follow rules
- Bring agenda home
- Complete assignments and homework and hand them in by the due date



The Student's Role...

- Learn to budget time
 - Use class time effectively
 - Plan ahead on long term assignments
- Take advantage of available study helps
- Return completed work by the due date
- Make up work missed

The Student's Role...

- Be sure to know what the assignment directions are
- Know when the assignment is due
- Know what other special instructions have been given
- Ask questions of the teacher before going home

Parent and Student Sharing

- Jointly agree on a time and place for studying
- Organize schedules to provide quiet, uninterrupted study time
- Organize time so assignments can be completed on schedule
- Check completed work carefully

Set Realistic Goals



- Academic progress is a slow but steady process.
- Help your child understand what they're trying to accomplish and that there are no shortcuts.
- Improving their grades is a goal worth reaching, not a punishment.
- Allow your child to suggest solutions to the problem.
- This will empower them and give them a say in their educational destiny.

Importance of reading and what you can do to encourage it



Both school and home are involved
in bringing up a reader



- ...the likelihood that a child will succeed in the first grade depends most of all on how much she or he has already learned about reading before getting there...

Dr. Marilyn Adams, from Beginning to Read

What is EARLY LITERACY?

- Early literacy is what children know about reading before they can actually read.
- Early literacy is pre-reading skills.
- Early literacy is “reading readiness”.

Why Start Early?

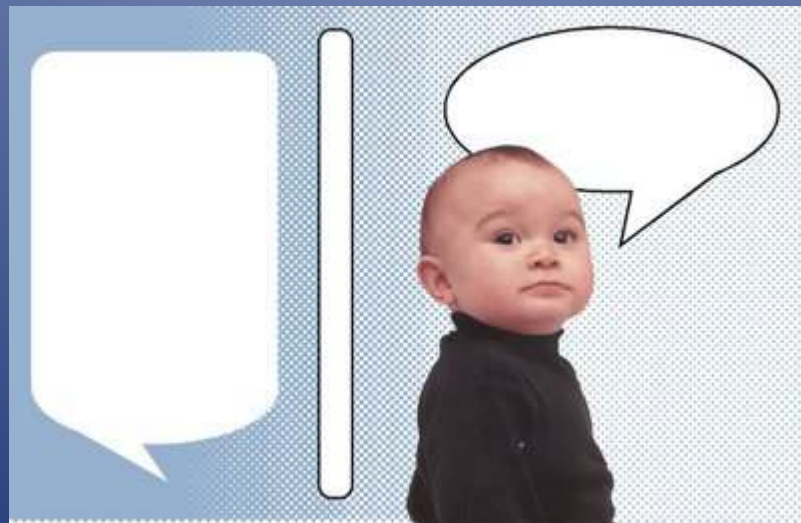
- Learning to read is essential for school success
- Children should get ready to read long before they start to school
- Research shows that children who are read to from an early age have a larger vocabulary and better language skills when they start school
- Children who struggle with “Phonological Awareness”—a pre-reading skill—often struggle learning to read.

The Importance of the Early Years

How early does a child begin to learn language?

- From the day of birth, a child's brain is receptive to learning language.
 - The size of a toddler's vocabulary is strongly correlated with how much a mother talks to the child.
- Children learn to speak by being surrounded by speech
 - Your habits of talking and listening will make a difference of in your child's language development

What does the research tell us
that we should do about
language development &
vocabulary?

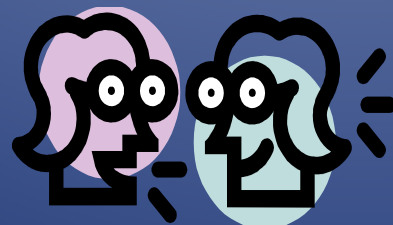


Research Evidence

- Children enter school with a listening vocabulary ranging between 2500 to 5000
- Vocabulary differences at grade 2 may last throughout elementary school (Biemiller & Slonin, 2001)
- Children who enter with limited vocabulary knowledge grow more discrepant over time from their peers who have rich vocabulary knowledge (Baker, Simmons & Kame'enui 1997)
- 86-98% of the words recorded in each child's vocabulary consisted of words also recorded in their parents' vocabularies (Hart & Risley, 2000)

Use High-Quality Oral Language

- Model good language use
- Engage in daily oral language
- Read aloud good literature
 - Use less “business” talk at home
 - Use descriptive words
- Lots of shared reading and conversations about words



- Business Talk

- Come here!
- Stop that!
- Be quiet!
- Sit down and eat!
- Go watch TV!
- Clean your room!
- Go to sleep!
- Get in the tub!

- Conversations

- Tell me about...
- How was?
- What do you think about...?
- Why is?
- Do you think?
- Who is?
- What do you like?

Other Ways to Help Your Child's Language Development

Recommended Habit	Example
Rephrase & extend your child's words.	<i>Child:</i> That's a doggie. <i>Parent:</i> Yes, it's a Doberman pinscher!
Ask a clarifying question.	<i>Child:</i> That's a man. <i>Parent:</i> Tell me more about the man you saw.
Model more complex vocabulary or sentence structure	<i>Child:</i> See my building <i>Parent:</i> Yes, I see the tall skyscraper you built with lots of windows so people can see the view of the city.
Ask "open-ended" questions	<i>Child:</i> I like that story. <i>Parent:</i> What was your favorite part of the story?

Reading aloud to children should begin when they are babies and continue well into their school years, even **AFTER** they learn to read for themselves



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Things You Can Do To Create a Reading Environment At Home

- Fill you house with books
- Establish good reading habits
- Visit the library as often as you can
- Give books as gifts
- Set an example for reading
- Help your child choose books



Some people there are who, being grown, forget the horrible task of learning to read. It is perhaps the greatest single effort that the human undertakes, and he must do it as a child.

- John Steinbeck, 1982 Nobel Prize Winner for Literature



Questions and comments?



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