

Thus it is against the sunnah to severely reprimand or beat a child. Furthermore, a severe reprimand seldom has a lasting effect. The child may refrain temporarily from that act but will repeat it later. The child should be taught with love and affection that the masjid is not a place for mischief and playing. The child will respect you and *insha-Allâh* will not repeat his mischief again.

May Allâh grant us the ability to refrain from committing wrong acts, *Âmin*

Pearls of Wisdom

☆ "Don't love the Heart that hurts you and don't hurt the Heart that loves you.

☆ "Don't cry over anyone who won't cry over you.

☆ "Good friends are hard to find, harder to leave, and impossible to forget.

☆ "Most people walk in and out of your life, but only friend's leave footprints in your heart.

☆ "True friendship "never" ends. Friends are forever.

☆ "People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges.

☆ "If we are incapable of finding peace in ourselves, it is pointless to search elsewhere.

☆ "The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life. Rarely do members of one family grow up under the same roof.

☆ "A change of heart changes everything.

☆ "Our greatest glory is not in ever falling, but in rising every time we fall.

☆ "You only live once - but if you work it right, once is enough.

☆ "One generation plants trees, and the next enjoys the shade.

☆ "It is difficult to live in the present, ridiculous to live in the future, and impossible to live in the past. Nothing is as far away as one minute ago.

The children's saff should be made after the men's saif has been completed. This is the sunnah way. After the salâh has begun, those who arrive later should join the children's saff on the right and left side.

Moving the children

Some latecomers move the children further back when seeing them in the saff. Some people hold the child by the ears and drag him to the back. If the child resists, he is carried to the back. Whoever comes late does this. This occurs in many of the masjids. If the child was in the first saff at the beginning of salâh, he reaches the last saff at the end of salâh. This is because most people come late for salâh nowadays. Whoever enters the masjid, does this thinking that it is not permissible to perform salâh next to children. This is completely wrong. One should free one's mind of such a thought. You should stand next to the child whether he is in the front saff or the rear one. You may stand on his right-hand side or his left-hand side. This does not affect the salâh of the adults.

All late comers should stand at the back next to the children. It is not permissible to shunt the children further back. Such an act is sinful. By doing this, we are nullifying their salâh and thereby placing that sin on our shoulders.

Standing in the adults' saff

If the children that attend the masjid for salâh are not well disciplined and they run around in the masjid, play fools, laugh and talk, then the ruling for such children is that they should be separated and made to stand among the adults. A separate saff should not be made for them. This will prevent them from disturbing others in their salâh. If there are only one or two children, then it is permissible to make them stand with the adults without any *karâhat* [abomination].

Discipline

We should also remember the way shown to us by Nabî Sallallâhu alaihi wasallam when dealing with children. They should not be mercilessly treated and beaten up. Nabî Sallallâhu alaihi wasallam said, "One who does not have mercy on our young ones and does not respect our elders is not from amongst us." Anâs Radhiâllâhu anhu served Nabî Sallallâhu alaihi wasallam for ten years but not once did Nabî Sallallâhu alaihi wasallam reprimand him for doing something or for not doing something.

Categories of Children

There are three categories of children:

- (1) The first type are those who are innocent and young. They neither understand the etiquette of the masjid nor do they know anything about salâh. They do not have the understanding that the masjid is a place for worshipping Allâh. There is also the danger that they urinate in the masjid or play therein and violate its sanctity. Children of five to six years fall in this category. The ruling for such children is that it is not permissible to bring them to the masjid. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that they do not bring such children to the masjid. If they do so and the children violate the sanctity of Allâh's house, the parents will be sinful because the children themselves are innocent. The masjid trustees can also prohibit such children from entering the masjid.
- (2) (2) The second category is those children who are slightly elder. They are between seven to eleven years old. Such children understand the status of a masjid and respect it to a certain degree. However, due to lack of a complete understanding, they do not respect it fully. It is permissible to bring such children to the masjid but it is better not to do so.
- (3) (3) The third category of children is those who are close to maturity. Their ages range from twelve to fourteen. However, a fifteen-year-old child is considered mature even if he does not have any signs of puberty. The ruling for this category is that
- (4) they should be brought to the masjid in order to inculcate the habit of salâh with congregation because salâh becomes obligatory on them the moment they reach the age of puberty. It is obligatory on them to attend the masjid for salâh with congregation. If this habit is not inculcated before puberty, it will take time after puberty as a result of which they will forgo their salâhs with congregation. Thus it is imperative to bring the youngsters to the masjid while guiding them at home to respect the masjid. They should be taught not to make a noise in the masjid as it is a sanctified place where the name of Allâh is taken.

The Position of the Children's Saff

(فقہ المعاملات پر اپنی نوعیت کا پہلا علمی و تحقیقی مجلہ آپ کے ہاتھ میں ہے)

Ejecting these youth from their places in the row will:

1. Be contravening their rights, for whoever precedes someone to that which has not been claimed by the Muslims, then he is most deserving to it
2. Create an aversion to the mosque and keep them away
3. Create a sense of resentment and hatred to those who have taken their places
4. Help the youth to gather up into groups (in the back rows) which will lead them to play around even more and disturb the people in the mosque more so than if they were standing in-between grown men (in the front rows)

As for what is mentioned by some of the People of Knowledge that the youth should take their positions at the end of the rows or the last row in the masjid, using as evidence the statement of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), "Let the wise people of experience and understanding be close to me", then this a weak opinion, contradicting the statement of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) "When one precedes another to that which has not been claimed, he (the first one) is more deserving of it."

Using as evidence the statement of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) "Let the wise people of experience and understanding be close to me", is not fully correct because the meaning of this hadeeth is to encourage those people of wisdom, intellect and experience to be near to the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) because they are more likely to have deep understanding (fiqh) than those who are young, and they are more accurate in recording what they see from the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) and what they hear from him. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) did not say 'Let none of you be close to me except the wise people of experience and understanding' and if he had said that, it would then have been fitting to remove the youth from the front rows. But the context of this hadeeth is to command those who have deep understanding, intellect and wisdom to come forward and become close to the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Children in the Masajid

By: Maulana Ibn-e-Abdul Rehman.



Q:) Some of the people who pray with us in the Masjid bring their children with them, children who are (too young and) unable to distinguish (between right and wrong). They are unable to pray correctly and they line up in our (front) rows, and some of them are fidgeting and playing around and therefore disturbing those around them... so what is the ruling on all that?

And what is your advice to those who are the Guardians of these youngsters?

A:) My opinion concerning these young children who come to the mosque and disturb those who are praying, is that it is not permissible, because of the annoyance it causes to the Muslims who are trying to fulfil their obligation (of salah) from the obligations of Allah, and the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) once heard some of the companions praying and reciting loudly, so he (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said, "Do not raise your voices over one another in the recitation."

And in another hadeeth, "Do not annoy one another", and so therefore everything that causes some harm or grievance to those who are praying, then it is not permissible for those responsible to do that.

So my advice to these Guardians is to not bring them (children) to the Masjid and that they should seek guidance by what the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) has guided us to, when he said, "Instruct your children to pray when they are seven, and smack them (if they don't pray) when they are ten".

Just as I advise the people who frequent the Masjid to be easy on those youth for whom it is legislated to come to the mosque, and to not make things difficult for them and not to stand in their places (in the row) when they have preceded you to it (in the row). For whoever precedes the other to that space, is more deserving of it whether he is from the youth or grown up.

امام محمد بن ادریس شافعی رحمۃ اللہ علیہ کا سن ولادت ۱۵۰ ہجری اور سن وفات ۲۴۰ ہجری ہے ☆