

Child Development

Chapter 12



**MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

Moral Understanding and Behavior

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- Self-Control
- Reasoning about moral issues
- Helping Others
- Aggression

Self-Control

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- Self-Control, defined as the ability to control one's behavior and to inhibit impulsive responding to temptations.
 - Self-control is a foreshadowing of ones moral behavior
 - Self-control is influenced by:
 - ✦ Parenting Styles
 - ✦ Temperament
 - Self-control is improved by:
 - ✦ Vygotsky – private speech control
 - ✦ Ability to focus on long term goals
 - ✦ Ability to reduce the attraction of temptation

Reasoning About Moral Issues



- Piaget
 - No well defined understanding of morality (Ages 2-4)
 - Moral Realism & Immanent Justice (Ages 5-7)
 - Moral Relativism (Ages 8+)

- Kohlberg (p.384 of Text)
 - Preconventional Level
 - Conventional Level
 - Postconventional Level

Reasoning About Moral Issues



- Kohlberg (p.384 of Text)
 - Preconventional Level: *Punishment and Reward*
 1. Obedience to authority
 2. Nice behavior in exchange for future favors
 - Conventional Level: *Social Norms*
 3. Live up to others' expectations
 4. Follow rules to maintain social order
 - Postconventional Level: *Moral Codes*
 5. Adhere to a social contract when it is valid
 6. Personal morality based on abstract principles

Helping Others



- Development of Prosocial Behavior
- Skills Underlying Prosocial Behavior
 - Perspective taking / Empathy / Moral reasoning
- Situational Influences
 - Feelings of responsibility / Feelings of competence / Mood / Cost of altruism
- Socializing Prosocial Behavior
 - Modeling / Disciplinary practices / Opportunities to behave prosocially

Aggression



Aggression, defined as behavior meant to harm others.

- **Change and Stability**
 - Instrumental / Hostile / Reactive / Relational
- **Roots of Aggressive Behavior**
 - Biological contributions
 - Impact of the family
 - Influence of community and culture
 - Cognitive Processes
- **Victims of Aggression**