

GUARDING CHILDREN'S SAFETY

04 OCTOBER 2024 / 01 RABIULAKHIR 1446H

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اِتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us increase our righteousness to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and leaving all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this life and the hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Children are a trust given by Allah the Almighty to parents. Parents are responsible for the safety of children under their care and custody. In this modern time, the fun world of children has been limited due to kidnapping cases that are becoming more prevalent in our country. This causes every parent to feel very worried about the safety of their children, especially those involving kidnapping. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 64 (surah al-Taghabun') verse 14:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ مِنْ أَرْوَاجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ

Which means: *“O believers! Indeed, some of your spouses and children are enemies to you, so beware of them...”*

Incidents of losses, accidents and deaths of children demand that parents play their responsible role of ensuring the safety of their children that Allah has given to them. In fact, they need to always ensure that their children do not escape from their attention, especially when they are in public places such as night markets, supermarkets, shopping centers, recreation centers and so on.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Children have extraordinary peculiarity especially when playing because they do not take into consideration of any threats involving themselves. By nature they will not sit still for long periods of time, instead they start running, climbing, screaming and jumping aimlessly. Parents need to be aware of any possibility that can happen to children, especially in public places.

The most important effort to deal with this problem from happening continuously is that parents provide education about personal safety to their children. Knowledge of any danger is very important to prevent negative things from occurring. Meanwhile, some unknown criminals will take advantage by handing out sweets to attract the attention of children to follow them. Therefore, responsible parents should advise their children to shout and say "no" or "don't disturb me". Furthermore, parents also need to train children not to take anything from strangers. This action causes children to be more alert and cautious when meeting strangers. Education about personal safety should be done from an early age. To iterate, knowledge of personal safety is highly crucial to prevent the crime of kidnapping from happening.

Children approaching adolescence need to be provided with the basics of self-defense. This is very important so that they can protect themselves when they are about to be kidnapped and there are no adults around to help them. Parents are advised to send their children to self-defense training centers. Basically, children are weak and this make them prime targets for kidnappers. However, if a child has knowledge of self-defense, he/she can save himself/herself from becoming a victim of child abduction and trafficking. Indeed, the knowledge of self-defense needs to be taught to children as protection from kidnapping. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 8 (surah al-Anfal) verse 60:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ

Which means: *“Prepare against them what you believers can of military power and cavalry to deter Allah’s enemies and your enemies as well as other enemies unknown to you but known to Allah...”*

Dear brothers and sisters,

In conclusion, everyone needs to take his/her own initiative to prevent the occurrence of child-related cases in public places. However, the Malaysian community is not yet ready to use the hand strap as practiced abroad. Therefore, the traditional method where the children's hands are held tightly even if they protest especially in areas crowded with people must be practised.

Children can also be trained to use whistles as additional safety equipment. However, they need to be taught and reminded to use the whistle only in emergencies and when they are threatened. Most cases of missing children occur in places crowded with people, especially when sales are held and parents are busy shopping. Parents need to educate their children on which parts of their bodies should not be touched and to refuse the invitation or persuasion of strangers. At the same time, parents are responsible for ensuring that their children are not alone either at home or outside the home.

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَانِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.