

# **Parenting Programme**

Workshop - Helping in the home  
and Respecting women

# Recommended 2:

**It is recommended that a list of topics with support materials be developed and provided to mothers to support them in having open and transparent discussions with their sons.**

# Recommendation 2 topics:

- A. Importance of Prayers (Session 1)
- B. Developing closeness with Khilafat (Session 2)
- C. Watching of Friday Sermons (Session 2)
- D. Purdah (Session 3)
- E. Modesty (Session 3)
- F. Helping in the home** (Session 4)
- G. Respecting women** (Session 4)
- H. Role in Society as Ahmadi boys/men (Session 5)

We aim to cover the topics during this year and link these with the developmental ages of boys Insha'Allah.



# **Helping in the home and Respecting women**

# Within these topics, we will discuss the following aspects...

❖ Why is it so important to teach our sons about respecting women?

❖ Why must we encourage our sons to help around the house?

❖ Equality of men and women in the Holy Quran and respect of women emphasised by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

❖ Hadith and Sunnah about helping in the home

❖ Action and words of Promised Messiah (as) & Hazoor e Anwar's guidance.

❖ Huzoor e Anwar (aba)'s words about helping in the home.

❖ How to instil respect of women in the home?

❖ How to ensure our sons help around the house?

❖ Potential questions our sons may ask and how to answer them.

**Why is it so important to teach  
our sons about respecting  
women?**

## **Why is it so important to teach our sons about respecting women?**

In this current day and age, we have seen a feminist revolution, as women fight for the rights of fairer pay, better opportunities, and an end of harassment by men in their everyday lives. A recent spate of violence against women in the UK has put men's treatment of women under a microscope, with many Western role models such as footballers, politicians and musicians accused of misconduct.

## **Why is it so important to teach our sons about respecting women?**

Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih IV (rh) emphasized the importance of teaching sons to respect women and warned of the long-term dangers of neglecting this. He said: “In most homes, not only is there a strong wish to have a son, but also mothers want it more than men. When they give birth to boys, and even if they have quite a few of them, still they (the boys) are spoiled and there is no respect for girls. The result is that these men become unjust and they mistreat women when they grow up. See how one generation leaves an adverse effect on the second and then the second leaves an adverse effect on the third. Thus, if you want to be merciful to yourself then give your sons good Tarbiyyat and tell them about the rights of women from early childhood.”

(<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Paradise-Under-Your-Feet.pdf> page X).



# Equality of men and women in the Holy Quran

“Surely, men who submit themselves to God and women who submit themselves to Him, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast in their faith and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember Him—Allah has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward” ([33:36](#)).

“They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them .” (2:188)

“Whoso does good whether male or female, and is a believer, shall enter Paradise and they shall not be wronged a whit.” (4:125)

“Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure life; and We will surely bestow on such their reward according to the best of their works.” (16:98)

“Whoso does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, these will enter the Garden; they will be provided therein without measure.” (40:41)

[https://www.alislam.org/book/quest-of-curious-muslim/gender-roles-in-islam-is-islam-misogynistic-faith/#\\_ednref3](https://www.alislam.org/book/quest-of-curious-muslim/gender-roles-in-islam-is-islam-misogynistic-faith/#_ednref3)

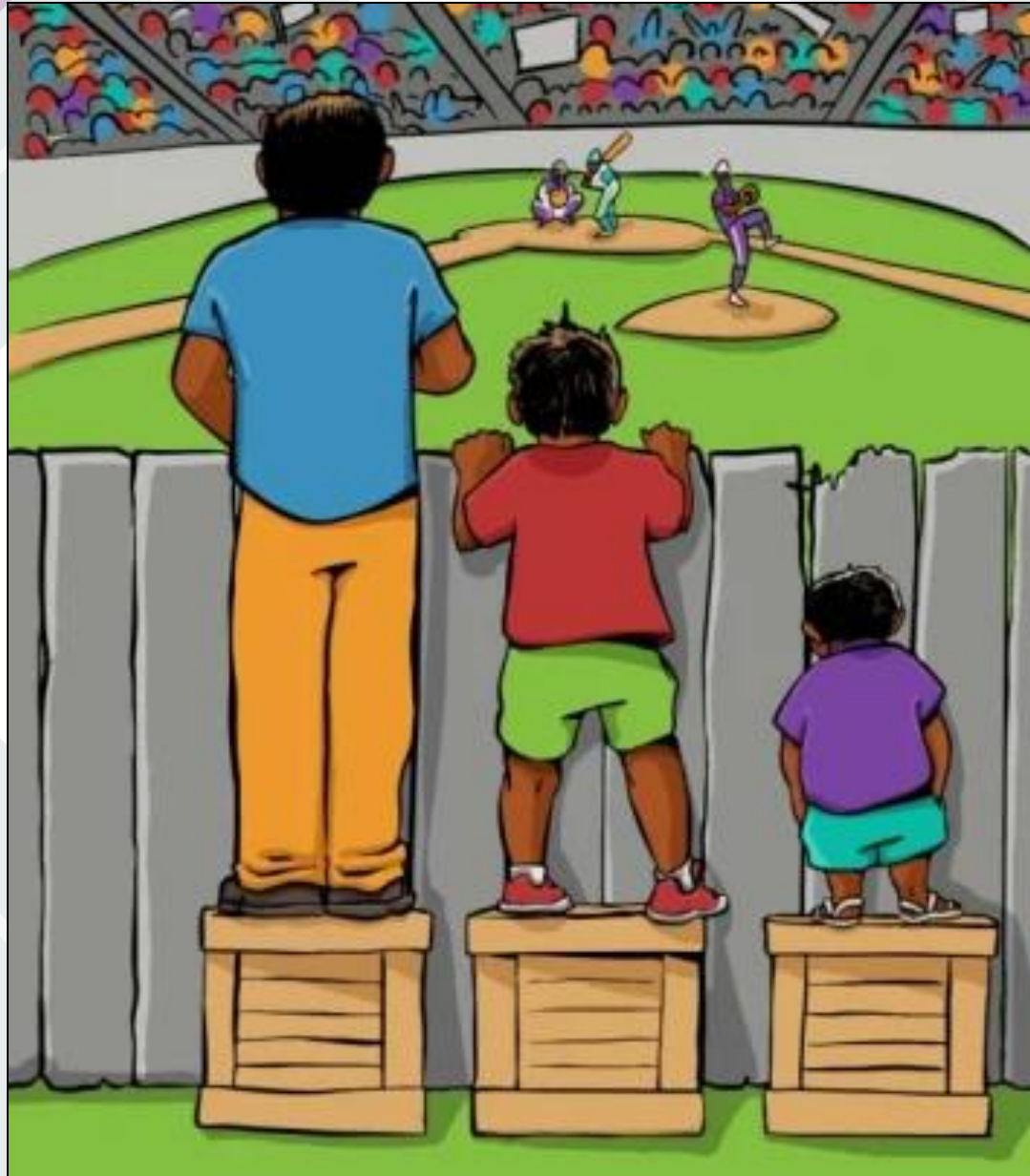
# What does equality mean?

The word equality, according to the Oxford dictionary, means, fairness, impartiality. It is being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities, where everyone has the same chances or gets the same treatment. Everyone is treated equally.

Equality is about ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity, and is not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics.

Before we look at the concept of equality for us as Ahmadi Muslims and its significance, let's look at an image...

# What do you see?



# What do you see now?



Is it fair that some get to use one or more boxes to stand on where as the one of them did not get any?

Why? Why not?

# What is the Islamic concept of equality between men and women?

The Holy Qur'an states that all believers, without distinction, are equal and that only righteous deeds elevate one person above another. Muslims therefore have an immense respect for righteous and pious men and women. Islamic history also tells us that men and women both served in many capacities from being teachers, doctors, leaders and even as soldiers in battle when Muslims were under attack.

Islam, however, also recognises that such equality does not mean that men and women are the same. It notes their different physical and emotional strengths and in view of this sets out their key roles in life. The roles are therefore not a question of superiority or inferiority, but a question of natural capacity and proper functioning.

For example men have been assigned the duty to work and provide for their family and women have been assigned the role of motherhood and of looking after the household.

Islam places equal importance on both and also stresses that the roles are not exclusive nor inflexible. This does not mean that women cannot work or serve society or that men have no duties or responsibilities for their children or for their household.

It is interesting to note that where women choose to work the money they earn is theirs and the husband has no right over it, whereas a husband must provide financially for the whole family.

(Alislam: <https://www.alislam.org/question/islamic-concept-equality-between-men-women/>)



# Gender Equality in Islam

by Farhan Iqbal, Missionary, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Canada

What that means is that it must be acknowledged that each gender has strengths and weaknesses that may or may not overlap. In certain respects, one gender has an advantage over the other, while in other respects, the other gender has the advantage. As one psychiatrist, Dr. Neel Burton, puts it, “biological advantages and disadvantages are more or less equally distributed between the sexes”.

Alislam: <https://www.alislam.org/articles/gender-equality-in-islam/>

Pathway to Paradise: <https://www.alislam.org/book/pathway-to-paradise/>

Alislam: <https://www.alislam.org/women/>

# Hadith about respecting women

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said: The most perfect of believers in the matter of faith is he whose behaviour is best, and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives. (Tirmidhi)

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: Let no Muslim man entertain any rancour against a Muslim woman. Should he dislike one quality in her, he would find another which is pleasing. (Muslim: <https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Woman-in-Islam.pdf>)

‘A person who is blessed with a daughter or daughters and makes no discrimination between them and his sons and brings them up with kindness and affection, will be as close to me in Paradise as my forefinger and middle finger are to each other.’ (Muslim II, Section Beneficence).

## **Actions and words of Promised Messiah (AS)**

The Promised Messiah (as) states, “Except for indecency, all weaknesses and petulant behaviour of women should be tolerated. I find it absolutely shameful that a man should fight a woman. ....”.

Once, the Promised Messiah(as) said that our members [of the Jama'at] should not be harsh and ill-tempered with their wives. The Promised Messiah(as) said, “Once raised my voice against my wife and I immediately refrained from uttering any hurtful and harsh word. I recited a lot of Istighfar [seeking forgiveness] and offered voluntary prayers with great ferventness and gave some charity...”

<https://www.alislam.org/friday-sermon/2017-05-19.html>



## **Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's (aba) words on respecting women**

Huzoor (aba) has continually highlighted the status and emphasised the importance of women in Islam and for our society, 'In the establishment and development of any nation or community, the women play a fundamental and vital role, as the responsibility for the training of the future generations lies in the hands of mothers. They are the nation builders.'

Address to National Waqifat-e-Nau Ijtema on Feb 24, 2018:  
<https://www.alislam.org/articles/high-status-of-women-in-islam/>

## **Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's (aba) words on respecting women**

In his address, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih reminded us of our responsibilities at the Lajna Imaillah UK Ijtema 2019:  
'Unquestionably, women play an indispensable role in society because the future generations lie in their laps and grow up in their tender care.'

<https://www.alislam.org/articles/living-as-muslim-woman-in-modern-day-society/>

## Our Role and Status as Mothers...

In our role as mothers, Allah Ta'ala has ordained us with the highest social status and directs Muslims to be kind to their parents, especially the mother. Allah says: *“And We have enjoined man to be good to his parents; his mother bears him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning takes two years....”* (31:15)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) emphasized the love and respect due to the mother by saying:

“Paradise lies at the feet of the mother.”

In another hadith, he is reported to have stated when asked to whom a man should be kind: “to your mother.” When asked a second time, again said: “to your mother.” He was asked a third time, again the reply was: “your mother.” Only upon being asked a fourth time did he reply: “your father.” Thus he emphasized three times how important it is for a Muslim to take of his/her mother and to give full consideration and respect to her needs and wishes.

Pathway to Paradise: <https://www.alislam.org/book/pathway-to-paradise/>

## Our Role and Status as Mothers ...

### Useful resources:

- <https://www.alislam.org/book/way-of-seekers/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/woman-in-islam/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/hazrat-amman-jan/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/my-mother/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/garments-for-each-other/>
- <https://www.alislam.org/book/domestic-issues-their-solutions/>



# **How to instil respect of women in the home?**

## How to instil respect of women in the home?

Equal treatment of  
sons and daughters

Set clear boundaries

Model respectful,  
compassionate and kind  
behaviour

Teach boys to  
speak politely

Train boys to  
show respect

**Why must we train our sons to  
help around the house?**

## Why must we train our sons to help around the house?

This topic appears as an offshoot to respecting women within the house, as it is common for some boys to get away without taking much responsibility while girls might not.

Sometimes we see bias in the treatment and expectations towards boys and girls. A common example is dealing with household chores where in some households, sons are used to having everything done for them, from having all three meals made to their full washing being done and their rooms being tidied, avoiding these tasks with minimal resistance.

Not being asked to help around the house instils an entitlement and expectance amongst our boys which they carry into their married lives, where, when their wives do not do the same for them it leads to tensions and disagreements. This however, is a cultural trend, and has nothing to do with Islam and Ahmadiyyat. It is therefore, very important that this distinction is made and that our sons are indeed trained from a young age to help out.



# Hadith and Sunnah about helping in the home

## Holy Prophet SAW on importance of keeping a clean home

The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) said:

1. Cleanliness is half of Faith.
2. Keep your houses and yards tidy.
3. When you visit your brethren tidy up your clothes and your mounts for Allah does not like dirt and untidiness.

<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Wisdom-of-Holy-Prophet.pdf>

## Holy Prophet SAW helping in the home

Some one asked Hazrat Ayesha (ra) if The Holy Prophet (pbuh) did some household chores or not. She said, “Yes, of course, The Holy Prophet (pbuh) would mend his shoe when needed or sew his clothes if they required repair and lived just like you live in your homes.” (*Musnad Ahmad* p. 167)

<https://www.alislam.org/hadith/simple-life-of-the-holy-prophet-saw/>

## Huzoor (aba) words about helping in the home

Asked in Arabic by a member of Lajna Canada about whether Huzoor is able to help around the house or cook, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) stated:

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih aba answered, “If I cook well or not can only be determined by the one who eats [what I prepare].”

Huzoor, with a smile, said, “I do not claim to know how to cook everything, but I used to cook sometimes. Now, I do not get much time [...] When I have the opportunity to do a task, and if it is necessary, I do it. That is why when men make excuses for being busy, they are often mere excuses. They should help out in their homes.” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=252zzEkLzbc&t=1293s> , 23 minutes)

**How can we ensure our sons  
help around the house?**

## How to ensure our sons help around the house

- Ensure from an early age they are at the very least making their own breakfast – teach them how to cook basic meals so that they are not overly reliant on you
- Make a reward based chore system – watching tv, playing games and other pass times should happen after the chores are complete
- Ensure if you have sons and daughters that they are working equally – sons should be encouraged to help in the kitchen and in the lead up to guests arriving as much as daughters
- Give sons with younger siblings responsibilities such as ensuring their little brothers and sisters are praying, reading Quran and doing their chores – will ensure better Tarbiyyat as they will be more mindful of these matters themselves
- Mothers must train themselves not to give their sons special treatment– although sons are very precious, we should not go out of our way to indulge them

## Potential questions our sons may ask and how to answer them 1/2

We are taught to lower our gaze and avoid unnecessary interactions with women as Ahmadi Muslims – this is seen as disrespectful in Western culture, how do we answer this?

I have seen a quote of the Promised Messiah (AS) saying that men and women are not equal – what did he mean by this?

# Potential questions our sons may ask - and how to answer them 1/2

It can both be possible to have eye contact where necessary and to keep low gaze. Many men make eye contact and then when it is not necessary then they lower their gaze. Same with women. In cases where it is seen as disrespectful, it is natural to look away from the other person. Even in Islam, women do not have to cover their eyes and so you can have eye contact where necessary. There are subtleties to all this and the key principle in making judgements on how to navigate those subtleties is that the fear of Allah should be in one's heart, and we should realise that Allah is watching us and seeing what we do. For instance, Islam allows that first look upon a person when they come in front of you because you often cannot avoid that. But if someone prolongs that first look unnecessarily to continue looking and peering at the person of the opposite gender, then that is wrong and cannot be classed as a 'first look'. All of these rules of Islam rely upon the first basic principle outlined in Surah Al-Baqara that 'Hudal-lil muttaqeen' which means that this book is a guidance for those who are righteous and who fear God. If the fear of God is taken away then no amount of rules are sufficient for a person.

**Promised Messiah (AS) saying that men and women are not equal – what did he mean by that?**

**The exact quote, “The answer is that men and women are not equal. Universal experience has shown that man is superior to woman in physical and mental powers” is taken deeply out of context and has then been warped to fit the agendas of those who wish to oppose the Jamaat. When studying the wider text, it is much clearer to see that The Promised Messiah (AS).**

## Potential questions our sons may ask - and how to answer them 2/2

There are many Hadith in which women are described in lesser or subservient terms compared to men – why is this?

I never see my dad helping out around the house, why should I?

## Potential questions our sons may ask - and how to answer them 2/2

It is firstly important to remember that like the quote from the book of the Promised Messiah AS in the question before, it is very important to not take Hadith out of the context in which they were initially said by The Holy Prophet SAW. With respect to the one Hadith often highlighted in this regard, whereby Holy Prophet SAW said that he had seen in a vision of hell in which there were many women, who had no knowledge of their religion, who displayed no wisdom or intellect, and who were ungrateful, Huzoor ABA spoke about this during an address to Waqf-e-Nau girls at their 2017 UK Ijtema. He said on the matter "Based on this Hadith, certain non-Muslim critics have alleged that Islam has belittled and maligned the status of women, yet nothing could be further from the truth. Hazrat Musleh-e-Maud ra has given a detailed commentary and interpretation of this Hadith, in which he notes that the Holy Prophet SAW was referring to specific weaknesses that existed in some women of that time, whereby they were illiterate, ignorant of their faith and ungrateful for the favours bestowed upon them. Hence, the words of the Holy Prophet SAW were given as a warning for such women to reform themselves. Yet, during the same era, we also see how Muslim women scaled the highest peaks of morality, virtue and knowledge. For example, some women, notably Hazrat Ayesha (ra), taught Islam to the Muslim men. Similarly, some fought in battles alongside the men and gave great sacrifices. Further, as I mentioned earlier, the Holy Prophet SAW said that women who trained their children and looked after their homes would be the recipients of the same rewards as those who had engaged in Jihad. Thus, how could it be that such devout and pious women were bound for hell? It is impossible and anyone who claims this has entirely misrepresented the teachings of the Holy Prophet SAW."

**I never see my dad helping out around the house, why should I?**

As Ahmadi Muslims, it is our duty to lead our lives as Islam has instructed us to. If there are clear examples and instances of the Holy Prophet SAW, The Promised Messiah AS and the Khulafa helping around the house, then even if the father is not doing so, we should do the right thing and lead by example. It can well be that seeing a son helping around the house creating an atmosphere of happiness and peace will inspire the father to do the same.



**We would like to conclude with these questions:**

**How do I inculcate respect of women in my son?**

**How can I ensure that my son is equipped to help around the house?**

**How can I help my son become a model Ahmadi Muslim?**