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# EDUCATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S DOMESTIC LIFE IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY FAMILY PROBLEMS

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## Abstract

This article examines the educational dimensions of the Prophet Muhammad's domestic life and their relevance to contemporary family problems. It argues that the Prophetic household offers an integrated ethic of responsibility, affectionate instruction, equitable treatment, and disciplined moderation. Using a qualitative textual approach, the study reads selected Qurʾanic passages alongside authenticated reports in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. It then places the resulting principles in a cautious dialogue with contemporary evidence on parental distraction, child maltreatment, and parenting interventions. Three distinctions guide the analysis: between a normative teaching and a historical description, between a transferable ethical principle and a context-specific household arrangement, and between a religiously justified proposal and an empirically established intervention. The first section develops the foundations of domestic education; the second examines changing family arrangements, marital difficulties, parenting pressures, and their social and psychological implications; the third proposes practical applications. The analysis finds that domestic service, emotional restraint, consultation, and responsive attention provide a coherent basis for family education. Their application nevertheless requires material support, appropriate professional expertise, and protection against coercion. The article recommends premarital education, negotiated household responsibilities, child-sensitive instruction, proportionate digital boundaries, and accountable referral procedures. These proposals should be adapted to local conditions and evaluated through measures of safety, participation, and sustained behavioural change rather than assumptions of automatic success.

Keywords: Prophetic household; Seerah; family education; marital ethics; parenting; digital distraction; family stability

## Introduction

Family education takes place through repeated conduct as well as explicit instruction. The Prophet's domestic life is therefore significant for understanding how Islamic commitments become visible in ordinary relationships. Reports transmitted by members of his household describe service, affection, correction, and worship within the same moral setting. Their educational significance concerns the formation of dispositions rather than the reproduction of every historical circumstance. Contemporary households face varied pressures, including insecure income, demanding schedules, disagreements about responsibilities, and digitally mediated interaction. These conditions require contextual investigation; they cannot all be attributed to a single moral failure. The research problem is how principles drawn from

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authenticated domestic reports can address contemporary family pressures without overlooking historical context or the limits of empirical evidence. The study asks which educational principles these reports support, which present problems they illuminate, and what conditions make their application responsible. It first establishes textual foundations, then examines contemporary problems, and finally develops practical proposals. Arabic excerpts are followed by English translations and analysis. Translations are the author's renderings of the cited excerpts; ellipses are avoided by selecting self-contained clauses. The study is an interpretive research article, not a systematic review, a clinical treatment protocol, or a comprehensive comparative account of family law. Numbered Chicago-style notes and a bibliography identify the sources used.

## Section One Educational Foundations of the Prophetic Household

### 1 Meaning and Significance of the Prophet's Domestic Life

Domestic life includes relationships with spouses, children, and dependants. Its educational significance lies in the connection between moral teaching and observable conduct, particularly where authority encounters ordinary needs and shared responsibilities.

When asked about the Prophet's conduct at home, ʿĀʾishah described his practical participation:

«كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي مِهْنَةِ أَهْلِهِ»[1]

"He would be engaged in serving his family."

ʿĀʾishah's description gives domestic service religious and educational visibility. It challenges the assumption that care work diminishes the dignity of a respected man. The report also mentions departure for prayer when its time arrived: family service and worship appear within an ordered life. It does not enumerate all tasks or settle every legal disagreement about their allocation. Its strongest inference is that practical participation belongs within exemplary household conduct.

A person may address a public audience persuasively while behaving differently in private; domestic reports therefore provide a distinctive perspective on character. The household must also be read within seventh-century social conditions. Its practices supply evidence for ethical reasoning without establishing that every contemporary family must share an identical size, economy, or division of tasks.

In a report transmitted by ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, the Prophet linked guardianship with accountability:

«أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ»[2]

"Each of you is a guardian, and each of you is answerable for those entrusted to your care."

Guardianship is framed through answerability. Authority consequently entails duties toward people rather than unrestricted control over them. For educational purposes, this means that adults must examine what their habits teach: whether promises are kept, burdens are acknowledged, and weaker members can speak. The transfer to contemporary households is an ethical inference from the report. It warrants shared reflection on responsibility while leaving specific arrangements open to legitimate circumstances. Domestic excellence is thus assessed through care that can be observed and obligations that can be explained.

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[1] Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of the Call to Prayer, chapter on attending to household needs when prayer is announced, hadith 676, Sunnah.com, accessed October 19, 2026, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:676.

[2] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Judgments, chapter on obedience to those in authority, hadith 7138, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:7138.

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## 2 Household Routines and Educational Principles

Household routines provide repeated opportunities for instruction. Meals, worship, and cooperative tasks allow educators to identify a specific expectation and demonstrate it. The following evidence examines how attentive guidance and perseverance can form habits without making humiliation an instrument of teaching.

ʿUmar ibn Abī Salamah recalls the Prophet's guidance during a meal:

«يَا غُلَامُ، سَمِّ اللهَ، وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ»[3]

> "Young boy, mention Allah's name, eat with your right hand, and eat from what is near you."

ʿUmar ibn Abī Salamah recalls guidance addressed to him during a meal. The instruction identifies attainable actions and links remembrance of God with social manners. Its brevity matters pedagogically: the learner can understand what to do next. The narrator's recollection of continuing the practice indicates durability in this particular case. It should not be converted into a universal experimental finding that one brief instruction always produces lasting change.

The relevant Prophetic reports show attention to the learner and to the immediate action. They do not require a lengthy lecture whenever a child makes a mistake. This allows a distinction between instruction that clarifies an expectation and rebuke that merely displays an adult's frustration.

ʿĀʾishah transmits the Prophet's instruction concerning gentleness:

«إِنَّ الرِّفْقَ لَا يَكُونُ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ»[4]

> "Gentleness is present in nothing without making it more beautiful."

Gentleness concerns the manner in which a valid expectation is communicated. It does not remove boundaries or make adults indifferent to harmful behaviour. A contemporary application is to explain one rule, demonstrate it, and provide repeated opportunities to practise. Correction can name the behaviour without branding the child as worthless. Adults should also align their example with their instruction: expectations concerning honesty or device use lose credibility when caregivers openly disregard them. Such applications extend the ethical logic of the reports; their effectiveness depends on age, capacity, repetition, and family conditions.

The Qurʾan connects household instruction with sustained practice in Ṭā Hā:

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا﴾[5]

> "Instruct your family to pray, and persevere in it."

The command joins teaching to perseverance. Household formation therefore requires the educator's continuing example, not instructions directed only at others. A family routine gains credibility when caregivers participate consistently and adapt their guidance to the learner's capacity.

## 3 Kind Treatment of Family Members

Good companionship requires respectful conduct as well as fulfilled obligations. It includes speech, practical assistance, and attention to relatives, while excluding the assumption that private authority permits injury. The sources considered here illuminate these different

[3] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Food, chapter on mentioning Allah's name and eating with the right hand, hadith 5376, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5376.

[4] Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Virtue and Maintaining Ties, chapter on the excellence of gentleness, hadith 2594a, Sunnah.com, accessed October 19, 2026, https://sunnah.com/muslim:2594a.

[5] Ṭā Hā, 20: 132.

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responsibilities and clarify why domestic kindness must be assessed through behaviour rather than reputation alone.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Nisāʾ:

﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ﴾[6]

"Live with them in an honourable manner."

The instruction addresses marital conduct through maʿrūf, a standard of recognised right dealing. Custom may help specify ordinary expectations, but a practice does not become just merely because it is familiar. An application to contemporary marriage requires attention to dignity, consent, and enforceable responsibilities. The verse supports criticism of contemptuous or exploitative behaviour; it does not by itself prescribe a complete counselling technique or determine every disputed legal question.

Everyday tone, financial reliability, privacy, and willingness to hear concerns all affect the meaning of companionship. The Qurʾanic command provides a normative basis, while reports of the Prophet's behaviour illuminate its domestic expression. The following evidence must be interpreted without turning endurance of mistreatment into an educational ideal.

ʿĀʾishah's account in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim describes the Prophet's restraint in personal relationships:

«مَا ضَرَبَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَيْئًا قَطُّ بِيَدِهِ، وَلَا امْرَأَةً وَلَا خَادِمًا»[7]

"The Messenger of Allah never struck anything with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant."

This excerpt is from ʿĀʾishah's account; the full report separately mentions fighting in Allah's cause. Its relevance here is his treatment of women and servants in ordinary relationships. It provides strong evidence against presenting domestic aggression as the ordinary Prophetic example. A family educator should therefore distinguish reconciliation from pressure to conceal violence. Where there is danger, protection and competent assistance take priority over a meeting designed merely to preserve appearances. Kind treatment is credible when it governs the conduct of the person with greater power, including when that person is displeased.

Al-Nisāʾ places care for relatives alongside other social obligations:

﴿وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا وَبِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ﴾[8]

"Show kindness to parents and to relatives."

The excerpt belongs to a wider command embracing worship and social obligations. It extends domestic ethics beyond the marital pair. Care for relatives should remain attentive to actual need and must not become a justification for neglecting another dependent's established rights.

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī records this instruction concerning speech:

«فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ»[9]

"Let him speak what is good or remain silent."

The instruction concerns the moral responsibility of speech. Within a household, it challenges insults disguised as frankness. Restraint should prevent injurious words while leaving room for necessary complaints, truthful disagreement, and requests for help; silence must not be imposed on an injured person.

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[6] Al-Nisāʾ, 4: 19.

[7] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Virtues, chapter on his avoidance of sin and his choosing the easier of permissible things, hadith 2328a, https://sunnah.com/muslim:2328a.

[8] Al-Nisāʾ, 4: 36.

[9] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Manners, hadith 6018.

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### 4 Moderation and Balance in Domestic Life

Moderation gives legitimate claims their due. Domestic education must therefore examine how worship, work, rest, and companionship are ordered, especially when one person's preferred activity repeatedly limits another family member's reasonable access to care.

Addressing ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr's demanding pattern of voluntary worship, the Prophet affirmed:

«وَإِنَّ لِزَوْجِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا»[10]

"Your wife has a right over you."

The surrounding report also recognises the claims of the body and eyes. Addressed to ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr in the context of excessive fasting and night prayer, it makes family responsibility part of religious accountability. The conclusion is not that all demanding schedules are wrongful. It is that a person must assess whether discretionary commitments repeatedly deprive others of legitimate attention. Contemporary timetables should include rest and availability as well as earning and worship.

A household ethic must therefore distinguish necessary effort from avoidable neglect. Prophetic guidance concerning voluntary worship is especially instructive because it corrects an excess that could otherwise be defended as piety. If an admirable activity can become imbalanced, professional achievement and online engagement also require scrutiny.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Rūm:

﴿وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً﴾[11]

"He placed affection and mercy between you."

Affection and mercy identify qualities through which marital life is understood as a divine sign. They are not a promise that every marriage will remain emotionally effortless. Their educational relevance is to make relationship maintenance a recognised responsibility. Families can review workloads, protect modest periods for conversation, and adjust expectations during illness or financial difficulty. Balance must also account for unequal burdens: one adult's uninterrupted leisure may depend on another's exhaustion. A negotiated arrangement should therefore consider actual labour and capacity. This is a practical proposal grounded in the ethical orientation of the texts, rather than a claim that a particular weekly schedule is directly prescribed.

## Section Two Contemporary Family Problems and Their Causes

### 1 Changes in the Modern Family System

Changing family arrangements alter the distribution of care, income, and privacy. Their effects differ across households. Analysis should therefore assess actual responsibilities and resources rather than assume that either extended or smaller families invariably provide better conditions for every member.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Baqarah:

﴿لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةٌۢ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ﴾[12]

"No mother should be harmed through her child, nor any father through his child."

The verse appears within directions concerning nursing and parental responsibilities. Its immediate context should remain visible when a wider family principle is drawn from it. It discourages using the child's needs as a means of harming either parent. Applied cautiously,

[10] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Wedlock, chapter "Your wife has a right over you," hadith 5199, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5199.
[11] Al-Rūm, 30: 21.
[12] Al-Baqarah, 2: 233.

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it supports asking whether household arrangements distribute care without manipulation. It does not establish that one residential pattern will always serve every family best.

Extended families can provide care and material support but may also involve intrusive decision-making; smaller households can protect privacy while increasing the burden of childcare. Neither arrangement should be assessed through nostalgia alone. A meaningful analysis asks who provides care, who bears costs, and how the needs of vulnerable members are met.

The same instruction also affirms the body's claim to care:

«فَإِنَّ لِجَسَدِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا»[13]

"Your body has a right over you."

This principle helps evaluate arrangements that depend on chronic exhaustion. A caregiver may require practical assistance rather than another exhortation to patience. Technology similarly has mixed possibilities: it can sustain contact across migration while displacing attention within a shared room. McDaniel and Radesky's original study of parental technology interference provides evidence of associations with child behaviour difficulties, not proof that devices alone explain family decline. A responsible religious response therefore combines moral reflection with investigation of employment, housing, and support networks. The key question is whether change enables care and accountability or weakens them. This avoids treating modernity itself as a sufficient explanation and keeps reform directed toward identifiable practices.[14]

Al-Ṭalāq relates expenditure to the resources actually available:

﴿لِيُنفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ﴾[15]

"Let a person of means spend according to his means."

In its context of family provision, the verse directs attention to capacity. Contemporary expectations should distinguish binding support from competitive consumption. Limited income calls for fair prioritisation and practical assistance, while genuine capacity should not be concealed to evade an obligation.

## 2 Contemporary Challenges in Marital Relationships

Marital difficulties can involve expectations, money, communication, and trust. Their interaction requires attention to evidence and unequal power. Ethical guidance should distinguish ordinary imperfections from serious injury, and reconciliation from pressure to endure it, while identifying changes that spouses and advisers can realistically undertake in their particular circumstances and relationships.

Abū Hurayrah transmits this instruction on the fair assessment of a spouse:

«لَا يَفْرَكْ مُؤْمِنٌ مُؤْمِنَةً، إِنْ كَرِهَ مِنْهَا خُلُقًا رَضِيَ مِنْهَا آخَرَ»[16]

"A believing man should not hate a believing woman; if he dislikes one characteristic, he is pleased with another."

The report corrects the total judgement through which one disliked feature erases the person's other qualities. Its immediate address is to men, which matters when teaching husbands to examine their own evaluations. A broader practice of fair assessment may also be commended to both spouses. The principle does not require a person to overlook violence,

[13] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 5199.

[14] Brandon T. McDaniel and Jenny S. Radesky, "Technoference: Parent Distraction With Technology and Associations With Child Behavior Problems," *Child Development* 89, no. 1 (2018): 100–109, https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12822.

[15] Al-Ṭalāq, 65: 7.

[16] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Suckling, chapter "Advice with regard to women," hadith 1468b, https://sunnah.com/muslim:1468b.

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coercion, or repeated deprivation of rights. Ordinary imperfections and serious harm demand different responses.

Digital communication adds opportunities for connection and for misunderstanding. Public comparison with curated relationships may also influence expectations, although its importance cannot be presumed in every case. Ethical guidance should identify conduct that each spouse can change while recognising constraints beyond individual control.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Ḥujurāt:

﴿وَلَا تَجَسَّسُواْ﴾[17]

"Do not spy on one another."

Within the verse's wider prohibition of destructive suspicion and backbiting, this instruction offers a relevant standard for private conduct. Applying it to phones requires careful reasoning: ownership, consent, genuine safety concerns, and legitimate authority matter. Routine secret monitoring should not be celebrated as proof of love. A proposed alternative is explicit discussion of communication expectations, financial transparency, and agreed privacy. When trust has been damaged, restoration needs accountable behaviour and time. It cannot be produced simply by compelling access to every message. Where wrongdoing is alleged, pastoral advice must remain attentive to evidence and should avoid amplifying accusations.

Al-Ḥujurāt directs believers toward reconciliation:

﴿فَأَصۡلِحُوا بَيۡنَ أَخَوَيۡكُمۡ﴾[18]

"Make peace between your two brothers."

The immediate address concerns the believing community. Applied to marital disputes, its reconciliatory purpose supports fair assistance rather than partisan mobilisation of relatives. A mediator should establish the complaint and the parties' circumstances before proposing a resolution.

Al-Nisāʾ recognises the value of a negotiated settlement:

﴿وَٱلصُّلۡحُ خَيۡرٞ﴾[19]

"Reconciliation is better."

The surrounding passage concerns a wife's fear of ill-treatment or withdrawal by her husband. Its context prevents treating reconciliation as a demand addressed only to women. A settlement deserves that name when it addresses the actual grievance without pressure to surrender protection.

## 3 Contemporary Problems in Children's Education

Children learn through relationships, routines, and examples as well as explicit religious instruction. Guidance requires attention to understanding and capacity, with clear expectations communicated through affectionate and dependable engagement. The evidence below connects religious instruction with mercy while distinguishing educational proposals from findings established through intervention research.

The Qurʾan states in Luqmān:

﴿يَٰبُنَيَّ لَا تُشۡرِكۡ بِٱللَّهِ﴾[20]

"My dear son, do not associate partners with Allah."

The Qurʾanic account of Luqmān is not a report of the Prophet's own household. It supplies a complementary scriptural model in which affectionate address accompanies a fundamental religious instruction. Its use here is thematic, not an identification of two historical settings. A

[17] Al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 12.
[18] Al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 10.
[19] Al-Nisāʾ, 4: 128.
[20] Luqmān, 31: 13.

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contemporary implication is that moral seriousness need not exclude warmth. Children should be able to ask why a practice matters and receive an answer appropriate to their understanding.

Inconsistent rules, parental distraction, unsuitable content, and unrealistic academic expectations can complicate formation. The extent of each problem depends on age and circumstances. Adults should therefore distinguish a child's deliberate refusal from confusion, developmental limitation, fatigue, or an unmet need. This distinction helps make instruction proportionate rather than reactive.

After kissing al-Ḥasan, the Prophet answered a visitor who expressed distance from his own children:

«مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ»[21]

"Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy."

The statement follows the Prophet's kissing of al-Ḥasan and a visitor's expression of emotional distance toward his own children. The action gives visible form to mercy. It supports affectionate availability, while leaving room for clear expectations. In current households, a feasible application is regular attentive time, predictable routines, and brief explanations of rules. Digital limits should include adult example and discussion of content and context, rather than relying exclusively on a timer. These proposals require adaptation for disability, learning differences, and family resources. WHO parenting guidance supports structured assistance to caregivers; religious educators can contribute motivation while qualified practitioners address needs that exceed their competence.[22]

## 4 Social and Psychological Implications of Family Problems

Family difficulties have varied implications for emotional security and social functioning. Their seriousness depends on the conduct involved and the support available. An educational response should identify harmful processes without treating every disagreement or change in household structure as equivalent to abuse.

When a man repeatedly requested counsel, the Prophet repeatedly instructed him:

«لَا تَغْضَبْ»[23]

"Do not give way to anger."

The repeated instruction places restraint at the centre of moral practice. It does not imply that the initial experience of anger is always voluntary or that distress should never be expressed. In domestic education, the relevant issue is how a person acts when angry. Pausing an argument, refraining from threats, and returning to the issue at an agreed time are possible applications. They are proposed techniques rather than direct quotations from the report.

Protective relationships, material support, and appropriate services may alter outcomes. It is therefore inaccurate to label every child from a separated or economically pressured household as damaged. The more useful task is to identify harmful processes, including violence, persistent humiliation, and involvement of children in adult disputes, and then reduce exposure to them.

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[21] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Manners, chapter on showing mercy to children, kissing them and embracing them, hadith 5997, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5997.

[22] World Health Organization, *WHO Guidelines on Parenting Interventions to Prevent Maltreatment and Enhance Parent–Child Relationships with Children Aged 0–17 Years* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2022), https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240065505.

[23] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book of Manners, chapter on being cautious about anger, hadith 6116, https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6116.

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The instruction on gentleness also supplies a standard for the manner of domestic correction:

«إِنَّ الرِّفْقَ لَا يَكُونُ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ»[24]

"Gentleness is present in nothing without making it more beautiful."

Gentleness should not obscure the seriousness of abuse. WHO identifies child maltreatment as a threat to health and development and emphasises prevention and supportive responses. This supports treating protection as a substantive responsibility rather than a private embarrassment. At the same time, an institutional summary does not establish the precise cause of an individual's symptoms. Persistent distress calls for appropriate assessment. Religious counsel can offer meaning, accountability, and social connection, while clinical and protective services contribute specialised expertise. An integrated response respects both contributions. Family stability should consequently be evaluated by safety and trustworthy care as well as by whether members continue to reside together.[25]

Āl ʿImrān commends restraint and forgiveness:

﴿وَٱلْكَٰظِمِينَ ٱلْغَيْظَ وَٱلْعَافِينَ عَنِ ٱلنَّاسِ﴾[26]

"Those who restrain anger and pardon people."

The pairing distinguishes controlling an immediate response from deciding whether to forgive. Domestic education can encourage both dispositions without denying accountability. An apology and repair may support reconciliation, whereas repeated injury requires protective action rather than an appeal to pardon alone.

**Section Three Applying Prophetic Educational Principles**

**1 Reforming Marital Relationships through Prophetic Principles**

Marital reform should turn general complaints into identifiable responsibilities. It requires fair listening, a realistic account of rights, and protection against coercion. The following evidence addresses honourable treatment, mediation, and the ethical limits of preserving a relationship, including circumstances in which continuing it would prolong deliberate harm rather than restore trust.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Nisāʾ:

﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ﴾[27]

"Live with them in an honourable manner."

Honourable companionship can be translated into specific undertakings: reliable support, respectful speech, protection of confidences, and recognition of household work. The exact arrangement should reflect legitimate obligations and actual capacity. An agreement is not fair merely because the more powerful person announces it. Educators can help couples distinguish rights, voluntary generosity, and local preferences, avoiding the elevation of every custom into religious law.

Prophetic ethics encourage attention to conduct and responsibility, but their application requires listening to both parties and recognising unequal power. Reconciliation is most credible when each person can speak without intimidation and agreed obligations can be reviewed.

[24] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, hadith 2594a.
[25] World Health Organization, "Child Maltreatment," May 8, 2026, https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment.
[26] Āl ʿImrān, 3: 134.
[27] Al-Nisāʾ, 4: 19.

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The Qurʾan states in Al-Nisāʾ:

﴿فَٱبۡعَثُواْ حَكَمٗا مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهِۦ وَحَكَمٗا مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهَآ﴾[28]

"Appoint an arbiter from his family and an arbiter from hers."

The verse concerns feared marital division and introduces a process beyond private confrontation. Its application requires persons capable of fairness, discretion, and attention to the actual dispute. Kinship alone does not guarantee competence. A contemporary programme can prepare mediators to identify conflicts of interest and refer specialised questions. Where intimidation or violence makes joint mediation unsafe, protection and independent advice should precede reconciliation efforts. Suggested review meetings should examine whether commitments have changed conduct. A verbal apology without behavioural repair is insufficient evidence of improvement. This approach treats reconciliation as accountable work while recognising that the permissibility and terms of separation require qualified legal guidance rather than pressure to remain at any cost.

Al-Ṭalāq requires honourable conduct whether a marriage continues or ends:

﴿فَأَمۡسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعۡرُوفٍ أَوۡ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعۡرُوفٍ﴾[29]

"Retain them honourably or part from them honourably."

The instruction appears within rules governing divorce and its waiting period. Its importance for reform is that respectful conduct remains obligatory even when reconciliation fails. Family education should consequently prepare people for responsible decisions without making continued co-residence its sole indicator of success.

Al-Baqarah explicitly excludes retention intended to cause harm:

﴿وَلَا تُمۡسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارٗا لِّتَعۡتَدُواْ﴾[30]

"Do not retain them to cause harm and transgress."

The prohibition prevents the language of preservation from shielding deliberate injury. In contemporary applications, mediators should assess whether a proposed arrangement restores rights or prolongs coercion. Questions of legal remedy require qualified advice and cannot be settled by exhortation alone.

## 2 Educating Children in the Light of the Prophetic Example

Child education connects religious meaning with attainable practices. The Prophetic example combines clear instruction with visible affection, allowing correction to support learning. Contemporary applications must account for development, individual abilities, and security, while distinguishing the ethical justification of a practice from evidence about its effectiveness in a particular setting.

The meal-time guidance reported by ʿUmar ibn Abī Salamah includes a precise, practicable instruction:

«وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ»[31]

"Eat from what is near you."

The specificity of the instruction discourages vague moral demands that children cannot translate into action. A caregiver may explain, demonstrate, allow practice, and acknowledge improvement. Expectations must fit the child's development and abilities. A failure to comply does not automatically prove defiance. Support for learning differences or emotional difficulty may be necessary, and religious educators should avoid making diagnoses beyond their competence.

[28] Al-Nisāʾ, 4: 35.
[29] Al-Ṭalāq, 65: 2.
[30] Al-Baqarah, 2: 231.
[31] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 5376.

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Adults can apply the principle to prayer preparation, truthfulness, respectful disagreement, and care for shared belongings. The task is to cultivate understanding and practice while maintaining an environment in which mistakes can be corrected without humiliation.

Abū Hurayrah's report describes affection through a concrete domestic action:

«قَبَّلَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْحَسَنَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ»[32]

"The Messenger of Allah kissed al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī."

Affection is presented as an action rather than an abstract claim. Its contemporary application includes attentive listening and reassurance as well as culturally appropriate expressions of care. Boundaries should remain predictable and explainable. Programmes can teach caregivers how to give clear instructions and respond consistently without humiliating the child. WHO's parenting guidelines provide an evidence-informed basis for selecting structured interventions; the Prophetic material supplies an ethical orientation for how care should be exercised. These bodies of evidence answer different questions and should not be collapsed. Evaluation can examine caregiver participation, reported practices, and child safety. It cannot measure inward sincerity directly, and favourable reports should be checked against other appropriate information.33

## 3 Routes to Family Stability through Prophetic Principles

Family stability rests on dependable care and fair cooperation. It requires practical arrangements as well as moral commitments. Consultation, shared effort, and fulfilment of relatives' claims help assess whether a household's declared values are reflected in daily decisions and responsibilities.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Baqarah:

﴿فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا﴾[34]

"If both wish to wean by mutual agreement and consultation, there is no blame upon them."

The immediate subject is weaning, so the verse should not be quoted as a detailed constitution for every household decision. Nevertheless, it identifies consultation within a concrete parental responsibility. A reasonable application is to discuss choices affecting children and caregivers instead of imposing them without consideration. Consultation requires adequate information and the possibility of disagreement. It loses substance when the outcome has already been fixed.

Households may appear peaceful because some members cannot express distress. An educational framework must consequently examine the conditions under which cooperation occurs. Stable relationships require material arrangements as well as moral commitments: food, care, rest, and access to assistance cannot be replaced by language about harmony.

ʿĀʾishah's description of service at home provides a practical measure of cooperation:

«كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي مِهْنَةِ أَهْلِهِ»[35]

"He would be engaged in serving his family."

Domestic service provides an observable way to test whether concern becomes action. Couples can list recurring tasks, identify neglected duties, and revise responsibilities when employment, illness, or childcare changes. Extended relatives may help, but assistance should respect privacy and avoid competing claims to control. Financial planning should distinguish essentials from discretionary status expenditure and make obligations understandable. These

[32] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 5997.
[33] World Health Organization, *WHO Guidelines on Parenting Interventions*, recommendations and implementation considerations.
[34] Al-Baqarah, 2: 233.
[35] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 676.

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measures are proposed applications, not a claim that the historical household used a modern budgeting system. Research should assess whether they reduce identifiable burdens and improve reliable care. Stability becomes meaningful when responsibilities continue to be fulfilled during pressure, and when mistakes can be acknowledged without retaliation.

Al-Isrāʾ recognises the entitlement of relatives:

﴿وَءَاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ﴾[36]

"Give the relative what is due to him."

The language of a due claim distinguishes responsibility from optional generosity. Family stability depends in part on identifying obligations and fulfilling them reliably. Assistance from relatives should support that fulfilment without granting an unlimited right to control another household's decisions.

## 4 Practical Proposals for Contemporary Family Problems

Practical reform connects teaching with workable support. Family programmes need clear responsibilities, appropriate expertise, and trustworthy procedures for handling information. The following principles guide their design without establishing that any single modern programme is directly prescribed or empirically effective; such claims require evaluation within the social settings where programmes actually operate.

The Qurʾan states in Al-Ḥujurāt:

﴿وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا۟﴾[37]

"Do not spy on one another."

A proposed digital agreement can protect meals, conversation, and sleep from avoidable interruption while clarifying privacy expectations. Adults should model the limits they recommend. Rules for children require age-appropriate supervision, transparent explanation, and attention to genuine safety concerns. The McDaniel and Radesky study supports concern about disrupted attention but cannot determine an ideal universal screen schedule. Families should therefore review whether a rule improves interaction rather than equating strictness with success.38

Parenting sessions can combine scriptural study with demonstrations of clear instruction and responsive attention. Religious institutions should identify qualified referral partners before serious problems arise. These proposals must be adapted to local resources and evaluated; they are not established treatments merely because they use religious vocabulary.

The report on guardianship makes responsibility answerable rather than merely honorary:

«أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ»[39]

"Each of you is a guardian, and each of you is answerable for those entrusted to your care."

Accountability also applies to institutions offering advice. Facilitators need clear limits of competence, confidentiality procedures, and a route for complaints. Programmes should record participation and assess changes in specified behaviours, including whether household commitments are fulfilled and children can seek help. They should avoid claiming that attendance alone produces reform. Local studies could examine feasibility, acceptance, and outcomes across different household arrangements. No causal success claim follows from the present textual analysis.

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[36] Al-Isrāʾ, 17: 26.
[37] Al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 12.
[38] McDaniel and Radesky, "Technoference," 100–109.
[39] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 7138.

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Al-Māʾidah provides a standard for organised cooperation:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى ٱلْبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقْوَىٰ﴾[40]

"Cooperate in righteousness and piety."

Cooperation makes it possible to connect religious education with financial, educational, and professional assistance. The purpose and methods of each activity remain open to assessment. Institutional partnerships should specify responsibilities and confidentiality rather than relying solely on shared goodwill.

Al-Ḥujurāt requires verification when an unreliable report is received:

﴿إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا﴾[41]

"If an unreliable person brings you news, verify it."

Applied to family advice, verification requires distinguishing an allegation from an established finding while responding seriously to a request for protection. Advisers should avoid circulating accusations. Seeking information must not expose a vulnerable person to retaliation or become an excuse to ignore danger.

**Conclusion**

The Prophetic household provides a coherent educational orientation through service, mercy, moderation, and answerable care. These principles guide contemporary reform when their historical contexts remain visible and applications are supported by sound judgement. Family education requires both moral formation and practical assistance. Its success should be judged through safer relationships and fulfilled responsibilities, while acknowledging the limits of the evidence used here.

[40] Al-Māʾidah, 5: 2.
[41] Al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 6.