

**WELCOME TO WOMANHOOD SEMINAR**  
**Preston Halagah Sisters**

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR MOTHERS**

*Dearest respected mothers,*

***Your daughter is soon going to reach one of the biggest milestones in her life. It's an extremely delicate but important time for her as it is for you too. There is no one way to bring up a child or raise a daughter, however there is good practice. Below are some suggested points to think about over the coming years.***

The messenger of God (s) was the best example of a loving and caring parent and it is his (s) model we should look to follow. At the heart of his (s) teachings was love, concern for others and forgiveness. At the same time he (s) never ever compromised with obedience to God.

As a parent we should raise our children with love and a deep concern for their future. We should not be blinded by our own desires but should think of the needs of the child. We should be willing to forgive them, overlook their small mistakes so that they don't go on to make bigger mistakes in life. At the same time don't pamper your child so that they are unable to learn the great lessons of life and character building.

Reprimand them when they do something wrong but in a manner so that they understand your disappointment and will try to improve themselves. If your daughter is in a 'mood' then back off for a while and discipline and speak to her when she has calmed down. Never reprimand your daughter in front of others. This will affect their confidence. Don't praise her in front of others either. Rather respect her and her ideas in front of others. If she achieves something, praise her good attitude and hard work more than the achievement itself. If she does something wrong – show your disappointment (this means you expected better from her which means you believe in her and her good character) .

When you notice that your daughter's chest area begins to develop you should think about taking her shopping. Go out as mother and daughter, take her for a coffee or to eat at a restaurant or treat her to some dessert. Tell her 'Come on, let's go out and I'll take you shopping too.' Visit a department store that has a special section with a qualified assistant who will measure her and tell you exactly what she needs. Tell your daughter how you felt when you went through this ( if you remember).

The day your daughter has her first period may be an emotional day for you. When she tells you – be sure to hug her and give her a kiss on the forehead. Don't get upset in front of her. Share comforting words – show her how to wear her pad, point out where you keep everything and what she should do if she has an accident or needs anything. Reassure her and then call a friend or sister to let out your emotions – you might also need another lady to speak to. For the coming months go easy with your daughter and let little things slide, but be firm with important things.

Remember in the sight of God she is an adult and so perhaps it is time you treat her as an adult now too. Involve her in your conversations, listen to her opinions and don't tell her off like you would a younger child if she does something wrong. You could present her with a gift. Make her a nice basket filled with a hot water bottle, some toiletries, a musalla and tasbeeh and some dua kitabs. This will make her feel special and make her understand that hygiene and salah are important for her now and that she is important to you. Choose a private moment to give it to her.

If your daughter ever comes home asking you a question of a delicate matter, don't get thrown back by the question. Stay calm and don't panic. The important thing here is not to answer her question but to let her know that you're listening. You can always answer her another day so don't be tempted to waffle an answer. Start with saying something like 'Why do you ask that luv?' Or perhaps 'I'm glad you came to ask me, I really am'. Then tell her honestly that it is tricky to explain but you will try your best and she will understand better as she gets older. Or perhaps you can tell her you're not sure how

to explain it but aunt so-and-so or your apa so-and-so will be able to explain it better than me ... let's ask her to tell you.

Don't be tempted to get your daughters arms and legs waxed or teach her to remove hair so soon. She is young and still growing up to be an adult. Encourage her to scrub with a flannel or mitt to reduce the growth. Silk smooth legs and arms may encourage her to dress in a manner to reveal them. As for hair on the face, again encourage using a flannel regularly. If she does have growth which is causing her grief then don't ignore it. Think of options like lightening the hair if it's not too much. Waxing can cause them to grow back thicker and it will only result in her having to do it more. If your daughter has acne – don't mask it with make-up. Take her to the doctor who could prescribe medication. Remind her it won't last forever. Use natural remedies on the face to exfoliate her skin. Don't make your daughter feel she needs to change to fit in with others. Let her know how special she is. Teach her that the world is full of people who bully others with their ideas of how things should be, she must learn to stand her ground around such people for what is right and fair.

Always reassure your daughter you are there for her. Remind her that you love her constantly. Talk about her friends with her often. Talk about her school and madrasah life with her. Know what upsets her and what she enjoys. Now that she is older, slowly engage in adult conversation with her. Talk about the news with her, ask her what shall I cook today, don't just let her be a passive listener or observer. Go and sit on her bed in her room in the morning or at night and have a quick chat about her day.

Remember once your daughter is *baligha*, salah is compulsory. If you don't pray all the time – don't think it's ok if she misses her salah. This is an opportunity for you to get in to the habit. Pray with your daughter from time to time. Pray in her bedroom. Try your best not to nag but constantly remind about salah gently. Physical discipline of any sort is never acceptable. But to an adolescent even the lightest physical discipline can leave emotional scars more so than physical ones. Your daughter will resent you and resent anything you make her do including salah or Quran if you do it forcefully. A little slap on the hand to a young child will be forgotten within minutes. Adolescent children won't forget this so quickly.

Other than salah you should encourage her to read Quran daily. This is extremely important. One of the saddest things that can happen to a girl when she leaves madrasah is that her connection to the book of God dies. Don't make heavy demands. A few pages a day, one page even and perhaps praying particular *surahs* like *al waqiah* and *al mulk* in the evening.

When Ramadhan comes you should make her fast. Don't make excuses for your daughter. Encourage her to eat well, look after her health and be strong. Allow her to get rest. If Ramadhan is proving to be too demanding then ease off with everything else, including Quran if need be. Ask her teachers at madrasah to give her the month off if necessary. Fasting is the best worship you can do in this month. Remember even if she naps after school whilst fasting she is in a state of worship. Ensure she prays all her salah and keeps all the fast unless she is physically not able to. With Quran ask her to recite a little everyday and don't set big targets.

When you're daughter is *baligha*, *hijab* becomes compulsory for her. This is often dependent on how and whether you wear it. We may not be perfect in practising our religion but that doesn't mean we shouldn't give our children the chance to do it better. Tell her that hijab is the command from God. Wearing it is the correct thing to do. Support and praise her for choosing to wear it. If she doesn't want to, ask her why and address those reasons. At such a young age, girls don't always think about the deep meaning behind things in life. She may not really care what hijab stands for. The fact of the matter is, girls will most often wear hijab if they have friends or close cousins and family members who do. Girls who don't want to wear it, often have friends who dress against the etiquette of hijab.

To go against this norm – requires a strong individual. If you want your daughter to behave and be a certain way – you need to surround her with people who are like that. This sounds too simplistic but in the majority of people (including us adults) that is the case.

Involve her in house chores, reward her for helping out, praise her and kiss her. A huge smile and loud 'jazakA..... beta for helping me' will go a long way. She may not get it right but if she helps you then praise her. Allow her to cook a meal – let her choose the dish, and compliment her and praise her for HER EFFORT more than her success. This will make her work much harder and ultimately lead to successful results. Always give your daughter dua. When she pleases you, pray to God to reward her and keep you pleased with her. When she upsets you, pray to God to guide her. When she's upset, ask God to ease her burden and keep her strong. You don't have to be sat on a prayer mat to pray for her.

Encourage your husband to kiss your daughter on her forehead and enquire after her. But teach your daughter the boundaries of hayaa around others. As a family you should encourage discussion and conversation which will develop their ideas and build their character. Talking over meals ate together as a family is a priceless gift you can give to all your children. As she gets older, don't think it is an opportunity to start gossiping about family members, friends or others. Reprimand her if she backbites, uses foul language, is being mean to another classmate or to a sibling or family member. Particularly instil in her the need to care for grandparents, siblings and family members. Adolescents often don't want to socialise with 'the older generation' and will find any excuse including studies and homework. Interacting with people of other ages will develop their personality and enhance their worldly knowledge and common sense. Don't let them miss out on this opportunity.

Avoid letting your daughter spend all her time in her bedroom. Private space is essential but bedrooms are for sleeping in. And that too at night. Where possible encourage girls to be early risers as that is the most productive part of the day. The part with the most barakah in. Don't let her waste all her weekends sleeping in.

There will be days when your daughter may find Islam difficult. This has nothing to do with Islam being difficult. We all go through moments where we find obstacles in life or difficult trials come our way. You may find your job too challenging at some point or perhaps your marriage or being a mother overwhelming. We don't give up but we work at it and know that hurdles come our way. Allow your daughter to learn that life is full of tests and difficult moments but those moments pass by just like a storm does. Teach her to be brave and see it through and provide her with the support she needs. Let her speak about what upsets her and let her grow and learn as she gets older. She will come out of it stronger.

**Finally, remember she is your daughter. Few people will understand her better than you. As a mother your dua is so special. It is your most powerful weapon in raising a good child. Be careful what you ask for your child. Always ask God to give your daughter what is best for her in this world and the next. Be there for her and advise and raise her in the manner you feel is best suited to her and in her best interest, not yours and not that of other people. But in doing so never forget God. For that's where her success lies.**

**May God accept.**

The content in these pages is for general guidance only and does not contain any definitive practises specifically for raising a daughter.