

# STORIES *for* OUR CHILDREN



Dedicated to Our Children  
and the Young Parents of Today and Tomorrow



28/10/2020

In the Name of Allah  
the All-Compassionate, All-Merciful



PERDANA  
LEADERSHIP  
FOUNDATION  
YATASAN  
KEPIMPINAN  
PERDANA



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Yayasan Rosni Noor aims to be the platform that can provide opportunities for both givers and receivers to stand on common ground and perform good deeds in many ways. Through our activities, we hope we can generate not only funds but also avenues for people to do good, support, learn and share ways to reach out and inspire others.

We invite you to join us or help us. There are many ways you can contribute. Just give us a call at **(603) 7880 2001**.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## A VERY BIG THANK YOU

**F**irstly, I would like to thank Datuk Azrin Mohd Noor, the founder of Yayasan Rosni Noor for consenting and supporting the idea of publishing this book through Yayasan Rosni Noor. Secondly, my sincere appreciation to my dearest advisor, Safiah Osman (Kak Safiah) for giving me the opportunity to co-ordinate and produce this book. And of course, to all the writers of this book for believing in me to make this book a reality. Not forgetting the editors who selflessly volunteered to edit all the stories; namely Datin Noor Azlina Yunus, Zuraidah Omar and Putri Zanina.

And lastly to all those behind the scene who helped in producing this book from writing, designing, printing and to arranging the delivery of copies of this book.

May Allah SWT bless and reward all of you for your kindest efforts and deeds. Ameen.

**Yasmin Gan Abdullah**



## PREFACE

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported that the Prophet (may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *“There are three things which continue to benefit a person after death, a recurring charitable act, knowledge which he has imparted to others from which people derive benefit and thirdly, pious offspring who continue to offer prayers invoking Mercy of Allah upon him.”*

### FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUR CHILDREN

**A**ll praise is for Allah SWT, the Exalted. May Allah’s peace and blessings be on Muhammad, his family and his companions.

This book, *Stories For Our Children*, was conceived during a lunch meeting hosted by our kind Kak Safiah (Safiah Osman, one of our writers) at her house in Bandar Utama, Selangor. The gracious hostess had just launched *Stories of Love and Compassion*, a book with a collection of stories written by different writers, which Kak Safiah had steered to great success. This inspired the writers and also several new ones to work on the next book project.

All the writers unanimously agreed that there needed to be some form of guidance on parenting and family values for our younger generation of parents amongst them our own children. *Alhamdulillah* that intention and initial discussion culminated in the production of this book, the result of the joint efforts and commitments of all the writers.

Portraying different lives at different times and against varied backgrounds and scenarios, the common thread running through this collection of stories is that parenting is a huge responsibility but it comes with much love, joy and happiness. All are true life accounts which help us to uncover the universal meaning of love, sacrifice and devotion from and to parents, grandparents, caregivers and significant others.

Some of the writers have shared the milestones which have shaped their personal journeys and aspirations in life. Others have shown how with love and kindness, faith and belief, they had been raised and nurtured by their mothers, fathers or grandparents. Yet others have taken a trip down memory lane to pay a tribute, sharing their fondest memories of how a loved one had contributed immensely to making them the persons they are. There are also portraits of exemplary and inspirational individuals outside the family, but nevertheless, through their actions and deeds, have also imparted important life learning. Together, the writers hope that their stories offer something for everyone, perhaps, a lesson, a strong value of filial piety, a reminder or just a hope for the present and the future. *In shaa Allah*, the stories will be of benefit to our children and your children.

**Yasmin Gan Abdullah**



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**SHE IDENTIFIES WITH THE QURAN,  
WHICH STATES THAT CHILDREN ARE  
THE POSSESSION OF ALLAH SWT.  
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CHILDREN WITH AN OPEN HEART, AND  
YET SHE REMAINS CONFIDENT THAT  
THE BOND BETWEEN MOTHER AND  
CHILD WILL REMAIN STRONG AND  
THE LOVE UNQUESTIONED.**



# CHILDREN: OUR AMANAH

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Aliza Sharina Ahmad Ghiti

**A** *amanah* is an Arabic term which, in English, means ‘fulfilling or upholding trust’. *Amanah* is when a person fulfils his obligations to Allah the Almighty and His slaves.

My mother is one of those people who truly believe that children are an *amanah* from Allah SWT. Now that I have become a mother, she reminds me often that children and wealth all belong to the One and Only God, and that they are on loan for just a short while, some for periods shorter than others.

A religious scholar once told me that children are *fitaan*, a test. True, they are a gift from God but they are also a form of test for us in this world. They may test us through their disobedience, lack of morals or failure in education or marriage. In fact, the adversities or suffering that may beset a parent are countless. However, if the believer endures them patiently, these adversities may be a means of attaining Allah’s forgiveness as well as His reward.

“Do the people think that they will be left to say ‘We believe’ and they will not be tried?” (Al Quran: Al Ankabut 29:2)


At some point in a parent's life, they will be tried and tested. My mother's first test of motherhood came after the birth of my younger brother. At the time, she was a history teacher at Sekolah Aminuddin Baki secondary school in Kuala Lumpur. Having a husband who was a successful businessman, two healthy children and a lovely house in Taman Tun Dr Ismail, her life seemed perfect. Little did she expect that things were about to change.

My baby brother was born a special child in the early 1980s. Relatively unheard of at the time, he suffered from Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency, an abnormality that affects male infants. It is a condition resulting from a congenital lack of G6PD, a substance that coats the surface of red blood cells and prevents them from breaking up if a person is injured. The absence of G6PD can cause red cells to rupture, resulting in anaemia and jaundice in the early weeks of life.

If not diagnosed and treated promptly, the excessive release of bilirubin can accumulate in the brain, leading to brain damage. The frequency in Malaysia is approximately one in every hundred births.

*“Allah will not test you with a burden that you cannot bear.”* (Al Quran: Al Baqarah 2:286)

From birth, my younger brother also had respiratory problems, which the doctor initially classified as bronchitis. My mother felt desperate whenever my brother got a blocked nose and found it hard to breathe. She would

  
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resort to sucking the mucus out. However, after about seven months of frequent hospital visits, he was diagnosed as having acute asthma.

Pantai Medical Centre became their second home. My little brother was hospitalised a few times and was attached to drips. To this day, my mother painfully recollects her helplessness at seeing her child with tubes everywhere, fighting to breathe.

I rarely saw my mother in those early months. I was too young to understand what was going on but I knew it was something serious. I remember feeling a bit scared but, thankfully, I had my older brother to keep me company as well as my father.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *“When Allah desires good for someone, He tries him with hardships.”* (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

In those days, maids, especially foreign maids, were hard to come by. Local maids were obtained via advertisements in newspapers or through word of mouth. Unfortunately for my mother, she experienced a few unsatisfactory helpers. The last straw came when one of them stole some of my father’s personal belongings.

Being the first in a family of eight siblings to graduate with honours from the renowned University of Malaya was quite an achievement for my mother. But now she had to decide between her children or her career. Without consulting anyone, she chose to sacrifice her job to take care of her sickly baby and her two older children. She resigned from her teaching job, paying the school a month’s salary in lieu of notice. She has not looked back since!

In many ways, her resignation turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Appointments with the paediatrician became a fortnightly affair, and my



brother, accompanied by my mother, was in and out of hospital often. Caring for children, especially little babies, with acute asthma meant a lot of sleepless nights. But no mother would ever complain, for are children not God's greatest gifts on earth?

Children with G6PD deficiency also need to be extra careful with the food they eat and with their medication. There are certain medicines, especially those that are quinine-based, and certain foods, such as fava beans, which are harmful and must be avoided for the rest of their lives.

My younger brother was always up to mischief. He had a penchant for sweets. One day he managed to sneak a bottle of my mother's homeopathy pills, which were sugar-based, and swallowed the entire bottle. He was rushed to hospital to have the pills flushed out. Needless to say, it was a lesson learnt as the procedure was quite painful.

Fast forward a few years to the time we were back in my father's *kampung* for the family Eid gathering. My little brother had happily joined his cousins to go to the little village tuckshop down the road, which sold all kinds of tidbits and little toys that lured children with their pocketfuls of *duit Raya* coins. When he got home, he had difficulty breathing. As we ransacked his little treasures, we found an opened packet of nuts. *Fava beans!* We panicked. It had triggered his allergy. My mother did what she could to calm him down and to get him to breathe rhythmically. There was no clinic nearby as the family home, a traditional *rumah kampung*, was set deep inside the village, past rubber estates and paddy fields. There is also no specific medication for a nut allergy. Thankfully, with a lot of *dzikir*, his condition improved and my brother began breathing normally again.

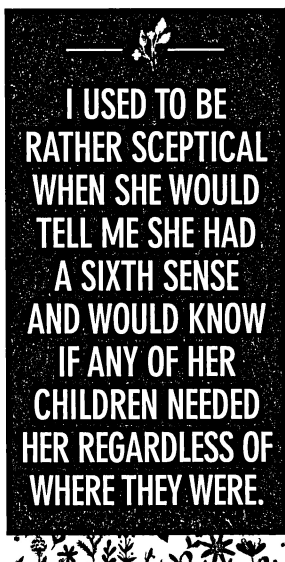
Because of his condition, I have always had a soft spot for this little brother of mine. We were only three years apart, but I felt very protective whenever I heard other kids tease him for being so frail. He was not able to play



sport very much because of his constant wheezing and he was definitely the skinniest boy around. But the prayers of the troubled are always heard by Him. With all the care he received, my brother overcame his asthma and has been active in all kinds of sports since.

*“Verily in the remembrance of Allah, do hearts find rest.”* (Al Quran: Ar-Ra’d 13:28)

Foremost in my mother’s mind is that children are Allah’s *amanah* to her. Giving them a balanced, all-round education is of utmost importance for this world and the hereafter. She feels that once that responsibility has been carried out to the best of her ability, she has fulfilled her obligation. She therefore made sure that all four of us siblings were well equipped with knowledge, be it for the mind, body or soul. We enrolled in general and religious classes, music lessons, sports activities, Quranic recitations, the whole works!



I USED TO BE  
RATHER SCEPTICAL  
WHEN SHE WOULD  
TELL ME SHE HAD  
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IF ANY OF HER  
CHILDREN NEEDED  
HER REGARDLESS OF  
WHERE THEY WERE.

She identifies with the Quran, which states that children are the possession of Allah. That is why she lets go of her children with an open heart, and yet she remains confident that the bond between mother and child will remain strong and the love unquestioned.

I used to be rather sceptical when she would tell me she had a sixth sense and would know if any of her children needed her regardless of where they were. It was not until I was pursuing my degree overseas that I had personal experience of this. I was having problems with my surroundings in the first year of my studies and was feeling somewhat depressed and



# STORIES *for* OUR CHILDREN

These are not bedtime stories. They are neither fables nor magical tales to amuse children. These are a collection of gripping real life stories that will move you and make you laugh or cry. Or they may just make you ponder about your own life, your parents, your grandparents, your children and all the people that matter in your life. This book projects real people, real stories – about parents as told by their children; about the trials and tribulations of raising children; and about things that no one tells you about becoming a parent or a filial son or daughter. The stories are infused with values, personal journeys and lessons, and intertwined with inter-generational, cultural and religious understanding. New parents in particular will hopefully find this book enlightening. Becoming a parent is a life-changing event, and life as a parent keeps changing, too! You will be on an emotional seesaw with the ups and downs of raising children. Read how others deal with their family challenges. Derive inspirations and lessons from these stories that express kindness, love, imagination, joy and sorrow.

## WRITERS

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