# Al-Ittihaad

# UNITY

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## Special ISSUE ON ADOPTION

### Adoption & Fostering

The M.W.I. has been encouraging Muslim families to consider adoption & fostering. The Social Services Departments throughout the country have a legal responsibility to provide protection to children who may be at risk. As part of this protection, sometimes children have to be removed from their families and placed with other families who will look after them. To provide short term care is known as fostering and to provide a permanent home to a child is known as adoption.

### Successful Adoptions

It is pleasing to report that a number of families have now successfully adopted children after being guided through the adoption process by the M.W.I. To encourage more Muslim couples to consider adoption, a special edition of `UNITY` magazine (Issue No.105), which contained all the necessary information regarding adoption, was presented to our readers. Since then, we have received enquiries from Birmingham, Blackburn, Bolton, Coventry, Leicester and Preston.

### What is Adoption?

For many children who cannot live with their birth families (maybe because of neglect or because they are at risk), adoption by an alternative family is the safest & most secure option. To take a child into your home & bring it up & care for it like your own is the simple definition of adoption.

### The Islamic Point of View

Having been brought up as an orphan Himself, The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was placed in a position where He was able naturally & instinctively to identify with the plight of orphan children more than others. His teachings therefore are replete with the teachings & directives towards the orphan, of treating them with utmost kindness & compassion. The list of such teachings is lengthy & enumerating them in this brief article would be inappropriate. It is sufficient to quote but one saying of His: `The home wherein the orphan is ill-treated is the worst home on earth`. In the time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), there was hardly a home that had not taken in and adopted an orphan child. This was a normal practice in the society of His Companions. Muslims should by virtue of the lofty examples & teachings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) be in the very frontline in efforts to secure the adoption & fostering of children. In fact, they should be setting the trend for the rest of society in this matter. At the least, it is expected of them to co-operate closely with groups & bodies that are promoting these efforts.

Due to the high standards of morality & conduct required of Muslims by their religious laws, Muslim homes & families are ideally positioned to imbue & impart these exalted values to adopted children – values that will be of life long consequence to them. A word of caution to prospective adoption families though, the humanitarian & noble practice of adopting children should never be motivated by material interests or intentions at all. This will destroy & demolish the very spirit of this gracious deed, leaving it as a lifeless corpse.

**Source: Mufti Zubair Bhayyat, South Africa**

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## *Muslim family adopts a second time, this is their story.....*

Our story on adoption was first published in the `UNITY` Magazine, Issue no. 105, May-June 2004.

It has been 3 years since we adopted our youngest child and 6 years since we adopted our eldest. It feels as if they have always been with us. They are part of us. Taqdeer was written that our souls would be together. We rarely talk about adoption, the girls feel very much as part of us. We as a couple are not related to one another but our souls were united through marriage. Same with our two beautiful daughters, we were to be united as a family.

Our eldest daughter is settled and is making good progress at school and Madrasah. She is very friendly, sociable and has many friends. She understands more of her adoption now than she did a few years ago and does not get upset by the fact that she is adopted. There will always come a point in her life when she will have come to terms with adoption. However, she is happy and contented and even more since the younger one came to live with us.

Our youngest daughter, from being a baby in the last issue of `UNITY` is now at Pre School. She is a joy to have, she is greatly missed when she goes to nursery and the thought of her being full time is very daunting and she will be missed very much. At the moment she is the apple of her teachers' eyes, they love her, she is so active and they are amazed that she absorbs all the info.

We can see the difference in that the little one is much more settled and attached to us compared to what the older one was at the same age. Maybe the fact that we adopted her when she was only 7 months old compared to the older one, who was 17 months old, is the defining factor.

When the younger one was only 2 years old and the older one was 6, we made a great spiritual journey to the Holy Lands of Makkah and Madinah during Ramadhan. It was a testing but enjoyable time and very different to our previous experiences. The main reason being, having a very young dependant child and basing our days and nights to suit the children. They still both vividly recall their experience with much enthusiasm.

*'The relationship between the two sisters is beautiful, just like any two blood sisters, protective and loving. They play, they laugh, they run, they fight and they argue. '*

It's amazing the logic and understanding of our little one. She is very fast, very quick, she makes her own nasheeds, she has lots of tantrums especially about what she wants to wear, always exploring, very independent and assertive.

The relationship between the two sisters is beautiful, just like any two blood sisters, protective and loving. They play, they laugh, they run, they fight and they argue. But because she is so petite she gets away with everything. Now its summer they want to go out for bike rides to the park, they like visiting and going places of interest but we tend to go to quiet places.

If anyone is thinking of adopting a child, we would say "don't waste time deciding – you will have no regrets".

(The above article has been kindly presented to the M.W.I. by a couple from the Midlands, we thank them for their real life story)

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## *A Muslim family`s first adoption, this is how it went……*

We are a family living in the Midlands and at the time of adopting our son, we had already been blessed with 2 lovely daughters, aged 10 and 4. We wanted to adopt a child to make a difference in that child`s life.

We had been interested in adoption for many years but had not taken any practical steps until the summer of 2002. We were advised to contact the local Social Services team. We were not considered as potential adopters on the grounds that our youngest daughter was only 2½ yrs old. After quite a lot of chasing and insisting we were finally granted a home visit. 2 Social Workers came for the visit. A few weeks later, we were informed that we were not suitable adopters.

We were quite distressed. Our dream was not to be fulfilled and it certainly was very disappointing. Our plans for adoption were laid to rest for about 6 months. We were not aware that if one agency does not accept us as adoptive parents, then we could apply to other agencies.

The above has been mentioned so that you are aware of some difficulties and are not put off by them. As you will read below, things had a dramatic turn for us.

By the Grace of the Almighty, we happened to approach an independent agency in May 2003 and it was so simple. After the initial visits & formalities we were quickly taken up as prospective adoptive parents. We were to be their first set of Muslim adopters.

By January 2004 we were approved and waiting for a child of either sex. We had decided we wouldn't narrow our choice on choosing only a boy as we already had 2 girls. It seemed such a long wait, however, within 5 months we were matched with an 18 months old baby boy. Our son brought us such an excitement, he was so cute and we were so happy.

Our son came to live with us in July 2004 and he blended in so well with our 2 daughters. Everything had fallen into place, it was perfect! From 4 members we became a 5-member family… It was marvellous!

*They bring something very special & unique into our lives, the barakah & happiness that comes with them is unbelievable.*

In January 2005 we legally adopted our son. Looking back, within 18 months we had gone through the full adoption process, been matched with a child that came to live with us and he was now legally adopted.

Throughout the adoption process, especially the difficult & testing times, Moulana Hanif from the Muslim Welfare Institute was very supportive and always ready to listen, providing a lot of valuable advice, many thanks Moulana.

Brothers and Sisters… adoption is not taking an unknown child into our family. It is, as stated above, giving a little child an opportunity and a chance in life, a family that will love them as they deserve to be loved and should be loved. They bring something very special & unique into our lives, the barakah & happiness that comes with them is unbelievable.

Today, it is nearly 3 years since our son

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*A Muslim family`s first adoption, this is how it went..... continued.*

came to live with us. He is nearly 4½ yrs old and since his coming we have been blessed with two more of our own children, so now our adopted son is part of a sibling group of five.

He has started school and Madrasah and can be quite cheeky at times. We understand that sometime in the future we will have to talk to him about his background and where he has come from and this does not worry us as this is his right, the right to know about his birth family, especially his birth parents.

To all brothers and sisters, do not delay in this highly rewarding act. Even if you have not thought about it, think on how you can and will make a difference in someone's life. Admittedly, it is not plain sailing, but good things never come easy. There are many children out there that need our help. Lastly, may I take this opportunity to ask all readers to remember our family in their duas.

(This article has also been presented to the M.W.I. by a couple from the Midlands, we thank them for their real life story)

**Who To Contact For More Information?**

If you are interested in knowing more about adoption, then please contact the adoption team at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council on 01254 587833 between 1-3pm and weekday. For our readers beyond Blackburn, please contact your local adoption team at your local social services dept. If you want, you can contact (Moulana) Hanif at the Muslim Welfare Institute on 01254 694015 or 07753 354810 who will be able to provide you with more information. For prospective adopters in Blackburn, we at the M.W.I. can assist you throughout the adoption process.

**May the Almighty give us all the correct guidance, Ameen**

## Representatives

Audley Range **– Moulana Yusuf Hajat, Moulana M. Ali Nagdee, Moulana Hasan Patel**

Shear Brow/Brookhouse **– Moulana Usman Gani, Moulana Shafiq A. Rahman**

Bastwell **– Moulana Rafiq Sufi**

Little Harwood **– Moulana Hasan Sidat**

Whalley Range **– Moulana Hanif Dudhwala**

Bank Top/Preston New Rd. – **Moulana Irfan Sange**