



The Impact of Parenting on Youth Transitions

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What I'll talk about today

- ▶ Introduce DIFI
- ▶ Parenting and Parenting Programs
- ▶ DIFI's report on Parenting Programs in the Arab Region
- ▶ Impact of Parenting on Youth Transitions
- ▶ Recommendations

Doha International Family Institute

- ▶ Established in 2006.
- ▶ A global policy and advocacy institute working to advance knowledge on Arab families and promote evidence based policies.
- ▶ DIFI's mandate is based on the **Doha Declaration on the Family** which reaffirms the commitments of the international community to strengthen the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society and encourages governments, international organizations and members of civil society to take action to promote and support the family.

Doha International Family Institute

► **Mission:**

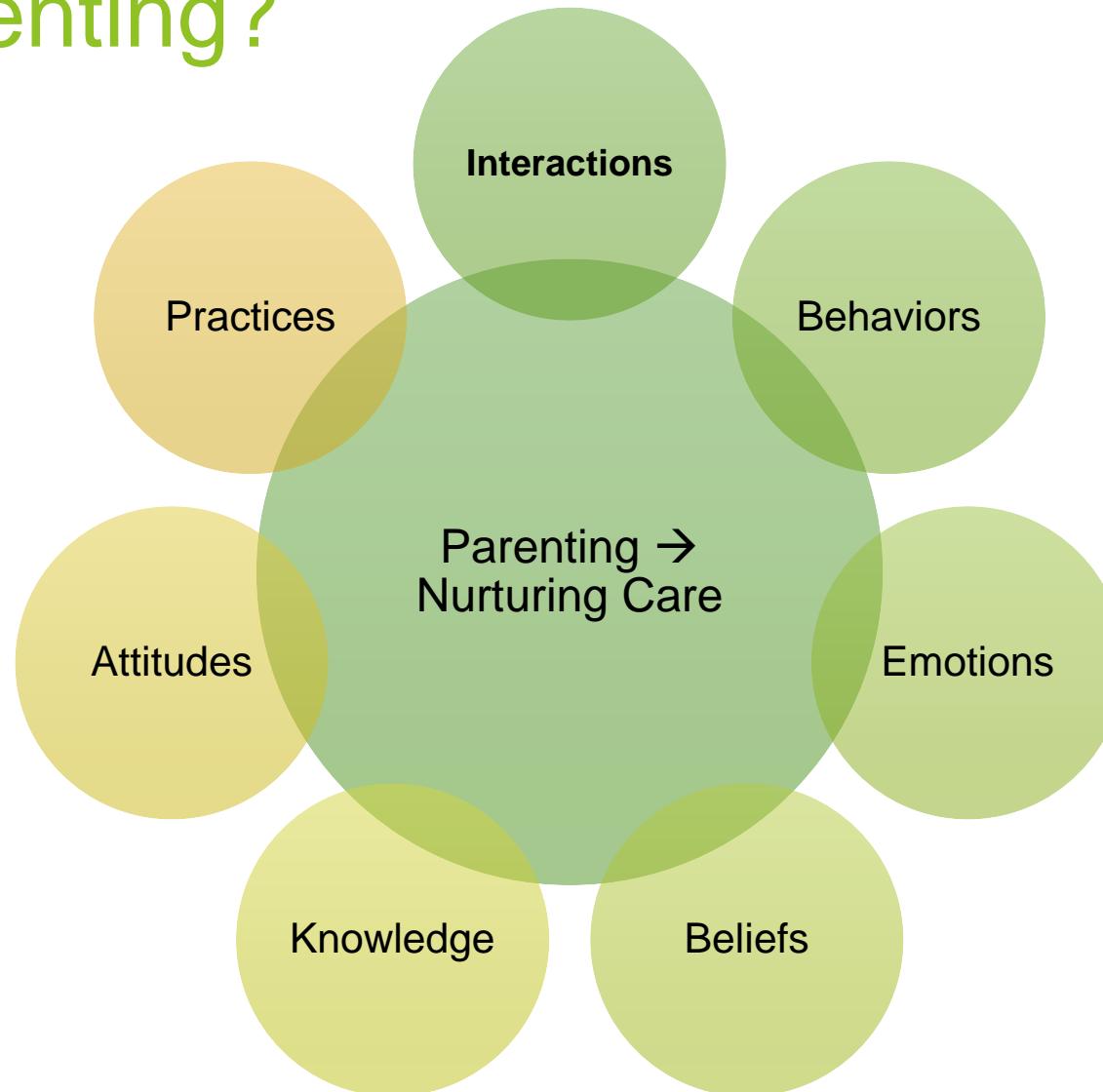
To strengthen the Arab family through research, policy, outreach and advocacy at the national, regional and international levels.

► **Special consultative status** with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

► **Strategic Priorities:**

- Family cohesion
- Family wellbeing and protection
- Marriage and divorce
- Parenting
- Behavioral issues

What is Parenting?



What is Positive Parenting?

It focuses on:

- ▶ creating **safe home environments** and
- ▶ building a **foundation of support and care** for children

How?

- ▶ **Nurturing parenting:** helping children to develop healthy behaviors, life skills and wellbeing
- ▶ **Positive discipline:** praising, rewarding and supporting good behavior

The Role of Parents in Parenting...



- ▶ It is the parent or caregiver's **duty** to prepare their children for the physical, psychological, and economic conditions in which they will flourish.
- ▶ The **involvement** and **participation** of parents and caregivers in the lives of children affects their growth, development and success, in terms of:
 - ▶ Improving education and health outcomes;
 - ▶ Promoting gender equality;
 - ▶ Preventing the reproduction of vulnerability.

Importance of Parenting

The role of parents in achieving child wellbeing has been highlighted in international documents such as the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, which obligates states to:

“render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children...” (Article 181, CRC)

As such, support for parents and parenting has been a focus of **family policies** around the world.

What are Parenting Programs?

Parenting Programs

are interventions or services designed to support parental care interactions, behaviors, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practices.

Positive parenting is at the core of parenting programs that support parents and caregivers.

Positive parenting practices are important across the life cycle of the child.

Parenting Programs help parents and caregivers to...

01

Manage children's behavior

02

Offer alternatives to physical punishment

03

Understand children's development

04

Improve parent-child communication
→ protective factors against violence

05

Teach children skills such as emotional regulation and problem solving

06

Help children build resilience and avoid experiencing/perpetuating violence

Importance of Parenting Programs

- ▶ A **World Bank** report (2015) showed that investments in early childhood in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region are among the lowest in the world.
- ▶ As such, investing in high quality parenting programs is an important element of national policies and social investment packages aimed at:
 - ▶ Building human capital of the next generation
 - ▶ Breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty
 - ▶ Reducing social exclusion and violence
 - ▶ Decreasing inequalities
 - ▶ Promoting the successful development of children and adolescents

DIFI's Report on Parenting Programs in the Arab Region

- ▶ **108 parenting programs across the Arab region**
 - ▶ 38 programs in the Arab Mashreq
 - ▶ 32 programs in the Arabian Gulf
 - ▶ 26 programs in the Arab Maghreb
 - ▶ 12 programs in less developed countries
- ▶ **Parenting programs in the Arab region target:**

Families

Individuals

Communities

Mixed Groups

Types of Programs

- ▶ **Parental education (34)**
 - ▶ Knowledge transfer, awareness of childhood characteristics, parental care
- ▶ **Parental support (29)**
 - ▶ Psychological support, family relations, social care, support for families with disabilities
- ▶ **Parental training (27)**
 - ▶ Parental integration, care mechanisms and methods
- ▶ **Parental interventions (18)**
 - ▶ Psychological and educational counseling, family conflict resolution

Parenting Program Evaluation

- Early intervention is more effective than delayed intervention
- Intervention based on theory and models
- Concrete and measurable interventions
- Targeted interventions
- Intervention concerned with implementation and service accessibility
- Quality staff involved in intervention
- Interactive and practical materials
- Long term funding for sustainable interventions
- Interventions focused on preventing child abuse

Region	Description	Objectives	Target Groups	Gaps	Challenges
Arab Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building - Family counseling - Protection from domestic violence - Problematic behavior management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing family care worker skills - Improving family awareness - Providing parental care knowledge and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families - Fathers - Mothers - Parents - Family care workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence of youth and adolescent related issues - Low attendance - Lack of father participation - Lack of standards - Weak or vague theoretical framework - Poor evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict between program times and working times - Lack of a prevention program - Long term funding - Weak reach for children with disabilities - Poor documentation - Poor impact evaluation

What about Parenting Programs Focused on Adolescents and Youth?

There are **few evidence-based parenting programs** available for parents/caregivers of adolescents that have been evaluated; most from high income countries like the US, UK and Australia.

Why should adolescents and youth be targeted by parenting programs in MENA?

Youth bulge

High risk of violence and conflict

Engagement in risky behaviors

Lack of employment opportunities

Lack of civic engagement and participation

Exposure to online violence and risks

= THERE IS AN URGENCY TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF THIS AGE GROUP

What can Governments, Private Sectors and Young People do to Support Youth?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Increase funding for early childhood development including adequate health, nutrition and responsive stimulation to build the foundation of children's physical, emotional and cognitive development; |
| 2 | Improve basic education and simultaneously nurture the skills needed to match the rapidly changing economy including training for young people. |
| 3 | Provide more support for young people transitioning from education to employment ; |
| 4 | Improve education quality to equip children with skills critical for their future including creativity, critical thinking, communication and empathy; |
| 5 | Provide children and young people with spaces to raise their concerns, share their ideas and engage with them in the decision-making process |

Family Influence on Youth Transitions

The MENA region has the **highest** youth unemployment rates **in the world, reaching 30% in 2017.**

- ▶ With a regional average of up to 40% among young women.

Families are a key resource for Arab youth:

- ▶ **Educational support**
 - ▶ Family advice
 - ▶ Enabling access to opportunities
 - ▶ Pushing women to work in certain fields
- ▶ **Employment support**
 - ▶ Families have expectations of their youth to work in certain fields
 - ▶ Expectations of youth to earn specific wages

Strengthen Parent-Youth Relations to Support Youth Transitions

DIFI's report on
"The Arab Family Strength in Qatar, Jordan and Tunisia"
highlighted the following family strengths:

Responsibility

Support

Good communication

Respect

Love

Conveying traditions

Resilience

Recommendations

- ▶ Implement **early parenting interventions**.
- ▶ Ensure that parenting interventions are **evidence based**.
- ▶ **Target adolescents and youth** not only children.
- ▶ Establish and implement systems for **long term service provision**.
- ▶ Provide **support for at-risk families** and continue to provide them with support no matter their circumstances.
- ▶ Raise parents' awareness on **positive parenting**.
- ▶ **Form networks** and coordination between governmental, non-governmental and international organizations on parenting issues.
- ▶ Adopt program criteria, **program evaluation** and risk assessment, including parenting issues in policies.



Thank you!

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