



Caring for Muslim Children

Basic requirements for
Supporting Muslim
Children in Care



Halal
Food &
Diet



Faith &
Cultural
Practices



Personal
Care &
Cleanliness



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About

Most people are familiar with the term halal, often in reference to food. Halal means “lawful” or permissible in Islam. The opposite is haram, meaning unlawful or forbidden.





Food

Some foods are fully permissible for Muslim children to eat, such as:

- All seafood
- All fruit and vegetables
- Dairy, provided it does not contain animal-derived or alcohol-based additives

Muslims may eat meat only if it is slaughtered according to Islamic law.

Avoiding Cross-Contamination

There is no restriction on who prepares halal food, as long as the food:

- does not touch non-halal ingredients
- is not cooked in oil that was previously used for non-halal meat
- is not prepared on surfaces used for non-halal foods unless thoroughly washed first

Standard domestic cleaning methods (soap, water, disinfectant spray) are suitable.

Foods That Are Forbidden (Haram)

- Pork and all pork-derived products (including gelatine)
- Birds of prey
- Carnivorous animals
- Rodents
- Reptiles
- Worms
- Any animal not slaughtered in line with Islamic rites

Vegetarian & Vegan Foods

These are typically permissible unless they contain alcohol.

Vinegar is permissible because, although produced through fermentation, it does not intoxicate.



Eating Practices

Muslim children may bring cultural eating habits from their home environment, such as:

- Eating while sitting on the floor
- Washing hands before and after meals
- Eating with the right hand only
- Eating with fingers instead of utensils

These practices are normal within many Muslim families.





Alcohol, Stimulants, Dress

Alcohol and Intoxicants

Islamic law prohibits all intoxicants because preserving a person's mind and intellect is a core religious value.

Therefore, alcohol and cigarettes are forbidden, even in small quantities (including cooking with alcohol).

A Muslim child may feel uncomfortable around alcohol or smoking due to religious beliefs. If a Muslim young person is struggling with substance misuse, their social worker should be informed and appropriate support arranged.

Dress Expectations

Female Children

After puberty, Muslim girls may choose to cover from head to feet when around males outside their immediate family.

Hands and face may be uncovered, though some may choose fuller covering.

Clothing should be:

- modest
- not tight
- not see-through
- not resembling men's clothing

However, each girl's beliefs, identity and comfort should guide her clothing choices.

Male Children

Boys and men are expected to dress modestly, with the area between the navel and knees covered.

Clothing should not be:

- tight
- revealing
- resembling women's clothing

Some Muslim boys prefer traditional cultural clothing; this should be respected.



Personal Care

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is a central part of Islamic practice. Many Muslim households use a water jug or container for washing after using the toilet. This may be important for a Muslim child's comfort and dignity.

Ritual Washing (Wudu)

Before prayer, Muslims perform a specific purification process known as wudu, which includes:

- Washing the hands
- Rinsing the mouth
- Rinsing the nose
- Washing the face
- Washing the forearms
- Wiping the head and ears
- Washing the feet

These steps help establish a sense of calm, focus, and readiness for prayer.

