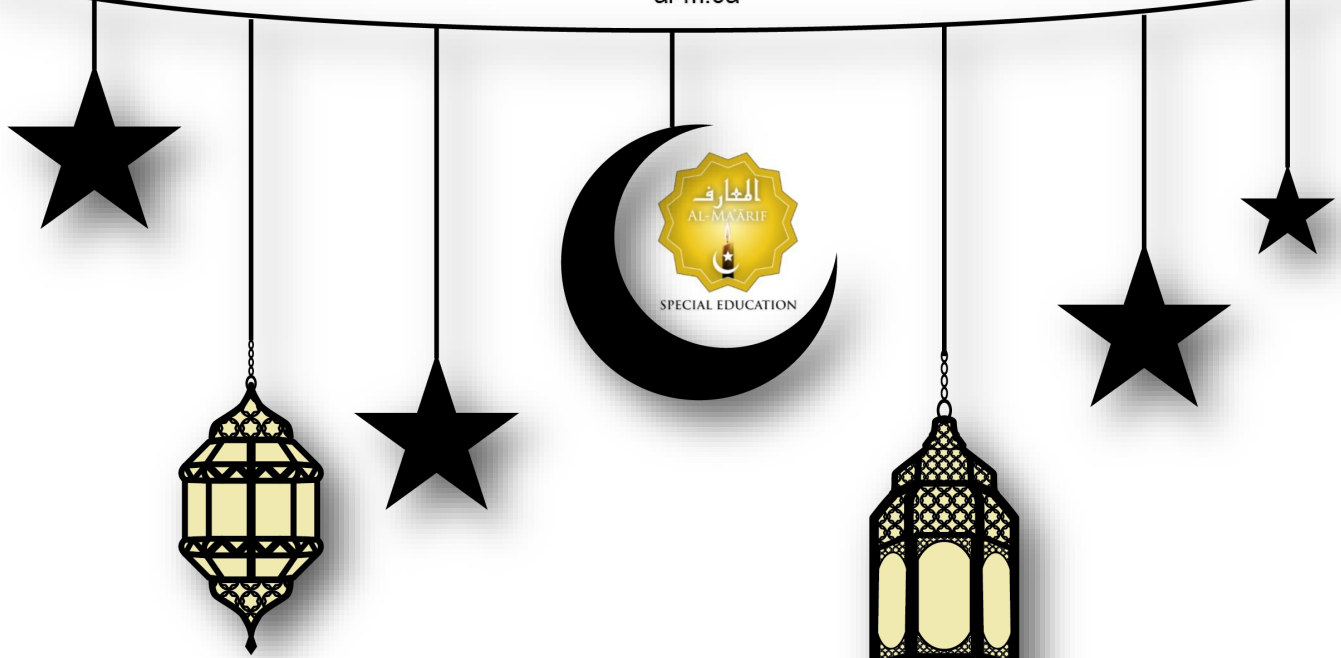


# Ramadhan at Home

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*Wishing you a blessed month*

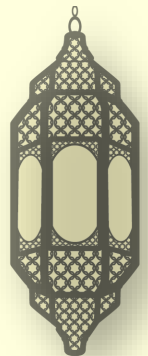
In honour of the holy month of Ramadhan, and in consideration of the stay-home situation, here are a few ideas to welcome, and raise awareness of, the holy month at home for your child. (Disclaimer: Every individual's situation varies, so please do consult your child's therapy team before implementation):

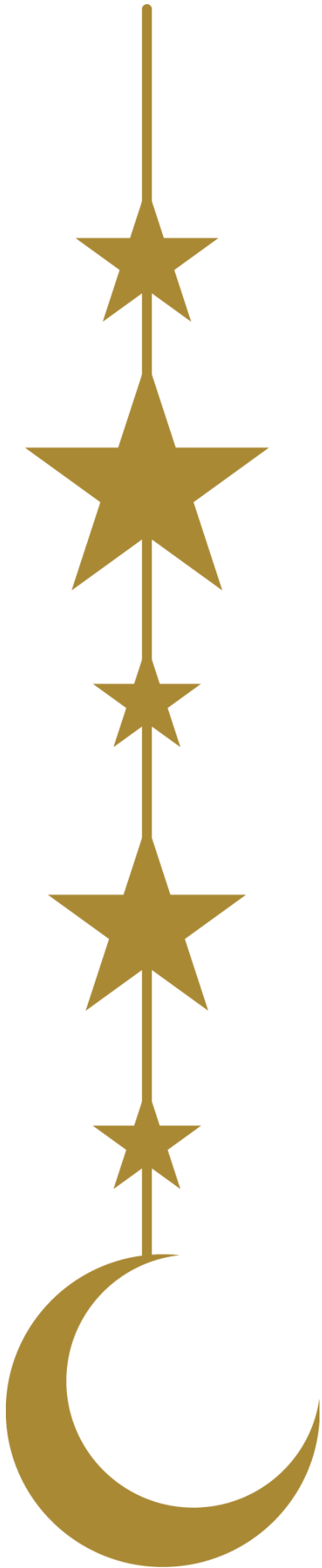
## *Decorating*

- Include your child in the decoration process!
- Let them see you put up decorations gradually over a few days
- They can make and help put up some décor too
- If they witness the decorating process, it will be less of a sudden change to see the home set up differently
- After Eid do the same, taking things down together with your child gradually over a few days
- Try to keep mostly the same decor that can be used for Eid as well so there are not too many sudden changes for Eid day
- For e.g. remove the "Eid" part of a banner and keep the word "Mubarak" only
- Be alert to potential hazards like LED candles with coin cell battery slots that can be easily opened, access to extra electrical outlets that are now in use for string-lights, etc.
- Any décor items that are special to you should be kept out of reach of the child
- In fact for the first year or two, perhaps avoid any traditional, annual or themed options, sticking to any recyclable

### *Truly celebrate by the second!*

It may take a few years to develop a Ramadhan routine, and that's perfectly alright! Celebrate each instance of presence and inclusion, a tiny step of progress, a minute longer on a task, a smile of joy, or a second of awareness that it's a special time. Truly celebrate each second that brings joy.





- DIY décor the child can be proud of making
- You can even designate a corner for them to decorate with any toys/ items they like
- Incorporate fine motor skill development activities they have already mastered, as even ripped scraps of colourful tissue paper glued on poster board can become a point of pride for them
- Even scribbled paper can become a background for you to write “Happy Ramadhan”
- A weekly craft can become décor: Letter-tracing sheets can become part of a banner, lace tying can be hung as tassels, folding papers can be strung as a paper chain, etc.

## *Daily Rituals*

- Consider introducing new home rituals one day at a time, instead of all on 1st Ramadhan
- One ritual could be to allow your child to turn on decorative string lights each evening before Maghrib (Do keep any flashing lights in a different area of the house such as a hallway, rather than main living spaces, as they may be too stimulating for some children)
- Create a Ramadhan nasheed audio or video playlist
- Use playlist as a pre-iftar or post-iftar timer e.g. while this playlist is playing on TV/Google Home/speaker, parents will be preparing iftar/ cleaning up after iftar in kitchen, so during this time play quietly with the toys in this bin, help out etc.
- Do be aware of playing loud audio in the house for a long time though as there may be an adjustment period required
- Create visual schedules, iftar time trackers, and/or print a Ramadhan calendar to cross days off, to make child aware of any schedule changes, sticking to design layouts they are used to

## *Ramadhan Calendars, Gifts & Timers*

- There are many free attractive printable Ramadhan calendars available online; print any you like! They may need to be reprinted so keep the file handy just in case
- Keep in mind the daily calendar prizes do not have to be worksheets or fancy presents—they can be a treat, a little sensory item, home made puzzles, stickers, anything to create daily excitement— even a token for access to 20 minutes with a video game
- Some Ramadhan calendars have drawers or pockets for storing gifts; it may be frustrating for some children to see the boxes every day without being able to open them
- Consider placing daily tokens in the calendar instead, that they can “redeem” for gifts/treats you’ve hidden elsewhere, or nontangible gifts like game time, story time, etc.
- If your child receives many gifts/books on Eid day, it can get overwhelming to process;
- Consider introducing the gifts throughout the month instead, e.g. here’s a gift for special Ramadhan Friday, or give one a day over the last week of Ramadhan

- Depending on the child's preferences, consider whether they would enjoy unwrapping (recyclable) paper, or prefer to see what it is in clear packaging or gift bags, with or without tissue paper—how can their senses be engaged best so they have a great experience?
- In the daytime hours, use a visual timer like a sand timer, or cast a video of an hourglass on the TV, when you'll be doing private daily Ramadhan du'as, reading a chapter of Qur'an, working or resting etc. so your child knows you'll be available after 30 minutes—they can visually gauge when you will be free



## *Food Rituals*

- Include the child in a single kitchen task every day, whether they press down the food processor button or pour nuts into a bowl.
- During iftar, announce and praise how they helped prepare iftar (it's alright if they will not be tasting the item, as the goal is participation in iftar preparation).
- Does your mosque usually serve iftar while people are seated on the floor? On weekends/over the summer, try this at home too.
- If it's too early to try a meal due to any reasons whatsoever, serve only dessert or a snack, even past Ramadhan, to get the child accustomed to the idea of dining on the floor, while in a familiar home setting with familiar dishes and shorter timeframes etc. (see the "I go to a Majlis" unit by [Al-Ma'arif Special Education](#) for lesson plans, social stories, and related activities)
- Quarter and roll pitted dates for the whole family into small tiny balls, to introduce the taste and fast-breaking ritual to your child gradually over the month, if desired
- Allow child to get accustomed to date-ball with a touch, a lick, without forcing them to eat or swallow the date
- Do place the tiny date-ball on or near their plate so they can be included in the ritual whether they eat it or not
- Have all family members start with the same small balls of dates—they can enjoy eating whole

- dates after if they wish, but the purpose is to create a daily Ramadhan ritual that includes the child in a way that has an achievable goal i.e. eat a small date-ball
- Consider having the child serve the date-balls even if they don't want to touch them—they can take a plastic bowl around and offer them to family members daily

# Ramadan Kareem



## Prayer Routine

- Since Maghrib will be iftar time, and later at night, it may not be ideal to use it as a teaching period if the prayer habit has not already been established for the child:
- Try to move the prayer-teaching to the day time or an earlier hour, when everyone is less tired
- Lower the expectations for your child (and yourself!) at the end of the day to something manageable. Include them at prayer time, but have a basket of sensory tools nearby if they want to take a break
- On the other hand, if your child is used to a particular Ramadhan routine already, for example where the family uses this time for praying together, and/or watching a lecture, it's a great time to try to focus on the typical masjid-setting skills that can transfer over in the future, in the familiar home environment
- Examples of skills are greeting appropriately, sitting for x-minutes while a lecture streams on TV, dining styles, etc.
- If it will be too big a change, consider doing this after Ramadhan, for the summer season especially if social distancing continues
- Try to maintain regular routines as closely as you can, while taking advantage of this time to create awareness of Ramadhan being a special time of year
- Teaching Qur'an and prayer will be done throughout the year insha'Allah, including while the household is not in a state of fasting
- Let the routine remain the same as much as possible, and focus on the child's awareness and enjoyment for now, while you focus on balancing your schedule with your own acts of *ibadah* whenever you can
- You know your child best. If two or three small *achievable* learning goals for your child (i.e. ruku posture and dhikr, as opposed to the general goal of learning whole prayer) along with the learning goals that were already in place before the month of Ramadhan are the best way to go, then let it be so
- Remember, what some call "small steps" are in fact huge! Celebrate those "small" steps each day of Ramadhan!

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