

Raising Children with Purpose: Know the Difference Between Care and Education

Qazi Dr Shaikh Abbas Borhany al-Waleed

PhD. (USA), NDI, Shahadat al-Aalamiyah (Al Hawzah, Najaf, Iraq), M.A, LLM (Shariah)

Musheer: Fed. Shariat Court of Pakistan

Member: Ulama Council of Pakistan

Chairman: The Guardian Pakistan

The Writer is an Attorney at Law and a Religious Scholar

Website: www.durrenajaf.com

Academia: <https://durrenajaf.academia.edu/QaziBorhany>

Contact for spiritual help: najafspiritualcenter@gmail.com

Abstract: Parenting is often misunderstood as providing basic needs, feeding, dressing, and bathing. While these constitute care, true education involves shaping belief systems, nurturing values, guiding social interactions, and modeling character. This paper distinguishes between care and education, emphasizing that only parents can fulfill the role of true educators, while teachers and mentors may support but never replace them. Practical parenting strategies are outlined, focusing on presence, communication, faith, and conscious role modeling. The study concludes that perfection is not the goal, presence is. Consistent parental presence, emotional availability, and mindful guidance shape children's values, resilience, and identity, ultimately preparing them to navigate life with confidence, responsibility, and faith.

Key Words: Parenting, Education, Presence, Care, Faith, Child Development, Islamic Parenting, Role Modeling, Values, Practical Parenting

Do you know that feeding, dressing, bathing, and meeting your child's daily needs is care, not education? Both are essential but they are not the same. True Education Means Five Things:

Belief Formation: Instill values, purpose, deep thinking, and faith.

Training the Mind: Teach what and how to think, not just what to do.

Skill and Manners Development: Grow abilities in sports, communication, learning, and etiquette.

Social Guidance: Who to associate with, and how to manage or end relationships with wisdom.

Role Models: Help them admire and emulate worthy individuals. You can hire someone for care.

But only parents can educate. Mentors and teachers can support, but they cannot replace you.

Practical Parenting:

Praise your child in front of others.

Never let them belittle themselves.

Teach them to say "Please" and "Thank you."

Let them live their childhood.

Involve them in small decisions.

Teach them to swim and cook simple meals.
 Make them feel honored during family events.
 Ask for their opinion and value it.
 Give them a space for their projects and display their work.
 Guide them to make good friends.
 Help them recognize their Allah-given strengths.
 Teach them to pray, love Allah, and understand the basics of Im'an.
 Help them express opinions clearly and confidently.
 Teach them how to read and follow instructions.
 Show them how to set and follow through on goals.
 Teach First Aid and personal safety.
 Keep your promises always.
 Explain the "why" behind your decisions.
 Let them teach you sometimes, role reversal builds confidence.
 Teach them what to do if lost.
 Train them to say "No" to wrong.
 Encourage generosity and gratitude.
 Give small amounts of money and teach wise spending.
 Build memory and recall through fun exercises.
 Help them defend themselves respectfully.
 Never shame or threaten them.
 Prepare them to face and learn from failure.
 Introduce teamwork and leadership skills.
 Try new things together and reflect on outcomes.
 Help them organize, repair, and take care of their belongings.
 Nurture their dreams, encourage ambition.
 Teach them gender identity through an Islamic lens.
 Reinforce values like honesty, empathy, responsibility.
 Celebrate their efforts, big or small and document them.
 Stop Blaming Friends, Start Reflecting at Home

A child isn't born smoking, lying, or being disrespectful. Friends don't teach them that overnight. For the first 10 years, you are their world. If children go astray, it's often because parenting took a back seat to work, devices, or entertainment. The child's heart is like blank paper, what you write on it early stays the longest. Words alone won't work. Kids copy actions, not lectures. If we say "be polite" while being rude, they follow what they see, not what we say.

Today's Reality: Screens Raised Them, Not You

Mothers distracted by phones while feeding. TV or YouTube used as babysitters. Fathers too busy for more than a quick check-in. Over time, this becomes the default and the child grows up feeling unseen and unheard. Later, we say, "friends ruined them." No, they were neglected before they even had friends.

The Home is the First School

A mother's lap is the first classroom. Raise children with faith, love of truth, and respect for others. If a mother is righteous, her children inherit more than her eyes, they inherit her character. A father must be present daily. Talk. Ask. Listen. Share stories. Model kindness. Show them right and wrong. Take them to the masjid. Tell them stories of Rasulullah (S) his Ahl al-Bayt (as) and Ash'ab (ra). Turn free time into a treasure chest of values.

Be Mindful with Labels

Watch what you call your child. Even "innocent" nicknames have lasting effects:

You're so naughty." They'll act worse.

You're bad at math." They'll stop trying.

You never cry, you're so brave." They'll suppress real pain.

Our tomboy daughter." She'll distance from femininity.

Children become what they're told. Speak labels you want them to live up to, not live down to.

Final Thought: You Don't Need to Be Perfect, Just Present

This isn't about being perfect, it's about being present."

What That Really Means:

Show up with love and awareness. Your child doesn't need flawless, they need you. Be Emotionally Available: Listen. Hug. Validate. Be Mentally Present: Put down the phone. Be Physically Present: Spend focused time, even 15 minutes matters. Be a Conscious Parent: Choose words and actions with care. Start Today: Delay is the enemy of growth. Plant Goodness Now: What you plant today grows into the adult your child becomes tomorrow.

Concluding Remarks:

Parenting, is not about perfection but about presence. The consistent love, patient guidance, and embodied example of parents shape a child's development far more enduringly than didactic instruction. This position challenges contemporary tendencies to conflate care with education: while care fulfils physical needs such as feeding, clothing, and bathing, education is presented as a deeper, non-transferable parental responsibility. Education, in this framework, encompasses five interrelated dimensions, belief formation, intellectual training, skill and manners development, social guidance, and the provision of role models, each contributing to

the moral, spiritual, and social identity of the child. The practical strategies offered ranging from affirming self-worth and teaching essential life skills to cultivating religious faith and moral discernment, translate these abstract ideals into actionable parenting practices. Central to this is the rejection of shaming, threatening, or careless labelling, which are identified as corrosive to self-concept and resilience. Instead, modelling desirable behaviour and reinforcing effort are emphasised as formative pedagogies. The overuse of screens is argued to displace authentic parental presence, leaving children emotionally neglected even within intact households. By insisting that the home remains the child's "first school," it draws attention to the irreplaceable roles of both mother and father in moral formation, with storytelling, role-modelling, and shared religious practice as key instruments of transmission. Parental perfection is an illusion; what matters is sustained attentiveness, physical, emotional, and mental. Yet the text risks idealising presence without adequately addressing the socioeconomic pressures that constrain parental availability. While its moral exhortations are compelling, a more nuanced account would interrogate structural factors, work demands, digital economies, and shifting family structures that mediate parental capacity. Nonetheless, the central metaphor of the child's heart as "blank paper" persuasively underscores the formative power of example over instruction in shaping enduring character.

Note: Effort has been made to trace all the copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the first opportunity. This document may be used, only with this copyright notice included. Permission is granted to circulate among private individuals and groups, to post on internet forums, and include in not-for-profit publications subject to the following conditions: (1) Material used must be produced faithfully in full, without alteration or omission; (2) The author's subject title must remain unchanged, in whole or in part; (3) Material must be attributed to the author. Contact the author for all other rights, which are reserved. **Copyright © 2026 Qazi Dr Shaikh Abbas Borhany al-Waleed**