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Love for one's own children is a natural instinct. Perhaps there will be few parents who don't love their children from the depths of their hearts. But only loving the child from the heart is not sufficient for the betterment of the child. The child needs love that is reflected in the actions of the parents.

The child wants to be kissed, hugged and to be looked at with caring smiles. When the parents sing the lullables, the child savors their sweetness. The child desires that the parents play with and gambol with him. The child treats this as a sign of love. It considers the anger and conflicts as signs of thoughtlessness. Whenever the parents look at the child at different times, it visualizes at that moment if there is a look of love on their faces or not.

There are also parents who shower their love on the child till it is a baby. But as it grows up, they gradually reduce the expression of love and when the child reaches adolescence and adulthood they totally forsake him and even say that any more expressions of love might spoil him. But this is not the right attitude.

The child expects the love of his parents throughout his life. He feels joy over the expression of love by the parents and if he finds them ignoring him, he has a feeling of hurt. Particularly the adolescence is a very critical period in the life of a person when support and guidance of the parents is required the most. It is this neglect of the adolescent–adults by their parents that there are many cases of suicide in this age group. There are also cases of such persons fleeing to some unspecified place. It won't be out of place here to quote some entries from the diary of Nazneen, a teenager:

"When I think of my mom and dad I cannot but laugh. Although they deserve more to be sadly pitied than laughed at Mom is busy in her own world, occupied with her daily chores. She wants to sit gossiping for hours at end with Aunt Vizri Jaan and Lady Hamida. If some of us sisters and brothers arrive in the midst of these conversations for some errand, she abhors the interruption. She doesn't realize that while gossiping about the idiosyncrasy of others' footwear and attire she makes me feel like a bird who is fluttering around to pour its heart's feeling to someone.

Mom and Dad are either busy arguing with one another or sitting with friends for society gossip. Or otherwise, they are away from home. I am also busy at the school from morning to evening on all working days. It is since many days that I have set eyes on Dad. My teacher of Literature is a psychologist.

Today he talked on the effect that a father can have on the psyche of his daughter. His talk went straight to my heart. He was right in saying that I am a grown up in the eyes of everyone. But I feel the need of the guidance of my dad more than at any other time in my life. There is need for the moral strength of someone wise and kind. But he, my Dad, seems to have no time for this."1

The best place for the training of a child, particularly in the early stages of life, is the home. In this period the child receives total attention, kindness and love of the parents. The parents are advised that as far as possible they don't entrust their small children to the care of crèches.

Perhaps, these crèches may be better equipped for hygiene and nutrition but they provide a cold and strange environment to the child. The place will be like a goal for the child who wants the company of the parents more than anything else. Only good environs and nutrition cannot fill the void created by the absence of the love and care of the parents.

The Prophet of Islam has observed:

"If you like someone, express your feelings to him. This expression of love brings you closer to each other."2

The Prophet used to play with his children and grand children every morning expressing his love and affection for them.3

- 1. Daily Italiaat, Issue 14112, Khurdad Month 1358
- 2. Mustadrak al-wasail,v 2, p. 67
- 3. Mustadrak al-wasail, v 104, p. 99

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