



Training-related Rights of Children over Parents

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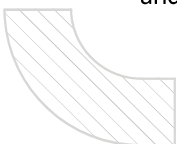
As we all know, one of the dimensions to the essence of human beings is their learning, which should be taken into account in the process of training and educating children. Thus among the children's rights upon their parents is their receiving proper social training by their parents so that their talents and potentials can adequately

develop in the arena of social life, enabling them to live fruitful lives as active and successful members of not only their own society but of the broader society of the world of human beings.

According to Islam, children should be taught and trained on the basis of Divine rules, moral values, and humane manners, so

that they learn to be responsible human beings: taking care not to violate the rights of other human beings in any condition and to do their best to fulfill their duties towards all.

Islam urges parents to train their children dutifully; to teach them "taqwa" (being careful about one's duties to Allah), chastity, and noble





manners including respectful behavior and generosity. Certainly, if children observe that their parents always speak the truth, talk politely and try to help anybody who needs their help, they will never grow up to be liars, stingy or miserly persons.

Likewise, self-control, self-discipline, and accountability can and should be taught to children in the family environment and by the parents. In this regard, the father's role is of particular significance, since they can make great impressions upon their children's character through involving them in decision-making and finding solutions to various problems. The Holy Prophet of Islam (pbuh) has been quoted saying: "Children are (to be treated)

as obeyed and cherished (as far as possible) darlings till the age of seven and during the next seven years, they should be instructed and educated and during the third seven years of life, they are aides (and can be consulted)."

Obviously, asking the youngsters for their views and help regarding various situations and letting them express themselves freely will boost their self-confidence and help them find out about the immense talents and abilities God has granted them. This way, they will become capable of dealing with numerous problems they will face as adults in society and also in their personal lives.

Also, it is the parents' duty to help their sons and daughters with selecting friends. Imam Sajjad (as) had advised his offsprings thus: "My dear children! Avoid the friendship of certain groups of people, do not keep company with them and do not travel with them: The liars, for like a mirage they present false pictures to you; the care-free sinners, for they will sell you for even the pettiest price: the people who are lacking in benevolence, for they will deny you help when you need it most; the silly, because they unknowingly harm you when they want to give you benefit...."

Accordingly, parents need to train their children in such a way as to make them feel obliged to respect others. Imam Ali (as) has advised his followers thus: "Speak to the people in a good manner as Allah has commanded you to.", and "Guard yourselves against getting afflicted with self-centeredness, self-conceit, bad temper, and impatience, because such qualities drive

friends away from you and make the people reluctant to communicate with you.", and "Avoid humiliating anyone you meet, for if he is older than you, then you should regard him as your father, and if he is your age, then he is as your brother and if he is younger than you, then you should look upon him as your son."

Likewise, the Infallibles (as) have stressed the fact that anyone who behaves arrogantly will suffer disgrace, and also that arguing with others unnecessarily is not only useless but also breeds enmity.

In just the same vein, our Divine-guided leaders have advised us to rush towards doing good. Imam Sajjad (as): "If you decide to do a good, benevolent action then try

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to do it immediately, for you do not know what will happen tomorrow.”

Also, parents should share their own experiences regarding life problems with their children and should through gradual training and guidance prepare them for dealing with the challenges they will inevitably face in adulthood, thus preventing any nervous breakdown in the face of social life which is the fate of those who in their childhood and early youth do not get adequate training and/or who are spoiled due to too much ease and luxury. And in this direction, parents should also teach their children to get themselves used to thinking deeply about the consequences of actions; just as Imam Ali (as) has advised his son: “Fore-sight and thinking deeply before an action will guard you against remorse.”

As for selecting companions and associates, the Infallibles (as) have also presented very il-

luminating guidelines, including the following. It is quoted from Imam Ali (as), “The companionship of the learned will bring dignity to the one who chooses to enjoy their company.”, and “Take the advice of the sagacious persons and think about their judgments.” Also, it has been

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narrated that Imam al-Sadiq (as) advised his infallible son, Imam al-Kazim (as) to, “Visit the good people and not the evil-doers, for the latter’s association is totally useless.” And most importantly, it is the parents’ duty to teach their children religious teachings and Ahadith. Imam al-Sadiq (as): “Teach your children Ahaith before the deviated succeed in leading them astray through perverse views. From the authentic accounts on the life and manners of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) of Islam and his Infallible successors, we can infer that one of the most effective ways of giving children proper Islamic teaching is to let them and, in fact, encourage them to ask questions freely and try to give adequate replies with patience and care, in words plausible to the children and suiting their age and level of understanding. And likewise, parents should let their children express themselves regarding the matters which concern them directly or even indirectly and should allow them to attend the gatherings of adults too. It is advisable for parents to let their children have some share in the activities and works, which entail hardships because in this way children will be better equipped with abilities needed for the future life. There are certain Ahadith pointing to this view: Too kind parents will not breed successful children. And it is mostly at home where children learn the principles of peaceful coexistence, cooperation, and sympathy towards their fellow human beings, and a sense of responsibility.