

Proposal 1: Family Life (Tarbiyyat)

“May Allah make it so that every Ahmadi family; be it the husband, the wife, the mother in-law, the daughter-in-law or the sister in-law all abide by righteousness and create a beautiful society” (Friday Sermon 5/30/2003 & Excerpt from Domestic Issues and Their Solutions, Khalifatul Masih Vaba). In Islam the family is the bedrock of society. Whereas many of our Jama’at families face challenges in maintaining harmony within the family, Islam is rich in guidance on these issues and has established rights for everyone, so as to ensure good and loving relations and create peace and security within the home. A family unit that lives by these principles of Taqwa and fulfilling the rights of others, gives the best environment and training for the next generation and makes an invaluable contribution to society as a whole. It is proposed that the Majlis-e-Shura committee is requested to:

- Identify the challenges faced by women to maintain domestic harmony and the sanctity of marriage.
- Provide guidance and counseling from existing resources in particular from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V’s^{aba} compiled sermons in the books "Domestic Issues and Their Solutions" , "Garments for Each Other" and various addresses to Lajna.
- Suggest practical and direct means of implementation of this guidance in daily life for Lajna members in their various roles as wife, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law.

(Submitted by: National Amila, Harrisburg PA, Cleveland OH and includes points from proposals 5,7,11 not selected)

Committee Chair: Ayesha Erfan – Cleveland, (Local Sadr)

Secretary: Saliha Malik – Boston, National Honorary Member (National Tarbiyyat Secretary in subcommittee Post College Children Dilemma)

Committee Members:

1. Attia Bajrektarevic – Iowa	15. Aziza Rahman – LA East
2. Navera Ahmad – Minnesota	16. Aziza Khan – Baltimore
3. Ayesha Sa-eed – Milwaukee	17. Liza Ramos Nasir – Central Jersey
4. Nusrat Sharif – Boston	18. Sadia Choudhury – Queens
5. Sarwat Malik – Binghamton	19. Syeda Khadija Ahmad - Long Island
6. Maham Khan – Houston South	20. Aneesa Chaudhry – Philadelphia
7. Toubha Khurshid – Austin	21. Azra Basit Virginia South
8. Maleeha Latif – Cypress Houston	22. Maham Mansoor – Silicon Valley
9. Munazah Bint e Saad – Seattle	23. Saima Mumtaz – Harrisburg
10. Mehrunnisa Akbar – Virginia Central	24. Shazia Mirza – Chicago West
11. Nusrat Ahmed – Charlotte	25. Attiya Ahmad – Houston North
12. Alishba Qureshi – Tucson	26. Asifa Mahmood - Queens
13. Bushra Zartasht Malik – Silver Spring	27. Sabiha Qureshi – Laurel
14. Hena Malik – Silicon Valley	28. Humaira Ahmad – Detroit
	29. Ayesha Erfan-Cleveland (Chair)
	30. Saliha Malik-Boston (Secretary)

Overall Goal:

When we realize that our ‘Marriage is Half our Faith’, all our family relationships, especially between husband and wife become positive and healthy based on Taqwa (love and fear of Allah), Insha Allah.

Identify the Challenges: *Many problems are caused when people have wrong intentions / expectations:*

- *Undue expectations of the wife:* she is expected to be the ‘solution’ to failings in her husband. It should be realized that the wife is his partner not his mother.
- *Control:* The wife might engage in controlling behaviors and try to ‘correct’ problems in others. It should be realized that you cannot expect to ‘change’ others directly, it is only our own reactions / behaviors we can really change.
- *Cultural challenges* can be the cause of marital discord, for example:

- ❖ From the Pakistani / Asian cultures the women may be treated as the ‘servant’ to her husband and in-laws.
- ❖ From the Western culture the girl may be demanding ‘freedoms’ and ‘her rights’.
- *In-law dynamics*: Mother in-law or sisters in-law can create friction by failing to respect boundaries or by being critical or judgmental of the new bride / wife.
- *Working women*: Challenges are created by needing to work or wishing to pursue a career and then trying to find the balance between work and home life.
- *Social Media*: Raises unreal hopes and expectations or unnecessary fears.
- *Materialism*: Our materialistic society causes people to incur financial distress, which results in marital discord.
- *Communication problems*: All such issues are exacerbated by poor communication rooted in emotional immaturity. This is a key point and the source of many problems in relationships.

Resources:

- Domestic Issues and their Solution – Excerpts from sermons given by Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}
- Garments for Each Other – Excerpts from sermons given by Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}
- Islamic Teachings on an Ideal Family – Mukhtar A. Cheema
- Daughters of Eve – Sermons of Khalifatul Masih IVth
- Hazrat Amman Jan – Munavara (Nabbo) Ghauri
- Help from various Jama’at Officers or members has been beneficial in some cases: Murrabi Sahib, Jama’at President, Lajna Sadr or listening to an understanding elderly member.

Recommendations:

- **Create quarterly discussion groups on ‘Family Life’ using the book Domestic Issues and Their Solution:** This book addresses all the above challenges and all aspects of family life. The book can be divided into eight sections to be explored over two years.
- **Provide practical tools:** Introduce useful preventative and tertiary intervention techniques for people to select as needed. These should be explained in the group discussion sessions. Some examples are:
 - Communication, Conflict Resolution Tools and Methods of Self Awareness
 - Listen to Faith Matters episodes about Marital Harmony
 - Stress the importance of observing Congregational Prayer and reciting various prayers
 - Raise awareness of the benefit in seeking the help of Professional Counselors.
 - Create a series of Real Talk videos with a panel of Professional Counselors to illustrate how they resolve family discord issues using family discord scenarios
 - Identify Professional Counselors amongst Lajna Ima’illah, who would be ready to offer their services to help members with domestic issues, establish trust and maintain confidentiality (To be approved by National Sadr Sahiba)
- **Jalsa / Ijtema Speech on:**
 - “Marriage is Half of my Faith”
 - “Women as Promoters of Peace in the Home (prompted by Holy Qur’an 30:22)”
- **Jamaat Shura Proposal:** Submit this Family Life proposal also as a Jama’at Shura Proposal. The committee recognized the need for fathers and husbands to participate in this discussion in order to create healthy, harmonious families.