# 215167 - How to Raise Children in Islam (Parenting Guide)

**the question**

Could you please advise us about how to improve our manners, and raise our children to have good manners? As many of the scholars mentioned, they studied under their teachers for years to learn proper manners. I am very concerned because it seems that we are surrounded by bad examples and role models, and the standards of society are very low. I am a revert to Islam so I was not raised with good Islamic manners. I don't have the knowledge or training to be a very good role model. My children's TV watching is very restricted, but they still interact with cousins and friends who pick up bad words and attitudes from TV. We also educate our children at home. But as much as we shelter them and instruct them, they seem to pick up some of the attitudes of the greater society. I am torn between whether I should continue trying to remain patient and remind them gently, or I should become more strict to enforce better behavior. We would really appreciate any advice that you could offer.

**Summary of answer**

You can raise children in Islam by:
1. Kindness and gentleness
2. Setting a good example
3. Providing a good environment
4. Offering sincere du'a to Allah to make your children righteous

**Detailed answer**

Praise be to Allah.

We congratulate you for the blessing that has been bestowed upon you of guidance to Islam , and we ask Allah, may He be exalted, to make us and you steadfast in adhering to this religion until we

meet Him when He is pleased with us. We also congratulate you for your keenness to give your children a good upbringing.

With regard to the answer to your question, we will point out some important matters in the hope that they will help you, with the help of Allah, may He be exalted, in what you are striving to achieve.

## Bad behaviour in most cases is in accordance with a person’s whims and desires

It is essential to point out that bad behaviour in most cases is in accordance with a person’s whims and desires; hence the child will pick up bad behaviour with the slightest influence and the most insignificant of reasons. On the other hand, good behaviour means disciplining oneself and restraining oneself from whims and desires that are detrimental to one’s own best interests. Good behaviour means following a path that is contrary to the whims and desires of the self, so it is a constructive process that requires effort and striving.

A sound upbringing is one that instills good attitude and behaviour firmly in the child’s heart and mind so that he will be able to resist corrupt whims and desires, and he will not feel comfortable except with things that help him adhere to the path of righteousness and will despise anything that is contrary to good values.

## How to raise your children

In order for the child to accept this good attitude and behaviour, it is essential to make that beloved to him. Love cannot be instilled by means of force and harshness; rather it needs the following:

### 1. Kindness and gentleness

There are a number of hadiths in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) teaches us to use kindness and gentleness when interacting with others, such as the following:

‘Aishah, the wife of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Verily Allah loves kindness in all things.” Narrated by al-Bukhari, 6024.

Muslim (2592) narrated from Jarir that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever is deprived of kindness is deprived of goodness.”

‘Aishah, the wife of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, narrating from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “There is no kindness in a thing but it adorns it, and it is not taken away from a thing but it makes it defective.”

‘Aishah said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “When Allah wills good for the members of a household, He instills kindness in them.” Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad, 40/488, no. 24427; classed as sahih by al-Albani in Sahih al-Jami‘ as-Saghir, no. 303

Children by their nature love the parent who is kind to them and helps them, and who cares about them, but that should be without yelling and getting angry, as much as possible; rather it should be with wisdom and patience.

The child is at an age where he needs leisure and play; he is also at an age where discipline and teaching are appropriate. Hence everything must be given due attention, within moderation.

Because children love kind parents, this love gives them a strong motivation to obey their parents . In the opposite scenario, if kindness is absent and there is violence and harshness, that will lead to alienation, which in turn will lead to stubbornness and disobedience, or the prevalence of fear which will generate an attitude of lying and deceitfulness in the child.

**2. Kind treatment does not rule out the use of punishment when necessary.**

But it should be noted that punishment, when bringing up children, must be used wisely. It is not right to punish the child for every misdemeanour on his part; rather punishment is to be used when kindness is of no benefit and when advice, instructions and bans have been to no avail.

Punishments should also be useful. For example, if you have the problem of your children spending a long time in front of the television, then you can dictate to them which programs they may watch, that will usually be beneficial and not harmful, and that are free of problematic material as much as possible. Then if they go beyond the stated time, you can punish them by depriving them of TV for an entire day. If they go beyond the stated time again, then you can deprive them of it for a longer period, according to whatever will achieve the aim and be of benefit in disciplining them.

**3. Setting a good example**

The parents must first of all adhere themselves to the attitude and behaviour that they are trying to instill in their children. For example, it is not appropriate for a father to forbid his child to smoke when he himself smokes.

Hence one of the early generations said to his children's teacher: "Let the first thing you do in setting my children straight be mending your own ways, for their faults will be connected to your faults; in their eyes, what is good will be what you do and what is bad will be what you refrain from." (Tarikh Dimashq, 38/271-272)

**4. A good environment**

This is the environment in which doing good deeds is praised and the one who does them is respected, whereas bad deeds and those who do them are criticized. In current times this good environment is often lacking, but we can try hard, physically, psychologically and financially, to create it, in sha Allah.

For example, if a Muslim family is living in a neighbourhood where there are no other Muslim families, this family should try hard to move to a neighbourhood or city where there are a lot of Muslims, or to a neighbourhood where there are mosques or Islamic centres that are active in running programs for Muslim children.

For example, if a child is interested in a specific sport or other activity, the family could look for a

suitable sports club or similar organisation run by committed Muslims, that is attended by Muslim families who are keen to give their children a good upbringing. Mixing plays a major role, as you say, so try to reduce the negative effects that you are seeing as a result of mixing, by mixing in a positive way with Muslim families.

If the father is spending on nice clothes, delicious food and a comfortable home, he should also spend on means of acquiring good attitude and behaviour, and let him seek reward for that with Allah, may He be exalted.

## Offer sincere du’a to Allah to make your children righteous

You have to offer du‘a constantly, especially at times when supplications are answered, such as the last third of the night, when prostrating and on Fridays. Call upon Allah, may He be exalted, a great deal and ask Him to make your children righteous and guide them to the straight path . Supplications for their children is one of the characteristics of the righteous slaves of Allah. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who say: ‘Our Lord! Bestow on us from our wives and our offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders for the Muttaqoon (pious)” [al-Furqan 25:74].

Shaykh ‘Abd ar-Rahman as-Sa‘di (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “the comfort of our eyes” means a source of joy.

“If we examine the situation and characteristics of the ones who offered this du‘a, we will realize, based on their qualities and high ranking, that they would not be content until they see their children obeying their Lord, knowledgeable and actively striving. As this is a supplication that their wives and children would follow the path of righteousness, it is also a supplication for themselves, because the benefit will come back to them too. Hence they regarded that as a gift to them and they said “Bestow on us (lit. give to us).” In fact their supplication brings benefit to all the Muslims, because the righteousness of those who are mentioned will bring about the righteousness of many of those who are connected to them, and will benefit them.” (Taysir al-Karim al-Mannan fi Tafsir Kalam ar-Rahman, 587)

For more information, please see the fatwas no. 4237 and 10016

And Allah knows best.