



Parenting Advice for Muslim Mothers

Activity 1:

Distributing Ramadan Kindness Packs to community helpers such as cleaners, security guards/ watchmen, school bus drivers etc.

Purpose:

1. To make your children **appreciate** the community helpers who they interact with throughout the year but whose services they take for granted.



What to say: Ask what it would be like if the cleaner stopped collecting our trash, or the watchman slept the night away instead of staying awake and ensuring our safety, or if the school bus driver did not pick us up on time, or drive safely.

2. To make your children realize the difficulties that these workers face in providing us with their services, in comparison with the ease that we experience in our lives, in order to invoke feelings of **sympathy** for them, and **gratitude** for their own blessings.



What to say: Talk to them about how the street cleaner stands in the heat all day while fasting while we sit in the comfort of air-conditioned cars and homes (and we still find it difficult to fast!), the night watchman sacrifices his sleep and puts his own life at risk to guard us and our property, that many of these workers live away from their families and do *suhoor* and *iftar* and even *Eid* alone, while we enjoy these special occasions with our family.

3. To make them spend their time and energy, and perhaps even money, to **help others** and bring joy to their hearts. As human beings our brains have been designed by Allah ﷻ to thrive in helping and serving others. The act of sharing and spreading happiness sets off the reward circuits of the brain, releases happiness hormones and helps develop compassion in our personalities.



Get children excited about Ramadan by involving them in purpose driven activities which are simple to execute for you while fasting and still fun and engaging for your children. Discuss short and simple points relatable and easily understood by your children while you are busy with the activity and let that time together be actual hands-on lessons in teaching our deen as a wonderful way of living a life of mercy, compassion and uprightness.









What to say: Tell them about sayings of the Prophet ﷺ with regards to being kind and charitable, such as:

- "All of creation is like the family of Allah. And the most beloved to Allah is the one who is best to His family."
- "Allah helps a person, as long as he is helping his brother."
- "The best act of charity is to feed a hungry stomach."
- "Whoever unexpectedly makes another person happy, Allah ﷻ forgives all his sins."

Get them excited about all the rewards they will get, and about how happy the person on the receiving end will feel (to make them relate, ask them how they would feel if they were in the recipients position).

What to do:

	Make your children identify which of the community helpers they would like to thank and hand their Ramadan Kindness Packs to. This results in them slowing down and taking notice of the people in the community, making them more aware of who needs help, and allows for opportunities to perform acts of kindness.
	Involve them in making a list of items to include in the packs. This will make them become aware of the daily blessings that they take for granted, like flour for their bread, and oil for frying their samosas!
	If convenient, take them shopping for the items to put inside these packs, which can include dates and other ingredients which are commonly used to prepare <i>suhoor</i> and <i>iftar</i> meals in your part of the world. Let them pay for part of the items if they want.
	It's a real party if the children have multiple kindness packs to make! Children absolutely love to sort and put all the things to go in a pack into designated piles and then put into a bag or box to give away.
	Help them make simple thank you tags to put on their Ramadan Kindness Packs; let all the siblings take turns to write and work on them together.
	Make the children hand out these care packs by themselves to let them experience the joys of sharing and compassion. Let them know that becoming a reason for someone's happiness is the best way to feel happy ourselves.

