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# Big family, big love

**PETALING JAYA** — Norlina Alawi never imagined that she would one day be blessed with 46 kids.

Seven of them are her biological children with Lt. Kol. Roslan Zakaria and the other 39 are adopted.

These adopted children have their own life stories.

Some were children of HIV/AIDS victims and converts while others were abused children of foreigners or born out of wedlock.

No matter who they are, they all have her unequivocal love.

There is no discrimination no matter what their religion or race is or if they are old or young.

Norlina has brought all of them into her heart, and the adopted ones all have the necessary adoption papers.

It is with heartfelt intention that Norlina raises all her children as one big family. No isolation, no neglect.

No matter who got sick, he or she would be given the best treatment. Even if Norlina and Roslan lose their life savings, even if she has to pawn her belongings, this couple wishes to see all their children grow up like everyone else.

These children get some measure of comfort in this life and are given the chance to chase after big dreams.

In this home, education comes first. Every day, the children observe religious obliga-

tions, study and do homework together.

Norlina's ardent hope is that they would one day prove useful and contribute to religion, race, society and be the pride of this family!

Some have asked, "Aren't you afraid of AIDS?" It's this perception that has to be rectified.

It's not all parents with AIDS/HIV that have their kids suffering from it too. Their health status can only be confirmed after two years. By the grace of God, there are kids without HIV/AIDS even though both parents have it.

You may wonder how Norlina and Roslan can take care so many children.

They all feel blessed.

Roslan works as a high-ranking military officer while Norlina runs a business that involves production, trading, motivation, and events. Everything to sustain a big family.

"The children are thankful for what we have, there were times we had delicious feasts, there were times we had rice with eggs," says Norlina.

Norlina is thankful that 28 of her children have had the chance to go on umrah at a young age.

Yes, Norlina has undergone some painful and bitter moments along the way. She once took care of seven babies all at the same time!

The older children help look after the younger ones. It is always heartening to

watch all children sleep. Its moments like this, that bring tears to Norlina and Roslan.

With a big group of children around, Norlina had time and again hollered to Roslan: "We've to buy a tour bus! Easier to bring the kids out!"

It has always been Norlina's principle that adopted children are not second-class who wear used clothes. So, they work hard to give everyone a better life.

Norlina and Roslan's hope is that their big family inspires the world to pursue humanitarian endeavours. May our efforts and tawakkal be blessed by God.

• *Articles contributed by TLC's socially concerned panel of writers.*



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Norlina (seated on settee, second from right) and Roslan (on her right) with their 46-strong brood. — Picture by TLC