

# The development of morality

Experience, Human Nature



Discuss the major influences on the development of morality. Identify various ways that adults can promote moral growth in children. Perhaps the biggest influence on development of morality is the interaction that children receive from other people. According to the article entitled "Moral Development and Moral Education: An Overview," renowned psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg concluded from their studies that children build their morals from the interactions that they participate in with others. This is particularly influential when it comes to the adults that they interact with: "in the natural authority relationship between adults and children, power is handed down from above" (Nucci, 2008). This indicates that the interactions with adults are especially meaningful and holds a greater amount of influence for developing the morality of a child as an adult is seen as more powerful, authoritative, and knowledgeable. Often times, children will have placed a lot of trust in an adult which adds to their influence over their moral development. Educators such as teachers also are influential in the process of moral development. According to a book entitled "Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice," "teachers are in a position to foster the necessary social skills to allow students to become autonomous and socially competent individuals" (Robert E. Slavin, 2010). This can lead to conflict as a teacher's morals might not be the same as the parent's who does not want their children to be influenced negatively by contradicting morals. According to the article entitled "Fostering Goodness: Teaching Parents to Facilitate Children's Moral Development," there are a few ways that adults can foster moral development within children. One of the most effective ways is through modeling which is an adult demonstrates a

particular moral element by ways of words, behaviors, or actions in the presence of the child(Berkowitz, 1998). Typically, the child will copy the behavior, words, or actions if the adult has modeled the behavior enough and if the adult is seen to be powerful in some capacity to the child.

References Berkowitz, M. W., & Grych, J. H. (1998). Journal of Moral Education, Volume 27, No. 3, pp. 371-391. An Overview of Moral Development and Moral Education. (n. d.). Welcome to UIC. Retrieved June 27, 2011, from <http://tiger.uic.edu/~Inucci/MoralEd/overview.html> Slavin, R. E. (2003). Educational psychology: theory and practice (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.