Child Development...

Protection Needs

- Education
- Play
- Parenting
- Child Labor
- Violence
- Malnutrition
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Having problems with studies?
Can’t shake off angst and anxiety?

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SAHIL
Against Child Sexual Abuse

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Editorial

The world is moving forward at a very fast pace. In the early 1990s the approximate population of the whole world was 5 billion, which is expected to reach 10 billion in 2050. Out of which more than 2.6 million are children.

According to a report published by UNICEF in 2015, of the total number of children living below poverty line in the world, 20 percent die before reaching their first birth day due to lack of food and malnutrition, approximately 58 million children drop out of school before completing their primary education and an equal number of children could not complete their secondary school education. Similarly according the estimates by UNICEF, every child may not be able to enjoy equal rights to education, health as enshrined in the UNCRC, by 2050.

The children of Pakistan are facing relatively similar issues as children are facing in other parts of the world. This includes war, conflicts, violence, food insecurity, poor health conditions and lack of educational facilities.

Sahil has always played its role for the protection of children through awareness raising and sensitization.

In our current issue you will read about the child development and protection needs.

It includes articles on different issues such as, the impact of world progress on children, malnutrition among children, child labor, the increasing numbers of child sexual abuse in Pakistan, story, quizzes and many other related issues.

Enjoy good read and share your feedback!
In 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was created with the aim of making ‘the convention a guiding document for the rights of every human being in every nation’. After 25 years,

Child protection is an issue that has become somewhat a crises in the UK with the allegations of child abuse in the British establishment that had been covered up by the highest political leaders. In Pakistan, a signatory to the CRC 1990, things are and seem to be getting much worst.

Child labour was made a constitutional violation through the Employment of Children Act (ECA) which restricted labour by children under 14. And in 1992 bonded labour abolition act was created. Article 1-40 of the Pakistan constitution lay out basic human rights. Many laws exist, but there is no system for their implementation.

In 2010, the 18th amendment, giving provincial autonomy, made it the responsibility of every province to look after its children. Apart from Punjab, the other 3 provinces were slow in passing laws for its children. Sindh Child Protection Authority act was passed in 2011 but the first meeting that was meant to take place in 90 days only happened in March 2015. This act states that a child’s problem will be solved in 10 days. Children take time to open up emotionally and integrating them back into society is a slow process. Perhaps we need to learn to stop taking short cuts. There is no rehabilitation mechanism and in-house courts mentioned because taking children to court in Pakistan is surely their humiliation. A ministry of child rights is needed in every province which specifically works on child issues and child friendly laws. Child protection committees are needed in schools, hospitals, madrassas, parks and neighborhoods who work on making these environments child-friendly and safe.

Lack of gender equity in state institutions makes child rights violation possible. Only two police stations in Pakistan have women officers and out of 84 MLOs (Medico-legal officers) only 4 are females, making girl victims especially vulnerable to poor or no medical reports. Furthermore MLOs and chemical examination reports which prove sexual abuse become a barrier to justice because evidence is often changed.

Most vulnerable of children are those on the streets who leave their homes due to violence only to face more abuse in unimaginable ways. 60% children run away due to domestic violence, violence at workplace and violence at religious schools. 90% of children are sexually abused on the first night out and 30% are involved in sexual exploitation. Girls being sent for sex work by their own families and children being sent for beggary are the plight of our poor and consumerist society. Child pornography is a huge business for street mafia and there are no interventions to stop such activities. There exists no mechanism to stop streaming of child pornography.
Lodging an FIR is a tedious and intimidating process and a child cannot even be a complainant in Pakistan. It is recommended that Police rules should be replaced by new public safety commissions. And blanket mechanisms such as a national child helpline should be created where the child can seek help around the clock. Right to free and compulsory education should be implemented immediately.

The future of a nation is in the hands and minds of its children. And the minds of our children are being fed with extremism: political, religious and ethnic. They are used by political parties and religious extremists and become the victims of our dirty ethnic politics, too young to realize that it is our mistakes of history that are shedding their blood. There is a need to create a counter-violent narrative for the future generations and this can be started through the teaching of inter-faith and inter-ethnic peace and harmony at schools.

Stopping corruption is vital for child protection; that is corruption not only of the state but of our children who, starting from schools, are socialized into cheating and copy culture. It is essential that we redefine our values and priorities. Only then can we stop our children from being innocent victims of progress where we can deliver a pizza 24 hours a day, but providing child protection 24 hours a day seems like a task impossible.

A Life full of Violence & Fear

An image becomes viral on twitter which touches the heart of millions. An innocent Syrian child gave up, assuming that the cameraman was pointing to her with a gun. He is deep sad in tears but hadn't cried because the conditions there make him strong. Child thought the photojournalist was holding a weapon, so she “surrendered”. Its a Shame on Humanity, UN and our so called Leaders of the free world if these small children have to live in such terror. It’s very sad that in wars many times we forget who we are and why we are fighting and what shall be the outcomes of it. His eyes speaking more than any words she is suffering from a very sick situation of the country because of which her childhood is destroyed. Once Nelson Mandela quoted “We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in any society, a life free from violence and fear”. Every nation must strive for it.
As parents, we all want our children to succeed and be the best. We know from research that two factors influence how your child grows and succeeds: genes and environment.

One of the factors that influence our child’s development is their genetic makeup or "genes." This is referred to as "nature." These genes act like a blueprint for what characteristics a child may have. The other factor that influences child development is the environment. This includes experiences children have in their home, school and community environments. This is referred to as "nurture." The environment can either improve or harm a child’s genetic blueprint.

Healthy development depends on the quality and reliability of a young child’s relationships with the important people in his or her life, both within and outside the family. Even the development of a child’s brain architecture depends on the establishment of these relationships. We often think we need to run out and buy special toys, music and games to stimulate our child’s development, but we have to remind ourselves that it is more important to provide the following, every-day activities you can do with your child to encourage brain development.

- Give your child lots of love and attention. No matter what a child’s age, show your child the affection you have for them.
- Interact with your child by talking, singing, playing, eating, and reading with your child.
- Having consistent rules, rewarding behaviors you want to see your child do more of, and having consequences for behaviors you do not want your child to continue to do.

A child’s social environment influences their cognitive development and educational attainment. Children who engage in good social relationships perform better academically than those who do not. Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development. Growing up in a positive social environment is associated with less risky behaviors.

There is also a reduced risk of developing a substance use disorder amongst children who have positive social relationships compared to those who do not. Children who have good social relationships have greater self esteem than those who do not and are less likely to experience mental health problems including depression and anxiety. There is also evidence that pro-social behavior during childhood leads to emotional stability, and considerate behavior in adulthood.

Individuals living in social environments characterized by positive social relationships are more motivated. Children’s development of the cognitive and social skills needed for later success in school may be best supported by a combination with behaviors that are cognitively responsive to the child’s needs, including the provision of rich verbal input and maintaining and expanding on the child’s interests, provide the range of support necessary for multiple aspects of a child’s learning.
According to Piaget, play supports emotional development by providing a way to express and cope with feelings. Pretend play (imitating real life situations) helps children express feelings in the following four ways:

1. Simplifying events by creating an imaginary character, plot, or setting to match their emotional state. A child afraid of the dark, for example, might eliminate darkness or night from the play episode.

2. Compensating for situations by adding forbidden acts to pretend play. A child may, for example, eat cookies and ice cream for breakfast in play, whereas in reality this would not be permitted.

3. Controlling emotional expression by repeatedly reenacting unpleasant or frightening experiences. For example, a child might pretend to have an accident after seeing a real traffic accident on the highway.

4. Avoiding adverse consequences by pretending that another character, real or imaginary, commits inappropriate acts and suffers the consequences. Children whose television viewing is monitored at home, for instance, can pretend to allow the doll to watch indiscriminately and then reprimand the “bad child” for unacceptable TV viewing habits.

According to Erikson, a developmental psychologist, in addition to expressing feelings, children also learn to cope with their feelings as they act out being angry, sad, or worried in a situation they control. Pretend play allows them to think out loud about experiences charged with both pleasant and unpleasant feelings. During play, children also increase their social competence and emotional maturity.

Hence allowing children to play and discussing with them interpretation of actions is very important for early interpretations especially in cases of abuse.

Sahil Training Department provides trainings to primary school teachers, parents and communities
On

Phone: 92-051 2856950
Email: teachertrainers@sahil.org
Frequently Asked Questions from Jeet Heeling Centre

Question: My son is going to be four in a couple of months. When he’s upset, he will hit himself on the arm and tell me he is bad!” What’s the cause of this, and how should I respond?

Dear,
I can understand your concern about your son as he is learning from the environment and young children often have very simple views of right and wrong, and extreme views about punishment. They also get very easily frustrated. They even don’t understand how they are feeling; especially when things don’t turn out the way they want. When your son cannot make the world work the way he wishes, he may feel that it is me “who is bad!” and want to hurt himself. Hitting himself is a variation on punching a wall, something adolescent boys do with some frequency.

Part of growing up is coming to understand the differences between mistakes and crimes. Children do not yet have a sense of proportion--the punishment must fit the crime--and they often think natural, human error requires punishment. But do examine the pattern of punishment being followed at home. Otherwise this is part of normal developmental attitudes of a child at four; his views will become more balanced and moderate as he grows older. For now, you need to stop him from hitting himself. Take his hands in your hands and say, "No, baby, you’re not bad. You’re just angry that such-and-such happened. Please don’t hit yourself when you’re upset.

Spend some time only with him because sometimes it’s a kind of attention seeking behavior.

Question by a 23 years old girl student of BS Computer sciences “I’m really nervous about giving presentations. I’m just not comfortable speaking in public. What can I do to get rid of these fears and make sure I don’t clam up or die of stage fright?

Dear,
Don’t worry. It's completely normal to fear speaking in public, when a room full of strangers is focused on your every move and word. Some people make public speaking look effortless or like it’s a natural skill, but even famous orators and Oscar winning actors get nervous in those moments. Here are a few things you should try to build your confidence and maybe even help you actually have fun when you’re in front of an audience.

Practice Makes Perfect: The more you know your material, the more comfortable you’ll be. So rehearse, rehearse, and then rehearse some more.
Try mentally rehearsing to the last detail like stunt people do, until you see yourself doing it perfectly. For feedback, practice in front of friends and family and/or video tape yourself to review later. You may end up sick of your presentation, but by then you should be able to deliver it more naturally. In addition to all that preparation, there are a few things you can do.

**Bond with the audience:** That’s one of the secrets of overcoming speech anxiety - make it feel like a conversation. It’s a good idea to also get to the place early so you’re familiar with the environment and equipment (and can make sure the equipment works).

**Anticipate possible questions:** Another reason people get nervous in public does not know what to expect from the audience and being put on the spot. When you’re preparing your talk, try to anticipate any possible questions, including challenging or opposing viewpoints. If you don’t know anything, it’s perfectly fine to say you don’t know the answer but you’ll find out, or you could even throw the question out to the audience to see if anyone else knows.

**Use body hacks to boost your confidence.** Before you step into the limelight, adopt a power pose, such as stretching out your arms or raising your hands with closed fists in a victory sign. Also take deep breaths if you feel the butterflies returning, and try slow pacing across the stage.

**Find the passion in your topic.** Finally, try focusing on the message and the conversation with your audience, rather than your performance. Nervousness happens when you become too self-conscious. If you can talk passionately about your subject, audiences will soak it up and, before you know it, the presentation will be over. The more you practice speaking in public, the better you’ll get at it.
Cruel Numbers Report is a flagship of Sahil that is compiled every year from data obtained from 70 newspapers across the country.

The data obtained from newspapers on child sexual abuse during the year 2014 shows that a total number of 3508 cases of child sexual abuse incidents occurred in the country, which has increased by 17% as compared to the figure 3002 of the last year 2013.

The sex-wise distribution of the cases shows that girls and boys both become victims of child sexual abuse.

The report shows that out of the total number of 3508 cases, 61% were girls and 39% were boys. The phenomenon of sexual abuse is usually associated with puberty, in which it is alleged that the victim is a consenting partner.

### Age of Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Victims</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 Years</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18 Years</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Mentioned</td>
<td>1042</td>
<td>462</td>
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On the contrary to this belief, it has been seen that the age range of abused children can be seen from 1 year to 11 years of age. In this year a sharp rise is seen in the age categories of 6 years to 15 years of age.

The analysis of the reported cases shows that 8% of the victims out of the total 3508 cases were up to 5 years of age.

There could be several reasons for the victimization of children under this age bracket to sexual abuse, but some of the reasons could be:

- Children in this age bracket can be easily trapped by offering small gifts such as candies, bike rides and play.
- Children of this age can be handled easily to avoid disclosure as they are often unable to understand or express their experiences.
In the year 2014, out of the total of 3508 cases, 58% cases were reported from the province of Punjab. This could be related to media having greater access and channels of communication in the Punjab in comparison to remote areas of the provinces with the least number of cases. Another reason may be more awareness on available complaint mechanisms and the justice system. Similarly, fewer cases reported from FATA and Gilgit Baltistan might be because of the less number of media coverage and less access and awareness and availability of the judicial system.

The data shows that out of the total number of 3508 cases 67% were reported from rural areas, which is higher than 57% cases reported from rural areas in the year 2013. Whereas there is a decrease in cases reported from urban areas from 43% in 2013 to 33% in the year 2014.

Out of the total of 3508 cases, 103 cases were of child marriage, of which 99 were girls and 4 were boys.

Of the total 103 child marriages cases 25 cases were of Vani, a traditional practice of marrying of young girls to settle honor related issues.

The results show that 39% of the victims of early marriages belonged to the age group of 11-15 years and 34% were from the age group of 6-10 years. The 4 boys were in the age range of 11-15 Years.

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<td>16-18 Years</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Mentioned</td>
<td>12</td>
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The issue of child sexual abuse needs to be stopped; otherwise its consequences can cast far-reaching effects on the child’s life, ranging from effects of neglect to physical and psychological abuse.
Lesson form Meri Hifizat .... Mini Escapes Kidnapping

Mini’s mom told her that she is going out, and asked her to close the door and take care of herself.

“Ok mom” Said Mini

A lady knocked the door;
Mini opened the door;
Hey Kid! Is your mom at home? inquired the lady,
“No Aunty mom is not at home” said, Mini
“Oh...Ok! Then get me a glass of water it is very hot..
“Ok I will just bring it replied Mini...

Meanwhile the lady nodded towards a man to come..

As Mini brought the glass of water... the man put a handkerchief on her mouth and she fell unconscious

When Mini opened her eyes she found herself in a bus between two strangers, one pointing a pistol on her arm...

Mini got afraid... and in a moment she remembered her teacher telling her stories from Sahil Meri Hifazat Story Book.

She told one of the guys that she needs to go to the washroom.
As she entered the washroom, Mini started weeping ... a lady asked what has happened and what’s wrong?

Mini said, Aunty! Help me please, two guys have kidnapped me and they are taking me somewhere....

Oh!! Don’t worry said the lady I will just have them caught. She talked to her companion on her mobile

As mini stepped out, the kidnaper said; Ok lets go!!

No! No! shouted Mini

Aunty these are the same guys

Passengers at the bus stand gathered and caught the two men.

And they were arrested and sent behind bars.....

Attention to Volunteers

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Fax :(92-51) 2254578

Sahil Legal Aid

Sahil provides free legal aid to all victims of child sexual abuse. Confidentiality is strictly maintained.

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Toll free service on 0800-13518
Malnutrition among Children: A challenge for generations to come

Dr. Irashad Danish
Save the Children

Nutrition is an important factor affecting growth, health and development of individuals, especially of children.

Malnutrition is defined as defective nutrition due to inadequate or imbalanced intake of nutrients or their impaired assimilation or utilization. It is usually associated with third world countries and families who are poor and underprivileged.

According to a report on global regional and national causes of child mortality, malnutrition accounts for 35–45% of deaths to children under-5 years, worldwide. Children in South Asia are disproportionately at risk, with 37% stunted (short height for age), 15% wasted (less weight for height) and 30% underweight (less weight for age).

The 2011 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) of Pakistan shows that more than 1.5 million children in Pakistan are currently suffering from acute malnutrition, making them susceptible to infectious diseases which may lead to death. Long-term (chronic) malnutrition undermines both physical and mental development; nearly half of Pakistan’s children are chronically malnourished, which causes life-long damage to brain development and immunity. Most of this irreversible damage happens between the day of conception and two years after birth, a period known as the ‘first 1000 days.’

Malnutrition plays a substantial role in Pakistan’s high child and maternal morbidity and mortality rates. Due to its correlation with infections, an estimated 35% of all under-five deaths in the country are linked with malnutrition.

These conditions are caused by a combination of: dietary deficiencies; poor maternal and child health and low micronutrient content in the soil, especially iodine and zinc. Most of these micronutrients have profound effects on immunity, growth and mental development. In addition poverty, rural residence, mother’s health and family size are identified as the primary contributors to child malnutrition.

If a pregnant woman is malnourished, her child may weigh less at birth and have a lower chance of survival. Low
birth weight babies are predisposed to many health and development problems.

'Failure to thrive' is a common term used in child medicine to describe an infant, or child's, inadequate growth rate. This can be due to premature birth and co-existing chronic illness however, neglect and poverty are often the causal factors. If not addressed, 'failure to thrive' is a risk factor for long term physical and mental deficits.

Children who are malnourished learn less at school, and earn less when they grow up.

Iron and iodine deficiency in childhood reduces IQ by up to 25 and 13 points respectively. Suffering from stunted growth has been shown to correlate with a loss of earnings of up to 46% percent in adulthood. Malnutrition makes the children prone to acquiring communicable diseases like measles and also ending up with complications. Malnutrition also reduces the effectiveness of certain vaccinations.

The current malnutrition crisis in Pakistan has been estimated to cost the economy 3% of GDP per year; Pakistan cannot afford to sustain this drain on the economy. If all relevant stakeholders work together and implement joint interventions for nutrition, we can avoid the bad impact of malnutrition on learning, earning and health.

Malnutrition is complex issue which can be addressed with multi-sectoral approach.

Currently, all provincial governments in Pakistan have approved/ passed multi-sectoral nutrition strategies and breastfeeding laws. However, political will is required for implementing these strategies and laws.

Provincial governments should allocate adequate financial resources and depute human resources for nutrition programs and interventions. Government of Pakistan has also joined signed Scaling Up- Nutrition (SUN) movement.

In order to implement the scaling up nutrition framework, there is a need for close coordination between all sectoral programs of health, education, water & sanitation, social welfare and agriculture.

Pakistan’s leaders must urgently recognize and respond to this challenge, and must prioritize the evidence-based policies and programs which can address this crisis.
Importance of quality education and our education system

Mamtaz Hussain Gohar
Program Officer Media, Sahil

In Pakistan not only quality education but even access to the common school has been a holly wish for the poor. Pakistan’s national census of 1995 shows that more than 40 million children of school going age are out of schools, whereas, those making it through to attend schools face corporal punishment, lack of wash and sanitation facilities and an inclined risk of potential environmental hazards, such as school environment, school building, boundary walls and road safety.

In this situation, children can face devastating experiences that can cause more harm than good to them during the quest for education.

Lack of water and sanitation facilities in schools can result in affecting children’s physical and biological fitness. Not only this but lack of toilets in school and open air urination has often exposed children to abuse.

The fact is that as a nation, we have failed to understand the true meaning of acquiring education. Since our admissions in schools, we have always been taught to get education to seek a good job, and we have never thought to seek education beyond this. Most of us are firm in this belief that those who have completed their sixteen years of education and have to found a job, be it through legal procedure or through bribery, are the most successful people throughout their lives.

Majority of our population lives in rural areas, but no serious steps have been taken to provide better educational facilities, quality education and trained teachers to ensure enrollment and attendance of children in schools in the rural settlements.

UNESCO report published in April 2015 has again highlighted that Pakistan is among those countries that have failed to achieve the “Education for All” targets. In this report, it is also referred to the findings of Transparency International stating that Pakistan has the most ghost schools and ghost teachers. There are 6480 ghost schools in Sindh province alone and in Balochistan, there are 5000 ghost schools, whereas, from these ghost schools, which do not have any existence, thousands of ghost teachers who are getting their salaries regularly and of included those who have died long ago. This is one of the reasons that the education department in Pakistan is the 4th the most corrupt department. This report is an eye open for all of us. As a nation, we all are responsible for the deteriorating situation of education throughout the country. If we are not directly into the black trade, we are still part of it as silent observers.

The quality of education in Pakistan varies from class to class. The rich stratum enjoys quality
education and facilitation for they pay for it whereas as for the poor it is different. There are hundreds of private schools in every town who offer comparatively better education than that of the government schools. Government schools are known for rote memorization, favoritism, ignorance and absence of teachers. Hence there is a huge gap between children studying at a government school and a private school.

The department of education is highly respected across the world’s most progressive countries and every year they allocate adequate resources for their educational institutions and for scientific researches. On the contrary, Pakistan instead of increasing its budget for education during fiscal year 2014-15 trimmed down a significant figure from it, which is enough to show our seriousness towards the significance of education in the eyes of our decision makers. According to the Chinese wisdom, if you want to plan for a year then grow adequate crops, and if you want to plan for 100 years sow plants, and if you want to plan for the next 1000 years, then invest your child’s education. What a pity we couldn’t even plan for the next five year.

One of the aims of educating children is to protect them. However as a society with the slow incline in literacy count, we are facing tremendous social issues ranging from domestic violence to other ill deeds.

To enhance the quality and standard of education it is inevitable to appoint eligible teachers on merit, who can play a vital role in the reconstruction of the functional pitfalls within the system. Yet again the reconstruction of the ill-fated education system within the country can actually not solely be attributed to incompetent teachers and government. It is rather the parents, civil society, decision-makers and the whole society’s responsibility to play their role as aware citizens to lift the education system.

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**SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES**

Dear Readers!

For the Readers’ Corner segment of Sahil quarterly magazine we will publish the writings of our readers. Submissions of your articles are welcomed for Sahil’s upcoming issue July-September 2015, which shall be exclusively for children. You can send your writings in English or Urdu. The editors reserve the right to make the final decision. The last date for submission of articles, stories, jokes, amazing facts, poetries, is 10th June 2015.

**Send your contributions, on:**

The Editor

No. 13, First Floor, Al-Babar Centre, F-8 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan.
P.O. Box # 235, Or E-mail: mag@sahil.org
Our Inspirational Talent

Insha Afsar

Insha Afsar was one of the thousands of victims who suffered from the devastating earthquake that shook northern parts of Pakistan on October 8, 2005. Afsar lost a leg when her house came down on the tragic day. But she has not let that stop her from pursuing her passion.

This week, Insha competed in a ski racing competition in the US Paralympic Alpine National Championships and was seen storming down the slalom course at Loon Mountain in Lincoln, New Hampshire. She now attends Berkshire Academy in Massachusetts and is sponsored by the Loon-based New England Disabled Sports (NEDS). Afsar was one of the 40 athletes participating in the competition.

Amina Wali and Afra Wali

Wali Sisters, Afra Wali and Amina Wali made history when they become first ever duo of sisters in South Asia history to win gold and silver medals in South Asian Winter Games. Afra Wali, 17 and Amina Wali 19, claimed first and second place respectively after beating Sri Lanka, Nepal and India who came in third in the giant slalom event in Auli 2011.

Amina Wali is also the first Pakistani woman to compete at the Asian Alpine Ski Championship. She participated in this event in March 2015; Fatimah Suhail was also with her. Amina and Afrah Wali are residents of Gilgit- Baltistan and daughters of Colonel Amjad Wali Khan. Both sisters aim to participate in Olympics and back to Pakistan with a medal.

Pakistan’s New Abdul Qadeer Khan

Abdul Qadeer is a young talented boy, from Muzaffarabad. He became popular overnight when on finding him with impressive his clarity and advanced knowledge in the biology, some tourist doctors recorded his video and uploaded on social media. This grasped immense attention on social media. The impressed tourists named him Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and from that time he is known by that name.
A coin in the name of God – Child Labor Day
Naveed Hussain Yaseeni
Social activist

The evening shadows were exponentially stretching out as the Sun was galloping away from the views of Margala Hills in Islamabad. All done and dusted with the tedious University business, I was on my way to my dorm when a friend threw an offer for a coffee. We headed towards a nearby coffee shop and helped ourselves around a table in the patio. We decided to go for a tea instead — mood swing!

Coffee or tea, our primary purpose to venture out, as always, was to share time together. We were enjoying the tea, lingering around with thoughtless gossips. A child caught our attention — with flat nose and sea-green eyes, he was well-behaved and neatly dressed. He barged into the patio and started asking for money from the people sitting around. He strode from one table to the other begging for spare coins. He used a tailored script in order to inspire generosity and, largely did not appear to succeed. Most of the people turned down his appeal for a coin.

He came to us with the same submissive posture, asking for money. I offered him a tea and welcomed to our table. He declined the invitation though. I became inquisitive and engaged him in a conversation humbly. He seemed to be communicative and friendly. We were interested in what makes him beg in the streets. Was it a free choice or a Hobson's choice? What was his name?

“I am Abdul Qasim and I am from Afghanistan. I live in Pirwidhai, Rawalpindi. My Father makes me beg. Not only me, but my siblings are forced to go for begging and bring back money in the evening. My mother assigns different locations every morning and drops us there as per schedule. We go back at night around 10:00 P.M with as much money as Rs.60 [$0.62]. We are five brothers and three of us are begging. The little ones are with my mommy who, after dropping us, stays in a Langar. My daddy sells vegetables in a nearby market.”

When asked why would he liked to beg at this little age. His tears started travelling down his cheeks and he said that it was not his choice.

“I hate to beg. Most of the people I ask for money from, tell me that I am doing something bad and I ought not to do it. My father is a brutally tough guy. If I refuse to do it, I will get beaten. I can’t help it.” He said.

Oblivious to his circumstances I asked him to go to school instead. “What if you request your father to send you to school? Go to school, your life will change forever.” I said
“I do attend a school. I am in Grade -1 at Iqra School. But as soon as I get home, my mother takes me out for begging, as my father wants my contribution in the evening. She drops me at my location.” He said.

I suggested that he should stay in a boarding house and continue his school. Qasim looked worried about his mother. “My mother will get beaten if my father does not get my share. I love my mommy and I cannot see her cry. I cannot stay away from her.” He helplessly replied. I gave him some money and the child left the place.

The United Nations through its charter has asked governments of member states to institute a day in a way that the welfare of the working children is taken care of.

Although 12 June, World Day against Child Laborers is observed worldwide to ponder upon the plight of child laborers, in which mechanisms are devised to cater their issues, but even after the 25 years of the enactment of the UNCRC and the observance of such significant days the United Nations is helpless to stop wars and displacements that have affected many Qasims and have made them beg in a foreign country.

Every year this day reminds me of little Abdul Qasim, whose life mission is to keep his mommy happy. What understanding, the UN thinks, Qasim has with the children of the world? He does not even count himself among the other Children—may be because he is overwhelmed by his circumstances.

The statistics of UN and its member states may mark World Day against Child Labour on June 12, but Qasim is still out in the streets to contribute to his living, asking for coins and dealing with the rough people, all alone.

For him, it’s a matter of a coin, not human or child rights and that is all in the name of God.

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Helpful Hints for Healthy Parenting

Are you a hurried parent who could benefit from hints on how to enhance communication with your kids, tips on getting along better, and guidelines on how to improve your relationship with your children? Please read on.

The parenting tips that follow provide a fresh perspective, an opportunity to build on your own positive parenting skills so that when difficult issues arise, you already have a strong foundation to build on.

BUILD CONFIDENCE: Be positive.
- Look for ways to give compliments.
- Give hugs.
- Remember to laugh with your child.

Emphasize your child’s strong points.
- Praise special, unique traits in your child.
- Help your child understand that nobody’s perfect and that’s okay.
- Help your child understand that everyone is good at something and not so good at other things.

Give your time.
- As parents, you are all probably short on time and may often feel overwhelmed with all your responsibilities. However, it’s important for you to know that the best gift is to give your child regular, undivided attention.
- If you’re experiencing guilt, you need to work through that and work on specific times to be with your children. You could begin by scheduling monthly “dates” together.

Say “I love you.”
- Give this message in different ways.
- Try non-verbal as well as verbal.

STAY CONNECTED: Listen.
- Give your full attention. Keep good eye contact, nod, and give a reassuring touch to your child.
- Listen for feelings. There are no wrong feelings. Acknowledge your child’s feelings, and then reflect those feelings back. (Don’t interpret; repeats their words to reflect your child’s feelings.)
- Keep your talk to a minimum. Simply saying you understand and care may be enough. Being there for them is the most important.

Take time to be with your child.
- Read a book or watch TV together. Talk about the book or program. Use this time to give your full attention to your child.
- If you’re a working parent, call your child from work just to say “hello” - not to remind him or her about chores or homework.
- Make time for regular heart-to-heart talks with your child. Keep conversations free and open.

USE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE:
Set rules.
- Determine what rules are important. Set limits and boundaries. Make sure everybody understands the rules and consequences.
- Apply rules consistently. If you make an exception, make sure your child understands that it’s a special treat (i.e., staying out later than usual).
- Rules are flexible in that they’re appropriate to the age of the child.
- Physical discipline is almost never effective.

Addressing a problem.
• Respond to the problem as soon as possible.
• Be firm. You’re the parent. Do not underestimate your parenting ability.
• Keep calm; use your anger in a positive way.
• Address the problem, discuss the consequence, follow-through. Don’t blow up!

Criticate the behavior only.
• Choose your words carefully. Address the behavior, not the person. For example, you could say, “I’m upset that you hit your friend”, instead of ”You’re a bad boy for hitting”.

HELP IN PROBLEM-SOLVING:
Define the problem.
• Try to help your child solve the problem, don’t solve it for them. Teach your child how to problem-solve.
• Ask your child what exactly the problem is. What are their feelings about it?

Brainstorm about ways to solve the problem.
• Talk about every possible solution with your child. List them out. Discuss and weigh the outcomes of each potential solution.

Pick the best solution.
• Talk about, and role-play if necessary, the way you or your child will implement the solution.

Discuss the outcome.
• Did the solution work? Why or why not.
  If not, talk with your child about trying another solution.

To be consistent is to be **reliable**, **dependable** and **constant**.

Being **reliable** means that you can be trusted. When we think of the people I can trust, the first thought that comes to mind is that I know if they say they will do something, they will do it. If they say they will be on time they are on time. I have every confidence in my expectations of them.

Being **dependable** means that you are steady and responsible. Aren’t these the values you would like your children to learn from you?

Being **constant** means to be stable, regular and even in your approach.

How to be consistent?

♦ Both parents will not always agree upon every rule and consequence. Talk these issues over privately and strive towards a workable compromise.
♦ Remember to be consistent with your praise of positive behaviors. This teaches your child what pleases you and reinforces appropriate conduct.
♦ Some parents find that developing reward charts using stickers or stars help them to remain on track. If this doesn’t work for your family try something else such as posting a list of rules and consequences where they can be easily seen.
♦ Each child has a unique temperament. Adjust your approach to fit the child. Some children are easily guided while another may be somewhat stubborn and persistent.
Answer the following questions and get a chance to win Sahil self protection tools

What Adolescents should know and Do

Tick the correct answers (There can be more than two correct answers for each question)

Question: How the shock or trauma of death be coped with?
1. By sharing feelings with someone who is close to you.
2. By suppressing emotions.
3. By engaging in positive activities.
4. By giving time to understand personal feelings.
5. By crying.
6. By taking drugs.
7. By praying.

Question: What can be the reasons for a road accident?
1. Rash driving.
2. Using a cell phone while driving.
3. Driving while feeling sleepy.
4. Racing cars.
5. Smoking while driving.
6. A technical fault in the car.

Question: How should anger be expressed?
1. By harming oneself or others.
2. By not expressing anger immediately.
3. By reflecting on his own behaviour before expressing anger.

Question: How should success be expressed?
1. Be respectful to the looser.
2. By showing off.
3. By not hurting the feelings of others.

Question: Playing for free in a snooker club can result in the following
1. More opportunities to play.
2. Can be forced into unacceptable behavior.
3. Can be kidnapped.
4. Can be abused.
5. A much older friend can take advantage of you.

Question: What are the dos and don’ts of friendship?
1. Always agreeing to your friends demands.
2. Making friends with the same age group.
3. Ignoring bad habits of friends to save the friendship.
4. Devising certain limits of friendship for your protection.
5. Providing essential information to your family about friends.

Question: Why is it difficult to quit illegal activities?
1. It is easy money.
2. No one will want to associate with you.
3. Can be threatened or blackmailed.
4. No one will believe that you were unaware of the consequences.

Question: What kind of a relationship should children have with parents?
1. Gain the trust of parents.
2. Do whatever one wants without their consent.
3. Children and parents spend time sharing activities together.
4. Make daily life rules with the help of parents.
5. Do not consider any of the difficulties faced by parents.

Send your answers to the editor Sahil Magazine by 25th May with your name and complete address.
What’s on at Sahil

Sahil Media Department
- Published Sahil Cruel Numbers 2014
- Organized Child Friendly and Best Volunteer Award 2014 at Serena Hotel Islamabad
- Published Sahil Quarterly Magazine titled “Seeking Justice… Complaints Mechanism”

Sahil Training Department
- Sahil training department conducted Meri Hifazat teachers training:
  - In Play School Islamabad
  - Science School and College, Islamabad
  - The Major Aziz Bhatti shaheed Army Public School, Mardan.
Training department also conducted training session on "Sexual Violence and Early Forced Marriages in Jaffarabad and Lahore.

Sahil Jeet Healing (Free Counseling) Center
- On demand training for secondary school teachers on the topic of “Adolescent health” was conducted at Play school Islamabad.
- POC khadijah Umer participated in National Conference on Early Child Marriages organized by Save the Children.
- Early Forced Marriages and sexual violence trainings were conducted in Abbottabad, Lahore, Sukkur and Jaffarabad, 10 events in each RO. 607 Male and 679 Female participated in these activities
- On demand training for secondary school teachers on the topic of “Adolescent health” were conducted at Brookfield school Islamabad.
- POC Naveed Sultan visited Mashal School at Bari Imam on Aflatoon Day.
- Two Child Protection sessions with community members at RO Abbottabad were conducted.
- 35 new CPN members were selected for CPN formation in RO Abbotabad UC Mirpur,
- On demand training for secondary school teachers on the topic of “Adolescent health” was conducted at Army Public School Mardan.

Sahil Regional Office Jaffarabad, Balochistan
- Conducted training on early child marriages in five villages namely: Goth Mohammad Arif Moil, Abdul Majeed Jatak, Goth Mohammad Zaman Tareen, Takriry Lal Bux Jattak and Sawali Khan Jattak of the UC Sohrah
Sahil Regional Office Sukkur, Sindh

- Conducted sessions on force marriages with five Child Protection Village Networks Namely: Sagrar Trighati, Hajamki, Lal Muhammad Abro, Abdul Karim Magrio and Muhammad Waris Magrio in Union Council
- Arranged puppet show to community people sponsored by world vision at Meharn hotel Pano Aakil
- The Executive Director met focal person CPU Sukkur Mr. Abdul Qudoos Memon, District Officer Social Welfare MS Tahira Siraj, Director Education Sukkur MS Zaib Mangi, DO Social welfare Khairpur, Qmar Raza Bozdar; Additional Deputy Commissioner Khairpur Muhammad Yousif Shaikh, District Manager SRSO Khairpur Sukkur Mr. Aashiq Kawlar for the referral system, orientation for child protection.

Sahil Regional Office Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

- Conducted training sessions on “sexual violence and Early Forced Marriages” in 05 villages of UC Jahngi
- Conducted sessions on child protection in 03 villages of UC Mirpur of Abbottabad district namely: Usmanabad, Basti lal khan and Karrak Mera
- Formed Village Child Protection Networks in village Usmanabad, Basti lal khan and Karrak Mera.
- Placed Sahil FIR Poster in Ayub Teaching Hospital, DHQ & Hospital of women and Children in Abbottabad.

Sahil Regional Office Lahore, Punjab:

- Provided in-person Counseling to clients during titled period.
- Provided telephonic counseling services to clients.
- Sahil Regional Office Lahore & Head Office Islamabad conducted trainings with community and VCPN members on Early Child Mirages.
- Conducted request based training on Meri Hifazat with preschool troops’ families’ females’ teachers in Mehfooz Shaheed Garison
- Sahil Regional Office Lahore & Head Office Islamabad conducted workshop on Referral Mechanism of Child Protection Network at Art Gallery Qazafii Stadium in Lahore
- Meeting of Sahil, RO Lahore Staff & Executive Director with Ms Nasreen Farooq Ayub (CPCC) Ombudsman Punjab Office to conduct Admin Workshop with Govt. Departments on Referral Mechanism of Child Protection Network Lahore.
- Conducted Orientation Session on Sahil Vision and Mission for Children Complaint Office Sargodha.
- SPOC & RC conducted request based training on Meri Hifazat with Primary female teachers in Anmol Public High School for Girls
- Sahil Regional Coordinator Lahore Displayed Sahil Stall at Royal Palm Country Club arranged by Agahi on Break the Silence during titled period.
GUIDELINES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Never take anything for free because you can be asked for something in return

Do not enter a house in which there is only one person

Do not leave your child alone with any spiritual healer

Make friends with children of your own age older children may exploit you

Others should help in front of everyone

Do not take anything for free from any one to fulfill a wish

Never take a lift from strangers, they may kidnap you

Tell your parents immediately If someone asks you to keep a secret

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Children need Protection, Education & Care

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