Chapter 3

Personal-Social Development: The Feeling Child

This chapter will help you answer the following questions about your learners:

• To what extent should my instructional goals include the affective development of my learners?
• Why do some children learn behaviors that repel rather than attract other children?
• What role do I play in the development of my learners’ self-esteem?
• What role do friendships play in the personal-social development of my learners, and how can I enhance friendly relationships?
• Can learners be taught helping or prosocial behaviors?
• How can I enhance my learners’ ability to think and reason about their own moral and ethical behavior?

In this chapter you will also learn the meanings of these terms:

affectional bonds
empathy
horizontal relationships
modeling
perceived self-efficacy
prosocial behaviors
schema of attachment
self-concept
self-esteem
social cognition
stages of identity
vertical relationships

As we begin our study of personal-social development, consider the following episode, described by Greenwood and Parkay (1989).

Setting: A small, relatively new high school in a rural area of a southeastern state.

Time: Lunch period on a warm autumn day.

Mr. Nash, on hall duty, is standing in the doorway because students are not permitted in the building during lunch period. Joe, a large, muscular 19-year-old-senior, whom Mr. Nash recognizes as one of his American history students, approaches the door. Mr. Nash has been warned that Joe is a troublemaker but has experienced no trouble with him to date.

**Mr. Nash:** You can’t come in the hall now. You know students aren’t allowed in here at this time.

**Joe [staring belligerently]:** I want some water.

**Mr. Nash:** You have to wait until the bell sounds. [Joe, ignoring Mr. Nash, walks to the water fountain and gets a drink.]

**Mr. Nash:** I told you you couldn’t get water.
Joe [insolently]: I’ve already gotten it. [Mr. Nash says nothing more, and Joe walks outside.]

Shortly after this incident, Mr. Nash goes to the principal to obtain information about Joe. From Joe’s disciplinary file, Mr. Nash discovers that he has been a problem through the years. He learns that Joe once threatened a teacher, has a reputation for fighting, and lacks respect for authority. Scholastically, Joe appears to be average. Mr. Nash also learns that Joe lives with his grandmother, that he never knew his father, and that his mother died when he was 8 years old. His grandmother is unable to discipline him, but she is concerned and cooperates with the school.

A few days later Joe comes to Mr. Nash’s class late, expecting to be sent out for being tardy. Joe takes his assigned seat in the back of the classroom and pulls out a comic book. He glances at Mr. Nash as though daring him to say something, but Mr. Nash calmly ignores him and teaches the class. At the end of class, Mr. Nash calls for the papers that have been assigned. All the students except Joe hand them in. Mr. Nash says nothing as Joe walks by without his paper.

The next day Joe is on time for class. However, instead of taking his assigned seat, he sits in another student’s seat.

Brenda: Get out of my seat, Joe! [As Joe looks at her daringly, Brenda approaches Mr. Nash in the front of the room.]

Brenda: Joe’s in my seat.

Mr. Nash: Joe, you know where your seat is. Will you please sit where you belong?

Joe: I’ll sit where I want to.
Mr. Nash: You’ll sit where you are supposed to sit or we’ll go to see the principal. [Joe grudgingly goes to his seat. An hour later, the class is dismissed.]

Mr. Nash: Joe, will you stay after class for a few minutes? [Joe hesitates, then comes to the front of the room.]

Mr. Nash: Joe, what happened to the assignment that was due yesterday?
Joe: I didn’t get around to doing it. I’ll turn it in later.

Mr. Nash: Why did you sit in Brenda’s seat? I thought you and Brenda got along pretty well.

Joe: I was having a little fun with her, that’s all. [Mr. Nash dismisses him.]

A week later Mr. Nash is in charge of admitting students to a football game. Joe walks in without paying, and Mr. Nash follows him.

Mr. Nash: You know you’re supposed to pay?
Joe: So what?

Mr. Nash: I can’t let you in without a ticket.

Joe ignores Mr. Nash and bolts into the stadium. The incident is reported to the principal, and Joe is escorted from the game. Joe’s grandmother is called in by the principal the next day. She describes Joe as a problem at home also.

The next day in the teachers’ lounge during Mr. Nash’s planning period, several teachers are discussing Joe’s conduct.

Mr. Nash: I’m concerned about Joe. I think he has a serious problem, and we should do something to help him.

Mr. Evans [the shop teacher]: I haven’t had trouble with Joe in my class. In fact, he’s one of my better students.
Mr. King [the math teacher]: He’s always late for my class, and I won’t let him in. You’re just wasting your time on Joe.

Later, Mr. Nash meets Joe in the hall.

Mr. Nash: Come into my room; Joe, I’d like to talk to you for a minute.

Joe: What’s the matter? I didn’t do anything wrong.

Mr. Nash: I think you’re capable of doing good work, Joe. So, what seems to be the problem?

Joe: I don’t have a problem. Nobody’s gonna tell me what to do.

Mr. Nash: If you’re going to be a part of this school, you have to obey the rules, just like everyone else.

Joe: I’m not like everyone else.

Whether you teach in the early elementary grades, middle school, junior high, or high school, you will encounter learners like Joe. They are puzzling, complex, challenging, and frustrating to teach. They often show widely divergent patterns of behavior at different times and defy simple solutions.

Learners like Joe confront us with difficult questions. Are there enduring personality traits such as self-esteem, anxiety, and the need to challenge others that affect a person’s behavior in the same way in all situations? Or is personality simply the way a person behaves in particular situations?

Like Joe, many children show a general pattern of behavior in most situations with exceptions in others. Some children, for example, are angry and uncooperative in some instances but cooperative and willing in others. How do these tendencies develop? How does a learner establish an ability to get along with others, gain self-confidence, and acquire moral and ethical behavior?

The role you play in your learners’ personal and social development is as important in your teaching as your role in cognitive development. To what lengths
should you go in the classroom to meet the affective needs of your learners? Should you view yourself primarily as a subject matter specialist who delivers effective lessons? Or should effective teaching include creating an atmosphere for learning in which all your students can feel comfortable and confident? These are some questions we will examine in this chapter.

In Chapter 2 we addressed two basic questions:

1. What are the basic processes underlying development?
2. How can we better understand the cognitive developmental challenges that learners confront in school?

In this chapter we will examine two related but different questions:

1. How do children develop the ability to learn important personal-social behaviors that allow them to acquire a healthy attitude about themselves, form successful relationships with peers and adults, and behave ethically and morally?
2. How can teachers enhance self-esteem, the ability to get along with others, and ethical and moral behavior?

Three Theories of Personal-Social Development

While Joe’s behavior can be examined from a variety of theories, we will study three in particular that are among the most discussed and researched. These are the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic theories of personality and affective development. Let’s review the basic ideas of these theories:

- *Biological theory* holds that differences in how we feel about ourselves, get along with others, and acquire a moral conscience are due largely to temperaments that we inherit from our parents (Bee, 1995).
• **Social learning theory** holds that personality differences are acquired through the learning process, in particular the process of modeling (Bandura, 1977b, 1986).

• **Psychoanalytic theory** holds that personality differences are the result of the complex interplay of maturational forces, cognitive development, and experience (Freud, 1905, 1965).

In this section we will explore each of these three explanations for how learners develop affectively and consider why Joe might have behaved the way he did.

The Biological Approach

The biological approach, as applied to personal-social development, holds that we inherit certain traits, or temperaments, from our parents. These temperaments describe certain predictable patterns of behavior or behavioral styles that we display in the presence of certain people, places, and events (Carey, 1981). One such temperament is **activity level**. Some individuals can be described as being energetic, up-tempo, vigorous, and having stamina and endurance, while others are low-key, laid-back, and lethargic. Your activity level can be traced to basic physiological processes, which are largely inherited (Buss & Plomin, 1986).

**Adaptability** to new experiences is another temperament that may be inherited (Thomas & Chess, 1977). Some of us are quick to adjust to new places and people, while others are slow to adapt and are more cautious when placed in strange and unfamiliar surroundings.

A third behavioral style or temperament is **emotionality**. Emotionality describes the degree to which individuals become quickly upset, fearful, or angry (Buss, 1989). Emotionality, along with activity level and adaptability, is assumed
to be rooted in physiological processes that persist throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Bee, 1995).

Temperaments affect not only the way individuals react to their environment but also how people in the environment react to individuals with these traits. Sociable children seek out and in turn are sought by other sociable children. Conversely, temperamentally difficult children often elicit high rates of criticism and punishment from their parents and teachers.

Supporting Evidence. Temperament research is a relatively new and controversial field within developmental psychology. Psychologists often compare identical twins, who have identical biological inheritance, and fraternal twins, who share only half their genes, to obtain support for the hereditarian approach. Buss and Plomin (1986) have shown that identical twins reared apart are more similar to one another in emotionality, adaptability, and activity level than are fraternal twins reared together. Furthermore, there is some evidence that certain aspects of emotionality, adaptability, and activity level remain relatively constant as children get older (Heguik, McDevitt, & Carey, 1982).

A Biological Analysis of Joe. If we were to examine Joe’s behavior from a biological perspective, we would identify certain traits that Joe possesses. For example, he appears to have a hard time getting along with others (adaptability) and becomes easily upset (emotionality). Biological theorists would then speculate that either or both of Joe’s parents displayed similar temperaments and that Joe inherited these traits from them. They would examine Joe’s school records for further evidence that Joe has exhibited this behavioral style over a number of years. Finally, they would analyze the persistence of Joe’s problem in terms of the types of peers he is attracted to and the high rates of negative reactions he gets from peers and adults because of his temperament.
The Social Learning Approach

The basic assumption underlying social learning theory is that children learn and develop cognitively and affectively by observing others. We can treat social learning theory as a developmental theory because it views cognitive and affective development as dependent on the cumulative effects of three important events: (1) maturation of the child’s increasing perceptual and physical abilities, (2) exposure to the increasingly complex verbal and physical behavior of models (parents, siblings, friends, teachers), and (3) an increasing ability to attend, recall, imitate, and be motivated.

In Chapter 2 we explained how children acquire new intellectual skills through social learning (Vygotsky, 1962). Children also learn affective skills through the same processes. For example, how do children learn how to take turns during a game? According to social learning theory, when children go to preschool, the skillful teacher calls their attention to the rules for playing certain games. She models taking turns and points out and praises other children who do the same. She then coaches her learners during the game to take turns and praises them for doing so. The child learns not only the behavioral skill of taking turns but also the expectation that taking turns will please others and that she can become good at it.

According to Bandura (1986), children learn social skills through a fundamental developmental process called modeling. **Modeling** involves being attentive to, remembering, imitating, and being rewarded by people, television, movies, books, and magazines. According to the social learning perspective, a child is popular not because he inherited a particular temperament but because, through modeling, he learned the behaviors involved in making and keeping friends. He also learned beliefs about the importance of friends, standards for what it means to have good friends, expectations that his efforts to make friends would be rewarded, and beliefs about his own ability to be liked by his peers.
The child who is unpopular, on the other hand, probably has not been exposed to appropriate models and has learned behaviors that repel rather than attract other children. Furthermore, she expects to be unsuccessful at making friends, has acquired a set of standards regarding who are and are not considered to be friends, and perceives herself to be someone who is not popular—someone who just can’t make friends.

Bandura believes that the important developmental tasks that a child must master from infancy to adolescence are acquired through the social learning process. According to this theory, as children observe people and attend to the media, they are learning how to establish relationships, get along with others, acquire appropriate sex roles, and behave morally and ethically. Along with learning these behaviors, they are learning important ideas, expectations (the expected benefits to them for acting certain ways), internal standards (by seeing and hearing the standards by which others evaluate their actions), and self-concept (which Bandura refers to as perceived self-efficacy).

Supporting Evidence. Bandura and his followers support their theories with an extensive research base, which has accumulated over 25 years of skillfully and creatively designed studies. They have demonstrated how children become more or less aggressive depending on which models they observe (Bandura, 1973). They have also shown that the standards by which children judge the effectiveness of their own performances and those of others can be influenced by social learning processes (Zimmerman & Ringle, 1981). In addition, the extent to which learners monitor their own behavior, evaluate themselves, and praise themselves can be altered through observation of models (Glynn & Thomas, 1974; Glynn, Thomas, & Shee, 1973). Bandura also presents data showing that models can affect how competent or capable children think they are in performing tasks of varying
difficulty (Bandura, 1982b). We will address the important role of modeling and its implications for instruction in Chapter 10. For now, let’s see what social learning theory would say about Joe’s behavior.

A Social Learning Analysis of Joe. Social learning theorists would note that Joe displays aggressive behavior toward both peers and adults. They would attribute his aggressiveness to two factors: (1) He has learned this behavior by observing aggressive models (others who physically discipline him), and (2) he has never learned the skills necessary to get along with peers and adults.

Joe also has low expectations for success in academic and social tasks. These expectations have developed through years of experiencing failure and social rejection. Each time he encounters failure, hostility from peers, or anger from teachers, his expectations are confirmed. His dislike of teachers and other authority figures prevents them from serving as role models of appropriate behavior and attitudes.

Joe’s low expectations and lack of self-efficacy in academic and social settings also prevent him from learning new ways to behave around others. Joe only attracts, and is attracted to, certain types of peers. Consequently, his ability to socially learn appropriate skills, beliefs, attitudes, and expectations is limited.

The Psychoanalytic Approach

The psychoanalytic approach to personal-social development shares some characteristics with the biological and social learning approaches. Like biological theory, this approach, as we learned in Chapter 2, emphasizes that children are born with certain instinctual tendencies or drives. For Erikson (1950/1963) the genetic tendency that is most important for understanding personal-social
development is the drive for identity. Although we are used to thinking of drives as sexual or life preserving, Erikson’s drive for identity is a cognitive one.

Like social learning theory, Erikson’s theory emphasizes the role played by the environment (particularly child-rearing processes) as it interacts with an innate drive for identity. Erikson’s approach is also developmental: he holds that personality gradually develops over time as a result of the interactions between physical maturation, inborn drives, and experiences with the environment.

Unlike the biological and social learning approaches, however, Erikson’s psychoanalytic approach is a theory of stages of identity. You were introduced to a stage theory in the previous chapter, when we studied the views of Piaget. Like any stage theory of development, Erikson’s proposes that personal-social development proceeds through a series of age-related stages, some of which were identified in Chapter 2 (see Figure 2.1). Each of these stages has a central task or need that must be met before the child can enter the next stage. The stages unfold in a fixed order or sequence, which all psychologically healthy individuals follow over the life span.

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development. According to Erikson, the inborn drive for identity is the engine that powers personality development. By a “drive for identity,” Erikson means the need each person has to know who he or she really is. This search is a lifelong quest. It starts in infancy, when you begin to form a personality as a result of your relationship with your parents. As you grew older, you expanded your relationships to encompass a wider and wider community of people, and you encountered increasingly complex social situations such as play groups, classrooms, team sports, dances, proms, and marital ceremonies. Your personality developed as a result of these encounters, as you continually attempted to solve the riddle of who you really are.
Erikson believes that as we grow older and experience new people and situations, we confront a series of identity crises. Each of Erikson’s eight stages of psychosocial development challenges us with a unique identity crisis, out of which healthy personality development occurs. If these crises are successfully met and resolved, the personality becomes strong and vigorous and better able to meet the challenge of the next stage or crisis. If, however, we fail to meet the challenge presented at one stage of development, we will be unprepared to meet the challenges of all subsequent stages. Erikson uses the metaphor of the “struggle to overcome identity crises” to explain the principal mechanism of personality development. His eight identity crises are described in the following sections and summarized in Table 3.1.

**Stage 1: Infancy—Basic Trust Versus Mistrust.** The infant spends her first year of life meeting the challenge of developing a sense of basic trust regarding the world around her. Depending on how her parents care for her, her response to their efforts, and her maturing physical capabilities, the infant will view the world as a predictable place that she can influence (basic trust), or a chaotic and unpredictable place over which she has little or no power (mistrust).

**Stage 2: Toddlerhood—Autonomy Versus Shame and Doubt.** During this stage the child develops the abilities to walk and to explore the environment. She learns to control biological needs for toileting and feeding. She can leave this stage with a sense of independence and autonomy or with feelings of shame about her failures and doubts regarding her ability to master her environment.

**Stage 3: Early Childhood—Initiative Versus Guilt.** During this stage the child’s physical capabilities allow for greater freedom of movement, her cognitive abilities allow for greater language facility and the ability to control her environment through questions and requests, and her increasing abstract
capabilities allow for greater use of imagination and symbolic play. These developing abilities and her parents’ and teachers’ reactions to them can create in her a strong sense of initiative: a desire to explore and to learn new things. On the other hand, if adults suppress, control, or ridicule the child’s attempts to explore and take risks, she will react by developing feelings of guilt.

**Stage 4: School Age—Industry Versus Inferiority.** School places three important demands on children: to master academic tasks, to get along with others, and to follow the rules of the classroom. Children who succeed at these developmental tasks develop a sense of industry or competence (or, as Bandura would say, self-efficacy). Children who fail at these tasks acquire a basic sense of inferiority: they believe and expect that they can’t do anything right.

**Stage 5: Adolescence—Identity Versus Role Confusion.** Adolescence is the time when a child draws upon all previous affective accomplishments and establishes a strong sense of who she is and who she hopes to be. If the child has successfully negotiated all prior identity crises, she enters adolescence with the belief that she is in control of her life and free to become whatever she chooses; with a willingness to meet new people, places, and events; and with expectations for success in whatever she tries. At this stage the child acquires not only a clear sexual identity but also an occupational identity. She adopts an appropriate sex role and realizes who and what she wants to be. If, however, the adolescent enters this stage having failed to resolve earlier identity crises, she will be unable to cope with the many physical and social changes that inevitably confront her. As a result, she will leave this stage confused about who she is and what she will become.

**Stages 6–8: The Adult Stages.** Adulthood confronts us with three final crises: intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and ego integrity versus
despair. While your learners will not have to confront these crises during their school years, you as a growing and developing adult will.

Before summarizing some of the evidence supporting psychoanalytic theory, we believe it is important to add that by identifying “crises” in terms of opposites (trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame), Erikson did not intend to imply that the ideal place to be at the end of any given stage necessarily and exclusively is with more trust, autonomy, initiative, or industry, and so forth. Both children and adults need a healthy mistrust, a healthy sense of needing other people, a healthy sense of caution in new circumstances, and a healthy realization of their limitations. In other words, it is the proper degree of each opposite that contributes to a healthy personality.

Supporting Evidence. Psychoanalytic theory is difficult to research. Its concepts and principles are general, metaphorical, and descriptive rather than analytic, and therefore they do not easily lend themselves to the methods of scientific validation. Thus, research projects designed to investigate the mechanisms underlying Erikson’s approach are rare. However, research on the effects of divorce on young children (Allison & Furstenburg, 1989; Doherty & Needle, 1991; Wallerstein, 1984, 1989) shows that children of divorced parents, in comparison with children who have not experienced divorce, are at greater risk for depression, substance abuse, and emotional and behavioral disturbance. Similarly, research by Sroufe (1983, 1988) and Erickson, Sroufe, and Egeland (1985) suggests that infants and toddlers who are securely attached to their mothers when they enter preschool are better able to get along with peers, make new friends, and act sociably than less securely bonded infants and toddlers.

A Psychoanalytic Analysis of Joe. Joe’s behavior suggests that he is overly aggressive, distrustful of adults, and lacking self-confidence and self-esteem. He
was without his natural parents throughout much of his life and was raised by his grandmother. Some of this disruption may have occurred during the identity crisis of basic trust versus mistrust. If so, we can assume that Joe entered the toddler and early childhood stage of his life without a sense of control over his environment and with a basic distrust of people. The difficulty he experienced at this stage of development may have created feelings of shame and doubt. Having failed to resolve the crises of the first two stages of life, Joe may have entered his early childhood and school-age years uncertain of his abilities, overly dependent on adults for approval, and with low self-esteem.

A Synthesis of Theories of Personal-Social Development

Helen Bee (1995) combines the major processes of development stressed in the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic theories into a single model of psychosocial development. Figure 3.1 represents her integrative view of the three theories of development studied in this chapter. Let’s look more closely at this model of personal-social development.

Bee believes that any attempt to understand personal-social development must begin with a consideration of the child’s inborn temperament. Arrow 1 represents the direct, causative effects of inborn traits on the eventual personality that we see in the child. According to Bee, the child’s temperament represents an initial and permanent influence on the formation of personality. But the effect of temperament alone, as represented by Arrow 1, is insufficient to account for personality and individual behavior. Arrow 2, therefore, represents the direct effects on personality and behavior stemming from child-rearing practices and modeling processes.
What we think of as personality, however, is more than the product of these two forces. Arrow 3 represents the direct effect of the child’s temperament on the family. Not only does temperament influence personality directly, but reciprocal influences involving the child’s self-image occur. Arrow 4 represents the reciprocal influence of self-image and the family environment. Arrow 5 represents the reciprocal influence of self-image and personality. Thus, the child’s self-image can shape as well as be shaped by personality and the family environment.

To add further to the forces that shape personality, we must remember that the child and his family are part of a larger system, consisting of the workplace, neighborhood, and larger community. Thus the family’s ability to provide the stable and supportive environment essential to the development of basic trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, and identity may be affected by the economy, parental job satisfaction, and the social support networks available to the family (Arrow 6). Finally, Bee includes Arrow 7 to remind us that the child’s personality and behavior not only are molded by how his parents behave but also shape the behavior of the parents. The child’s attitudes, expectations, and behavior affect those who choose to be around, listen to, and play with him, and to some extent help determine who those people will be. A happy, self-confident child influences people to react in a supportive, loving manner. This, in turn, strengthens the child’s behavior. By the same token, a sullen, unhappy, and distrustful child will cause parents and siblings to react negatively. Their reactions in turn may serve to maintain and even strengthen the negative attitudes, expectations, and behaviors of the child.
A Comprehensive Developmental Perspective of Joe

Bee’s attempt to integrate the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic approaches underscores the complexity of affective development and cautions us against simplistic explanations for the behavior of someone as complex as Joe. Joe’s behavior can become more positive and socially acceptable. In order to help bring this about, we must understand his problems in all their complexity. Thus, any attempt to help Joe must acknowledge certain facts:

- Joe was born with certain temperaments or dispositions, which will always be an important part of his personality and behavior. However, the extent to which these impair Joe’s development can be moderated by his environment.

- Joe’s beliefs about people and himself have been shaped over a long period of time. While these beliefs can change, we must recognize that throughout his life Joe has been exposed to few models of socially acceptable behavior.

- Joe’s current behavior causes reactions by peers and adults that only strengthen this behavior and confirm his attitudes, beliefs, and expectations of himself and those around him. It will not be sufficient for people to change how they act toward Joe. Joe must also change how he acts toward them.

- Joe has learned to approach his environment with a sense of mistrust. Any efforts to help Joe must deal with both his feelings of distrust and his attempts to frustrate those efforts.

With these perspectives of affective development as background, let’s turn our attention to three important dimensions of this development: self-esteem, social relationships, and social cognition.
Self-esteem

**Teacher:** Can you look at me when we talk, Angela?

**Angela:** I don’t want to look at you. I hate myself. [Angela shifts a little in teacher’s direction.]

**Teacher:** I’m sorry you didn’t get the grade you wanted. I think you may have to accept that this is a difficult course for you.

**Angela:** You think I should accept a D? You think a D is a good grade? I’ll never be satisfied with a D!

**Teacher:** You make it sound as though I just made up your grade. You know I spend a lot of time on grades. I didn’t give you a higher grade because you didn’t earn one.

**Angela:** [pausing to think]: Oh, I guess you’re right. It doesn’t matter anyway. I’m not going to be here after this year. (Adapted from Ryan, 1992, p. 104)

Some educators and psychologists, when attempting to explain Angela’s problems in school, might end up concluding that low self-esteem is at the root of them. Although it stands to reason that Angela’s feelings about herself and her school achievement are related, the exact nature of this relationship is unclear. Did Angela’s low self-esteem cause her to do poorly in school, or did poor achievement come first and low self-esteem follow?

Conventional wisdom holds that if children like themselves, they will make good choices for themselves. They will be good students, avoid drugs, listen to their parents and teachers, and make wise decisions about friends. This belief in the value of high self-esteem has compelled many school districts to add the development of self-esteem to their lists of school goals. At the same time, there is less agreement among educators and psychologists concerning the nature of self-
esteem and how to improve it. The exact nature of self-esteem, how it develops, what accounts for differences in self-esteem among children, and its relationship to classroom achievement are the focus of this section.

Self-concept and Self-esteem

Self-concept and self-esteem are different, although many educators and psychologists use these terms interchangeably. **Self-concept** is best thought of as a *schema* or cognitive structure (a term we discussed in the previous chapter). As adults we organize our self-schemata or concepts to include a host of beliefs, feelings, and attitudes about ourselves. Some of these concepts are general (we are people, we are human beings, we have an existence outside our mind), while some are more specific. For example, we have beliefs, feelings, and attitudes about ourselves as students, workers, husbands, men, women, weekend athletes, country-western dancers, and so forth.

Like all schemata, our self-schema develops over time (Bee, 1995). The young child’s self-schema is primitive and undifferentiated but includes some vague notions that he or she has an existence that is separate from others. Gradually, this schema changes. The developing child organizes her self-schema to include awareness of her sex, size, skills, likes, and dislikes. School experiences add to this schema, which gradually comes to include ideas of self (“I’m a girl”), individual (“I like sports”), and person (“I’m the athletic type”). During adolescence, according to Erikson, the self-schema takes on a future dimension as the person thinks about who she is becoming in terms of sexual, occupational, and ideological dimensions.

**Self-esteem** is a global evaluation or judgment of one’s self-worth. When Angela declares that she hates herself, she opens up a window to her self-esteem.
She indicates that she does not like who she perceives herself to be—whatever that perception may be. Harter (1988, 1990) tells us that children who make these global judgments do so on the basis of a perceived discrepancy between who they are and who they would like to be. Thus a child with low self-esteem has a standard of who she would like to be and perceives herself as not living up to that standard. She values some skill or quality and judges that she has little of it. She thinks that it is important to be good at some activity, such as a sport, and perceives that she is not good at it. The child with high self-esteem is satisfied with herself. She values something, has a standard to live up to, and judges that she has met that standard.

Thus, according to Harter, part of one’s global judgment of self-worth, or self-esteem, is a quality or skill, or standard of performance, and a perception of how well this standard is met. A perception of discrepancy is responsible for low self-esteem. A child who values gymnastics but lacks the right body type will have lower self-esteem than a child with a similar body type who dislikes this sport. By the same token, being good at something you don’t value will not boost your self-esteem.

Figure 3.2 summarizes the dimensions of self-esteem. The horizontal plane represents a continuum of value that a child places on a particular attribute. The vertical plane represents the child’s perception of the extent to which he possesses that attribute. Quadrants A and D have no effect on self-esteem because the child either possesses an attribute he does not value or lacks an attribute he holds no value for. Quadrant B represents a context for high self-esteem. The child both values an attribute and perceives that he possesses it to a high degree. Quadrant C, however, represents low self-esteem, because the child perceives that he has little of an attribute that he values highly.
The Development of Self-esteem

Because self-esteem involves a judgment, a value, and a standard, it is very difficult to assess self-esteem in children before the age of 7 or 8. But as children become firmly embedded in Piaget’s concrete operational stage (ages 7–11), they become better able to think abstractly about themselves. Thus, 8- and 9-year-olds routinely make judgments about how well they like themselves, how happy they are, and how well they think their lives are going (Bee, 1995).

Self-esteem can take a nosedive as children enter adolescence (ages 11–13). Jacquelynne Eccles and her colleagues (Eccles, Lord, & Midgley, 1991) report a pronounced downward spiral in school achievement, motivation, and self-esteem as children enter junior high school. This is often referred to as the “seventh-grade slump.”

Simmons and her colleagues (Simmons, Burgeson, Carlton-Ford, & Blyth, 1987) attribute this drop in self-esteem and achievement to the cumulative effect of all the changes that confront the child at this time. Since self-esteem involves a comparison of the self with a standard, any change in standards without a concurrent change in the skills the child needs to meet those standards can cause a drop in self-esteem.

Around the ages of 11 to 13, children can experience puberty, a change in schools, early dating, and sometimes a move to a new location or a family disruption. These changes bring about a rapid change in both the child’s and society’s expectations. But the new expectations or standards occur far faster than the child’s ability to learn new skills to meet them. Thus, an 11- to 13-year-old child’s perception of a discrepancy between what he is and what he thinks he should be can cause a decline in self-esteem.

Once the child’s skill development catches up with the changing standards, self-esteem starts to rise again. Studies of self-esteem that follow teenagers
throughout their school and college years show a steady improvement in perceptions of self-worth. Generally, 18- and 20-year-olds feel better about themselves than they did when they were 12- and 14-year-olds (McCarthy & Hoge, 1982; O’Malley & Bachman, 1983).

Harter’s research shows not only that children differ from one another in their self-esteem but also that a child’s self-esteem at one point in life may differ from that at another point (Harter, 1990). When a child’s standards change, and the child becomes either more or less skillful at meeting those standards, self-esteem will shift. To what can we attribute differences in self-esteem both between and within individual children? Why do children have different standards, and when do these standards change?

Parents, teachers, and peers play a major role in the development of self-esteem. The degree to which the child’s teachers, parents, or friends value athletics over academics, for example, can affect the child’s own expectations in that area. Likewise, if parents and teachers place a high value on appearance, this will affect the child’s standards as well. Since self-esteem involves a comparison between what children value and what they actually perceive themselves doing, children’s perceptions of their own competence often account for large differences in self-esteem among children. These differences will be based on the child’s direct experience of success or failure in the classroom, on dates, or during contests, and on what adults or peers say about that success or failure. Questioning a child’s ability to perform, for example, may cause the child to see a greater discrepancy between what he can do and what he thinks he ought to do. The greater this discrepancy, the lower will be the child’s self-esteem. Given the importance of teacher, parental, and peer statements about a child’s competence or self-esteem (and assuming that the child values the skill that is being commented on), some instructional arrangements, such as certain types of ability groupings,
may have potentially harmful effects on self-esteem. This occurs because such groupings can cause children to perceive a greater discrepancy than actually exists between what they are and what they think they should be (Good & Stipek, 1983). See the accompanying box, *Steps to Promoting Self-esteem in Your Classroom*.

Physical Development and Self-esteem

As stated above, the gap between the value a learner places on some skill or quality and her perception of how much of that skill or quality she possesses is a principal determinant of self-esteem. Physical development can widen or narrow this gap and consequently plays a prominent role in a learner’s self-esteem. It does this in several ways.

First, the child’s growth makes new behaviors and skills possible. Before a child can write legibly, express thoughts in sketches, ride a bike, walk a balance beam, sink a foul shot, or do a backward somersault, certain physical changes are required. When these changes come late for a particular child, so too will the learning of those new behaviors that require the changes. Thus, the slow-maturing first-grader who finds himself on a soccer team with fast-maturing peers will perceive a significant discrepancy between what he values (dribbling through the defense and scoring a goal) and what he can actually do. The same holds true for slow maturers on the middle school or high school track or basketball team, and at the high school dance.

Second, the child’s growth plays an important role in determining the opportunities and experiences necessary to learn new behaviors. The slow-growing child may never achieve skill in basketball because she’s too small to make the team and therefore cannot benefit from the coaching and training. The uncoordinated child may be steered away from the gymnastics that he values, or
the small child may find that he’s discouraged from trying out for the football team.

Third, physical growth affects how others respond to the child. Children who are attractive, tall, and well coordinated receive more attention from teachers and adults than do children who are short, physically unattractive, and clumsy (Langlois & Stephan, 1981). Parents and teachers who place value on a particular physical skill, physical attractiveness, size, or artistic ability requiring physical skill will affect the learner’s own expectations for himself or herself in those same areas. In the case of slow learners, this only serves to increase the gap between the quality that is valued and the amount of that quality that the learner perceives she possesses, and a drop in self-esteem is inevitable.

Are there long-term consequences to slow growth and maturation? Livson and Pes-kin (1980) present data showing that in adulthood, late-maturing boys showed signs of less social ease, less self-control, more uncooperativeness, and greater impulsivity than did earlier-maturing peers. Despite these data, other long-term follow-up observations of both boys and girls have shown improvements in self-esteem, self-confidence, social skill, and cognitive competence (Macfarlane, 1971).

Self-esteem and Academic Achievement

The assumption that self-esteem exerts a direct effect on school achievement has led many school districts to develop explicit goals and programs to foster its improvement (Beane, 1991). However, the research supporting this assumption is equivocal. Several studies have shown a relationship between self-esteem and school success (Hansford & Hattie, 1982; Metcalfe, 1981; Purkey, 1970; Reynolds, 1980), but they leave unresolved the question of which came first. As we have seen from our discussion, perceptions of self-worth are enhanced by
successful experiences in areas in which a student places value. Nevertheless, despite the lack of conclusive research linking self-esteem and school achievement, many believe that the enhancement of self-esteem is a worthwhile goal in and of itself. Whether or not there are links between self-esteem and school achievement in the short term, the former is related to the development of a positive attitude, sociability, and adaptability, and to other traits that in turn may, over time, influence school achievement (Kash & Borich, 1978).

The most important issue, however, is not whether you should try to enhance your learners’ self-esteem, but how to do so. Given the complexity of self-esteem and the subjective factors involved (what is valued, a standard of performance, and a judgment of discrepancy), we as teachers do well to be cautious about efforts to enhance self-esteem that ask children to simply repeat that they like themselves, or about a self-esteem curriculum that disregards the individual and idiosyncratic nature of each child. On the other hand, schools and teachers can play a major role in enhancing self-esteem by designing instructional arrangements that allow for cooperative learning (which we will study in Chapter 7), congruent communication (Chapter 8), heterogeneous grouping (Chapter 11), and performance assessment (Chapter 13). In other words, self-esteem should be viewed as something the child constructs for him- or herself over time by living and learning in an emotionally and intellectually supportive environment.

Social Relationships

Rebecca is a fifth-grader. She is a good student and is involved in a variety of activities, including music, soccer, and writing. Here is Rebecca’s “take” on the importance of social relationships throughout her elementary school years:
Interviewer: What can you remember about friendships and social relationships when you first started school?

Rebecca: Well, in kindergarten and first grade everything is sort of loose. It’s your first year with a big group of kids in a real class in a “real school.” Everybody feels real proud of themselves. You don’t worry about boy-girl stuff or about cliques or anything.

Interviewer: What about popularity?

Rebecca: There’s popular and unpopular but you don’t know it...you don’t know the words. Popular would be like someone who doesn’t have to worry about getting a turn at the paint easel. Unpopular would be someone who sort of has to cut in and be a little obnoxious to get their chance.

Interviewer: Do things change in second grade?

Rebecca: In second grade you start realizing that it’s not just who is nice and who isn’t. You start to notice how kids dress and who combs their hair or not. You become more conscious about what you say.

Interviewer: And what happens next?

Rebecca: When you’re in third grade there really are groups...there were fads and if you didn’t go along with them you weren’t right.

Interviewer: And in fourth grade?

Rebecca: By fourth grade you have already formed solid groups and those groups are kept. You aren’t going to be friends with somebody that’s really obnoxious or who is in the lowest group forever.

Interviewer: What if you like a kid who is not popular?

Rebecca: You have to even out how you divide your time between the popular and unpopular kids if you want to avoid getting permanently in one group. The kids are just beginning to be really cruel to the unpopular kids. It’s awfully hard to speak up for someone who is getting teased, because
you don’t know whether you will get someone to back you up or whether you will be alone.

**Interviewer:** Not a very good situation.

Rebecca: It’s funny. We’re all friends but underneath there’s a lot of tension. (From Seifert & Hoffnung, 1987, pp. 550–551.)

Although children like Rebecca know the importance of social relationships for happiness and adjustment in school, only in the last two decades have psychologists begun to appreciate and study their significance. Developmental and educational psychologists view the establishment of successful relationships with adults and peers as one of the most reliable indicators of happiness and success in school and in later life (Cassidy & Asher, 1992).

Learning how to get along with teachers and classmates is one of the key developmental tasks that learners must master while in school. Successful relationships with parents and teachers, referred to as **vertical relationships** (Hartup, 1989), meet a learner’s needs for safety, security, and protection. Successful relationships with peers, which Hartup refers to as **horizontal relationships**, are of equal developmental significance. They meet a learner’s needs for belonging and allow her to acquire and practice the important social skills of cooperation, competition, and intimacy (Bee, 1995).

**Vertical Relationships**

If you establish successful vertical relationships with your learners, you will notice that they:

- follow verbal requests
- imitate or model themselves after adults
- respond to praise and compliments
• seek to please
• view adults as available, reliable, and helpful
• desire to be around adults in times of trouble
• feel secure when adults are present
• want adults to teach them new things
• are willing to take chances

Hartup (1989) believes that children construct a **schema of attachment** as a result of their relationships with adults. This schema influences children’s expectations and behavior regarding vertical relationships. Just as we hope that children develop a self-schema that contributes to their feelings of self-esteem, so too do we hope that children develop attachment schemata that promote positive expectations of, and positive behavior toward, parents and teachers.

Some learners, however, come to school without such a schema. They mistrust teachers. They feel insecure and threatened around them. They believe that teachers are unreliable, undependable, capricious, arbitrary, and untrustworthy (McQueen, 1992). Consequently, they are noncompliant and unresponsive to praise and encouragement; they couldn’t care less about pleasing their teachers. Let’s see how a child constructs such a schema or working model of attachment.

The Development of Vertical Relationships. Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980, 1988) and Ainsworth (1972, 1982, 1989) attribute such negative schemata to a child’s failure to develop affectional bonds and attachment to an adult (either parent or both parents or a caregiver) during infancy. **Affectional bonds** are long-lasting ties between a child and a parent. The child experiences the parent as a unique individual who cannot simply be replaced with someone else.

Out of these affectional bonds grows a state of **attachment**, an internal feeling that the parent is a safe, reliable, ever-present individual and a secure base from
which the child can explore the environment. In contrast, the failure to develop affectional bonds and attachments results in feelings or internal states characterized by insecurity and mistrust of relationships. Infants and toddlers who develop internal working models or schemata of social relationships characterized by mistrust of adults sometimes enter school exhibiting antisocial behavior.

Bowlby’s and Ainsworth’s explanations for how relationships are formed come from the psychoanalytic tradition. As Bee’s model of personality formation suggests, temperament and social learning processes also are at work. The more important question is this: What are the long-term effects of the vertical relationship schema?

Effects of Vertical Relationships on Your Learners. Table 3.2 summarizes current knowledge about the long-term effects of affectional bonds and secure attachments (Bee, 1995). It summarizes the results of numerous studies of preschool and elementary school children who were rated as securely or insecurely attached to their mothers as infants. The available evidence lends strong support to the hypothesis that early attachments exert a strong influence on learners’ ability to form later successful relationships with their teachers.

Although results such as those in Table 3.2 suggest less desirable outcomes for poorly attached infants, this is not necessarily the case. As we will see in Chapters 4 through 6, on learning, the affective as well as the cognitive dimensions of learners are flexible. Just as schemata or models are constructed out of early childhood experiences, so can they be altered by later ones.

Horizontal Relationships

Most theories of affective development assign a central role to vertical relationships, particularly the social learning and psychoanalytic approaches. But
that emphasis may be changing. Just as we are beginning to appreciate the role of social relationships in cognitive development, thanks to theorists such as Vygotsky (see Chapter 2), the unique effects of peer relationships in affective development are beginning to be appreciated as well.

Psychologists who study the developmental significance of peer relationships are particularly interested in what happens to children between the ages of 3, when they are still completely dependent on adults, and later adolescence, when they are almost completely independent of them. From the work of researchers such as Willard Hartup, it is now clear that children learn cooperation, healthy competition, and the ability to establish intimacy with others not only through vertical relationships but through horizontal ones as well (Hartup, 1989).

The Development of Horizontal Relationships. Horizontal relationships first appear at about the age of 3. Although infants as young as 6 months show positive interests in other infants, and toddlers are often found playing with one another, they begin to express a true preference for peer companionship only during early childhood.

Thus, the foundation for successful peer relationships in elementary school is laid during the preschool years. During this time, children learn to play for longer periods of time with one another, pay attention to rules of equity and fairness, and look for opportunities to do things together rather than apart. Out of these experiences develops a schema that includes rudimentary expectations of loyalty and commitment to friends and a sense of mutual attachment and common interest (Hartup, 1989). Children who enter school with such a friendship schema are more likely to benefit from your efforts to build trusting peer relations than those who don’t.
During the elementary school years we want this friendship schema to accommodate such notions as the importance of finding cooperative solutions during competition, a desire for low-profile modes of conflict resolution, and a forgive-and-forget approach to fights rather than the holding of grudges. Hartup (1989) emphasizes that your learners will develop these friendship-building skills primarily out of the opportunities you provide for mutual play, learning, and problem solving.

Eisenberg (1988, 1990) emphasizes that horizontal relationships not only help children learn how to make friends but also help them develop a set of prosocial behaviors. **Prosocial behaviors** are intentional, voluntary behaviors intended to help another person. We commonly refer to them as *altruistic* behaviors. Children who express sympathy, share a candy bar, help someone clean up a mess, or get a friend to class on time are showing prosocial behaviors. Prosocial behaviors develop primarily out of experiences with horizontal rather than vertical relationships.

As learners enter adolescence and move on to junior and senior high school, they may add the following elements to their friendship schema: (1) a willingness to share feelings and secrets with others, (2) knowledge about the feelings of others, (3) a commitment to loyalty and faithfulness, (4) an attraction toward the opposite sex, and (5) a concern for the norms and expectations of the peer group. Although conventional wisdom and the media seem to suggest that dependence on the peer group is a negative force, in most cases it is a positive one. Adolescence is the period when your learners make the necessary transition from dependence on adults to independence as young adults. Erikson and other developmental psychologists view the peer group as a necessary vehicle for safe passage during this period. So, rather than being abnormal, the intense need of teenagers for
conformity may be a normal and necessary part of the process of developing personal identity and establishing intimacy with other people.

Effects of Horizontal Relationships on Your Learners. As we have emphasized, providing opportunities for learners to establish healthy relationships when they enter school helps them develop skills important in getting along with others, assisting others (altruism), and establishing intimacy. The failure to experience healthy horizontal relationships and to learn friendship-building attitudes, beliefs, intentions, and skills can have undesirable consequences, as Rebecca, in the earlier vignette, clearly described, and as the example of Joe demonstrated. This failure is often described by the terms “unpopularity” and “social rejection.”

Current evidence suggests that rejected children are more likely to be aggressive and disruptive in school (Hartup, 1989), experience intense feelings of loneliness (Cassidy & Asher, 1992), and suffer emotional disturbances in adolescence and adulthood (Dishon, Patterson, Stoolmiller, & Skinner, 1991). Nevertheless, educational psychologists have also shown that, within limits, learners can be taught some of the social skills necessary to gain acceptance by peers (Tharinger & Lambert, 1990). More importantly, by helping your learners construct their own well-functioning horizontal relationships, you eliminate the need to teach them how to acquire these relationships.

Social Cognition

What do they value? A can of hairspray. Materialistic things a lot. And yet they really care a lot about the feelings of other people in class, too—sometimes; sometimes they’re really mean to each other, too. For example,...I had a girl come during the afternoon class who...said she was checking out. “I need to go home.” The other girl said, “Look at that (ugly)
headband she’s got on.” I chewed her out...I was so mad at her. “Do you think every girl was born with a pretty face?” She said, “Well, why are you so mad?” I said, “Because that is so mean, you don’t care at all that you said that loud enough for her to hear.” Some just don’t have feelings that way.  
(Kerrie, seventh-grade teacher, quoted in Bullough, 1989, p. 119)

Kerrie is probably like most teachers. She wants her learners to value the right things. She wants them to be sensitive to one another’s feelings. She becomes upset when they behave thoughtlessly and selfishly, and her reaction to her students’ insensitivity is typical of what many teachers do: she scolds, criticizes, and lectures.

Some developmental and educational psychologists (Bee, 1995; Hartup, 1989; Kohlberg, 1978) suggest that goals for learners should go beyond mere academic achievement and reflect a concern that learners develop moral values, consideration for the feelings of others, and a commitment to social justice. Most educators and parents seem to agree. Increasingly, professional associations for improving teaching and curriculum, such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), recommend that schools develop programs to teach ethics, values, community responsibility, and citizenship (Parker, 1991).

Developmental and educational psychologists have an expression for how children learn to think and become concerned about other people’s actions and feelings, and how they think about what people ought to do: social cognition. When Kerrie expressed concern for what her learners value, and how insensitive some of them are to the feelings of others, she was disturbed about their social cognition: what they know and think about people, relationships, and right and wrong (Bee, 1995). Can teachers like Kerrie have an impact on social cognition? At what age are learners ready to think and alter aspects of their social cognition? What is the relationship between a child’s ability to think about people and what
they should and should not do and the ability to think and reason? Does changing how learners think about social and moral issues affect how they behave?

We will end our study of personal-social development with a discussion of social cognition. We will review the three major areas of social cognition: empathy, from the perspective of Martin Hoffman (1982, 1984, 1988); understanding of relationships, through the ideas of Robert Selman (1980, 1989); and moral judgment and reasoning, from the research of Lawrence Kohlberg (1978) and Carol Gilligan (1982, 1988). In addition, we will summarize what is currently known about the relationship between social cognition and social behavior.

Empathy

Whether you teach elementary, junior high, or senior high school, sooner or later you will say to one of your students, “How would you feel if someone did that to you?” In response to this question, some of your learners will greet you with blank stares, some will show puzzlement, and some will be thoroughly chastened. What you are asking of these learners is **empathy**, the ability to read someone else’s feelings and match them to one’s own. Empathy requires two processes: (1) determining another person’s emotional state and (2) imagining how you would react to a similar emotional state. Empathy is largely a cognitive process, so when you ponder why some children show empathy and others do not, recall what was learned about cognitive development in the previous chapter.

Hoffman believes that empathy develops in stages that roughly parallel the developmental stages of Piaget. Table 3.3 summarizes the changes in children’s ability to empathize as they get older. These changes reflect a learner’s increasing ability to think abstractly, draw inferences, and make deductions about what he or she is observing.
Hoffman’s research on the development and expression of empathy has several implications for teachers concerned with this aspect of their learners’ social cognition. First, a learner’s ability to recognize the emotional state of another and match it to his or her own improves with age and experience. Early elementary school children, although able to recognize that a peer is experiencing distress, have difficulty relating this state to themselves. Second, failure to show empathy can be attributed to the child’s level of cognitive development and to lack of social experiences that promote this development, as well as to social class and cultural differences. Undoubtedly, certain cultures and ethnic groups place different meanings on certain physical gestures and facial expressions. Moreover, different cultures place different values on the importance of interpreting the feelings of others as well as on disclosing one’s own emotions (Bowers & Flinders, 1990).

Social Relationships

“That’s no way to treat a friend!”

“Friends don’t behave like that.”

“That’s no way to make a friend!”

“Come on! Let’s behave like friends.”

If you’ve heard expressions like these, you’ve experienced a second aspect of social cognition, friendship. Social cognition involves not only empathy—our understanding of how individuals feel—but also how we think about relationships or friendships. This aspect of social cognition concerns what children think about friends: what it means to have a friend, how to make and keep friends, and how friends should behave toward one another.
Selman’s research (1989) shows that children’s thinking about friendships exhibits qualitative differences as they grow from early childhood to adolescence. This analysis of the development of children’s thinking about friendship describes three stages of thought, which Selman calls *levels of interpersonal understanding*. These levels are the following.

Level 0: Egocentric Level (Early Childhood). Ask a young child “What is a friend?” and you’re likely to be told that a friend is “someone you like,” “someone you play with,” or “someone you invite to your house.” If you inquire “How do you make a friend?” the child is likely to say, “Well, you just meet them and start to play.” Resolving disputes at this level does not involve understanding how the other person feels or thinks; rather, it requires the understanding to “just play better” or “just stop fighting.” A child’s thinking at this level is concrete and reflects his or her personal perspective.

Level 1: Reciprocal Trust (Later Childhood). As children develop genuine empathy and enter Hoffman’s second stage of development, a friend becomes someone who “thinks like you,” “likes the same things,” and is “someone you can trust.” At this stage, children realize that friendship imposes mutual obligations. Friends are expected to be tolerant of one another’s differences and to come to the aid of one another, even when this involves some personal risk. Friendships become characterized by qualities such as generosity and helpfulness.

Level 2: Mutual Perspective Taking (Adolescence). When adolescents talk about what makes a friend, qualities such as trust, helpfulness, and generosity are replaced by desires for mutual understanding (“We really think a lot alike”), support (“We’re there for one another”), and encouragement (“She helps me be what I want to be”; “He’ll forgive me no matter what I do”). A teacher can get
together a group of friends who are having a conflict and encourage each to take the others’ points of view. Three-way disagreements can be worked out. Such group problem solving is not possible at earlier stages of social cognition.

The implications of Selman’s analysis of interpersonal understanding for teachers are similar to those of Hoffman’s analysis of empathy. The accompanying box, *Encouraging Interpersonal Understanding*, provides some specific guidelines.

**Moral Judgment and Reasoning**

Two of the most frustrating things I’ve confronted this year have been derelict attitudes and morals....All teachers have a personal decision to make, a line to draw between remaining silent and speaking out on particular issues. I feel that it is my obligation as a teacher,...to speak out on such issues as crime, theft, violence, murder, and substance abuse. When I started the year teaching in a local public high school, these issues were certainly not absent from the classrooms nor the minds of the students. It’s just that when most of your students are incarcerated for these very same crimes, the subject of morality is always close at hand. (Sean, first-year teacher, from Ryan, 1992, p. 60)

Teachers like Sean are concerned about the morals and values of their students. From the earliest elementary grades to senior high school, all teachers encounter some learners who deliberately hurt others, destroy and deface property, lie, cheat, and steal. Like Sean, they ask themselves whether they need to provide moral education to their learners.

Over the past two decades numerous curricula have been developed for grades K through 12 to teach moral values (Schaefle, Rest, & Thoma, 1985). As with self-esteem, we no longer debate whether to teach values in school. Rather, the
issue has become focused on what values to teach, and how to teach them. We end our examination of social cognition by reviewing research on its third dimension: how children think about what people should or ought to do.

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development. Over the past two decades, Laurence Kohlberg (1978) has been one of the most influential theorists and researchers in the area of social cognition dealing with judgment and moral reasoning. Kohlberg’s work was heavily influenced by the writings of Piaget. Consequently, you will find many similarities between Kohlberg’s analysis of moral development and Piaget’s analysis of cognitive development.

To see how Kohlberg studied moral development, consider the following problem:

In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman’s husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about $1000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But, the druggist said, “No, I discovered the drug and I’m going to make money from it.” So, Heinz got desperate and broke into the man’s store to steal the drug for his wife. (Kohlberg & Elfenbein, 1975, p. 621)

Kohlberg told this story to children and adolescents of various ages and asked them questions designed to probe the dimensions of their moral reasoning. For example, he asked them whether Heinz should have stolen the drug, what should
happen to him, what if he didn’t love his wife, or what if the drug was for a dog rather than a person.

Kohlberg created a variety of these moral dilemmas and interviewed hundreds of children as well as younger and older adults in several countries. His analysis of their answers reveals a pattern of increasingly complex moral reasoning, which can be divided into three main levels with two substages at each level. Table 3.4 describes these levels.

Kohlberg’s analysis of the development of moral reasoning and judgment makes two important points. First, there are clear age trends. Preschoolers and elementary school children reason primarily at stages 1 and 2. This is no surprise, given the dependence of moral reasoning on cognitive development.

Conventional reasoning emerges during adolescence and persists throughout adulthood. Postconventional reasoning is rarely found at any age level, although when it does occur it is usually found in adults. Second, although older children tend to reason relatively abstractly by drawing on general principles or values, many older adolescents and adults persist with preconventional reasoning.

Gilligan's Challenge to Kohlberg. Kohlberg’s research into moral development, like Piaget’s research into cognitive development, has been challenged on several fronts. For example, developmental psychologists such as Eliot Turiel report that preschoolers and first graders engage in higher levels of moral reasoning than Kohlberg’s stages suggest (Nucci & Turiel, 1978; Tisak & Turiel, 1988; Turiel, 1983). Perhaps the most serious challenge to Kohlberg’s theories of moral development and research methods comes from Carol Gilligan of Harvard University, who raises important issues regarding the types of people interviewed by Kohlberg and the kinds of moral dilemmas that he used to study moral judgment and reasoning (Gilligan, 1982, 1988).
Gilligan correctly points out that Kohlberg interviewed only males about their thinking on moral dilemmas. Consequently, she concludes that Kohlberg’s perspective on moral development is more characteristic of males than of females. Males, according to Gilligan, view morality more from a position of rights of justice than from a position of caring, which she feels is characteristic of females. In other words, according to Gilligan, a male’s analysis of moral dilemmas is dominated by considerations of the rightness or wrongness of an action (*morality of justice*) without equal consideration given to its impact on the people involved. Females, on the other hand, view moral dilemmas in terms of the responsibilities of one person to another (*morality of caring*), rather than in strict terms of abstract rights or justice. Furthermore, females tend to personalize moral dilemmas, and as a result, their reasoning attempts to resolve conflicts between responsibility to self and responsibility to others.

The nature of Kohlberg’s moral dilemmas may further bias his perspective toward a morality of justice or rights rather than toward caring or responsibility. Gilligan points out that Kohlberg’s dilemmas represent hypothetical situations irrelevant to the lives of the subjects he interviewed. She states that a different perspective on moral development would emerge had he presented his subjects with situations that directly affected their lives.

Gilligan concludes that these two weaknesses—the use of only male subjects and the use of abstract dilemmas—explain why Kohlberg’s research tends to place more females at Stage 3 and more males at Stage 4. According to Gilligan, Kohlberg’s theory of moral development is biased toward males and does not reflect the full range of considerations that diverse people employ in thinking about moral issues.

To prove her point, Gilligan (1982) studied the morality of females by interviewing women who were confronted with an actual moral dilemma: whether
or not to have an abortion. Her subjects were women referred to a counseling center who were faced with the choice of continuing or terminating a pregnancy. Her analysis of their reasoning revealed the following stages of female moral development:

**Level I:** Orientation toward self-interest

**Level II:** Identification of goodness with responsibility for others

**Level III:** Focusing on the dynamics between self and others.

The principal feature of Level I reasoning is a pragmatic orientation: the woman focuses on doing what’s best for herself. Level II reasoning is dominated by considerations that reflect a sense of responsibility for others and a capacity for self-sacrifice. Women who reason at Level III, the highest, achieve an understanding that their actions must reflect both a concern for self and a concern for others.

Researchers such as D. Kay Johnston (1988), who studied the moral reasoning of 11- to 15-year-old boys and girls, confirm that girls spontaneously adopt an orientation of caring and boys an orientation of justice. Gilligan and Attanucci (1988) found that college-age men and women employ both perspectives in their moral reasoning, but that women are far more likely to adopt a caring orientation than are men. Likewise, men are twice as likely to adopt a justice orientation as women.

The issue of whether men and women actually view the world differently and make qualitatively different moral judgments is still open to question, however. Researchers, including Muss (1988), state that studies of prosocial behavior (altruism, empathy, cooperation, and so forth) show men to be no less prosocial than women. Regardless, Gilligan’s work has forced developmental psychologists to give serious consideration to the notion that some of our theories and
conclusions about human development may not apply in the same ways to both males and females. Moreover, Gilligan demonstrated that any comprehensive theory of moral development must encompass orientations of both care and justice, since both are important components of how humans make moral decisions.

Concluding Remarks About Social Cognition

Social cognition is the aspect of personal-social development that concerns itself with what learners think about the feelings of others (empathy), their own beliefs about friendships, and how they think they and other people should behave. As a teacher who is concerned about the whole child and not just his or her academic achievement, you will expect your learners to respect the feelings of others, understand what it means to have friends, and behave in morally acceptable ways. However, as Bee’s model of personality and behavior suggests, a learner’s behavior depends on a complex combination of influences, only a part of which stems from what you do in the classroom.

We concluded our section on self-esteem by recommending that you provide the conditions for its positive growth rather than suggesting specific instructional strategies. Our recommendation for the social cognition of your learners is the same. By allowing children to learn together, encouraging them to listen to one another, providing opportunities for discussion and disagreement, and modeling empathy, respect, and morality, you will create the conditions necessary for the development of social cognition.

Summing Up

This chapter introduced you to personal-social development. Its main points were these:
• Three theories that help explain how children develop affectively are biological theory, social learning theory, and psychoanalytic theory.
• Bee’s attempt to integrate the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic approaches with personal-social development considers the effects of inborn traits and the interaction between family environment, self-esteem, and factors such as the economy, parental job satisfaction, and social support networks on the development of a child’s personality.
• Self-esteem is how we evaluate or feel about ourselves, or whether or not we like who we are.
• Relationships with adults that meet a learner’s needs for safety, security, and protection are called vertical relationships.
• Relationships with peers that meet a learner’s needs for belonging and allow him or her to acquire the social skills of cooperation, competition, and intimacy are called horizontal relationships.
• Prosocial behaviors are intentional, voluntary behaviors intended to help another. A failure to develop healthy horizontal relationships often results in the lack of prosocial behaviors.
• Social cognition is giving consideration to how other people think and expressing judgments about what they should or ought to do.
• Empathy is the ability to read someone else’s feelings and match them to one’s own. Empathy requires both determining another person’s emotional state and imagining how one would react in a similar situation.
• Like empathy, a child’s thinking about friendship is understood to deepen as the child grows from early childhood to adolescence.
• What children think people should or ought to do is called moral judgment and reasoning.
• Kohlberg’s hierarchy of the developmental stages of moral reasoning includes three main levels, each with two substages, which are dependent on age and cognitive development.
• Gilligan’s research suggests that any comprehensive theory of moral development should include morality relevant to both care and justice, since females tend to personalize moral dilemmas more than men and their reasoning reflects attempts to resolve conflicts between responsibility to self and responsibility to others.

For Discussion and Practice

*1. In your own words, provide a brief description of the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic approaches to personal-social development.

*2. Cite research evidence in support of the biological approach, and identify three temperaments that, according to the biological approach, are inherited from our parents.

*3. If you were to apply the biological approach to Joe’s behavior, what might be your conclusions?

*4. Cite research evidence in support of the social learning approach. According to this approach, what three events cumulate to create affective behavior?

*5. If you were to apply the social learning approach to Joe’s behavior, what might be some of your conclusions?

*6. According to Erikson, what general drive is most important for understanding personal-social development?
*7. Identify Erikson’s identity crises most relevant to school-age children (stages 4 and 5) and describe how they develop.

*8. Cite research evidence in support of the psychoanalytic approach. If you were to apply Erikson’s approach to Joe’s behavior, what might be some of your conclusions?

*9. Using parts of the biological, social learning, and psychoanalytic approaches, provide an overview of Bee’s integrated approach to personal-social development.

*10. What might be some reasons for wanting to increase children’s self-esteem in the absence of research evidence indicating a strong relationship between self-esteem and school achievement?

*11. What is the difference between vertical and horizontal relationships? Give some examples of each for learners you are likely to teach.

*12. What are prosocial behaviors, and what would be some examples that Mr. Nash might expect Joe to exhibit?

*13. In your own words, what is social cognition? What is an example that might occur in your classroom?

*14. How would a child at each of Selman’s three levels of interpersonal understanding describe a “friend”?*

*15. Provide your own example of moral reasoning at each of Kohlberg’s three levels.

16. Analyze the dilemma you considered in question 15 according to Gilligan’s levels of moral reasoning.
Suggested Readings


Erikson, E. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). New York: Norton. Erikson, who was a painter by profession, writes like a highly skilled novelist. After reading this work, you may never think the same way about others—or yourself.


To what extent should my instructional goals include the affective development of my learners?

School-age learners display a variety of temperaments. Children differ in adaptability to change, activity level, and emotionality.

**Modeling.** Demonstrating what learners are about to learn; the process of being attentive to, remembering, imitating, and being rewarded for imitating specific behaviors.

Why do some children learn behaviors that repel rather than attract other children?
**Perceived self-efficacy.** An appraisal or evaluation that a person makes about his or her personal competence at a particular task; an individual’s personal expectations, internal standards, and self-concept.

**Stages of identity.** Discrete periods of personality development during which the individual confronts an identity crisis he or she must overcome to pass successfully to the next stage.

Erikson believed that personality develops only in the context of experience.
### Table 3.1

#### Erikson's Eight Stages of Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Ego Quality To Be Developed</th>
<th>Some Tasks and Activities of the Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>Basic trust versus mistrust</td>
<td>Trust in mother or central caregiver and in one's own ability to make things happen; a key element in an early secure attachment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>Autonomy versus shame and doubt</td>
<td>Walking, grasping, and other physical skills lead to free choice; toilet training occurs; child learns control but may develop shame if issue is not handled properly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–5</td>
<td>Initiative versus guilt</td>
<td>Organize activities around some goal, become more assertive and aggressive. Oedipus-like conflict with parent of same sex may lead to guilt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–12</td>
<td>Industry versus inferiority</td>
<td>Absorb all the basic culture skills and norms, including school skills and tool use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13–18</td>
<td>Identity versus role confusion</td>
<td>Adapt sense of self to physical changes of puberty, make occupational choice, achieve adultlike sexual identity, and search for new values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–25</td>
<td>Intimacy versus isolation</td>
<td>Form one or more intimate relationships that go beyond adolescent love; marry and form family groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–40</td>
<td>Generativity versus stagnation</td>
<td>Bear and rear children, focus on occupational achievement or creativity, train the next generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>Ego integrity versus despair</td>
<td>Integrate earlier stages and come to terms with basic identity. Accept self.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Erikson, children’s personalities develop in stages during which they confront a variety of challenges. Healthy development at one stage depends on overcoming the challenges of the previous stages.

**Figure 3.1**  

**Self-concept.** A schema individuals hold toward themselves.

**Self-esteem.** A global evaluation or judgment of one’s worth.

Self-esteem is affected by learners’ judgments of their ability to accomplish things they value. Teachers can enhance self-esteem by building an environment that promotes success.

**Figure 3.2**  
Dimensions of self-esteem.

What role do I play in the development of my learners' self-esteem?
Applying Your Knowledge:

Steps to Promoting Self-esteem in Your Classroom

1. **Be Aware That Your Own Values Can Influence How Your Learners Feel About Themselves.** Remember that when you express the desirability of one career or occupation over another, one way of dressing over another, or one social class over another you are influencing how your learners think about themselves.

2. **Be Sure That Each Learner in Your Classroom Experiences Success.** While some students may succeed where others do not, every learner should have the experience of being capable and successful in the majority of his or her work. Most of your students should feel “I can do that” when you introduce a new assignment.

3. **Questioning a Learner’s Ability To Perform Can Make Him or Her Not Want To Perform.** Encourage your learners to exceed your and their expectations, and reward them for their effort, regardless of the outcome. Be sure to value those tasks that your students can perform well.

4. **If You Group Students by Ability or Achievement, Be Sure Your Grouping Is for a Specific Task and a Limited Amount of Time.** Change the members of groups often and be sure each learner has the opportunity to use his or her own unique interests and talents.

5. **Be Sensitive to Cultural Differences.** Your awareness of cultural differences will be important to how your learners feel about themselves. Make an effort to know the culture of your students, even if you do not speak their language.
6. **Carefully Evaluate the Reading Level of Your Learners and Your Reading Materials.** Be sure that there are reading assignments and printed resources available at different levels of complexity and grade levels, so that all learners feel that they can participate in the content you are teaching.

7. **Encourage Oral as Well as Written Expression.** Provide your students the opportunity to use different communication modalities, so that they feel comfortable in participating and expressing themselves with as much confidence inside the classroom as they do outside the classroom.

**Vertical relationships.** Students’ relationships with adults, such as, parents and teachers.

**Horizontal relationships.** Students’ relationships with peers.

**Schema of attachment.** Positive cognitive structure influencing vertical relationships.

Focus on

Willard W. Hartup, University of Minnesota

My interest in child development research took shape midway in my graduate career when I came to realize that children were the most interesting variables in the education equation. I had prepared earlier to be a classroom teacher but didn’t realize until quite a bit later that children were more interesting to me than subject matter. At that point I changed course and took four more years to become a developmental psychologist.
Nearly a decade after deciding to study child development, I discovered the area with which I am most closely identified: peer relations. This came about because my 4-year-old son and his best friend were involved in a complex aggressive-sociable relationship with another boy that was overlaid with rich fantasizing (mostly creative ways that my son and his friend could use to destroy the other child). I became interested in the reasons that children are attracted to one another and reject one another, and conducted a series of observational and experimental studies that drew the attention of other investigators to this area. Later, I became interested in the mechanisms involved in peer socialization, and my most recent work concerns collaborative writing by friends as compared with nonfriends.

Although peer relations had been studied by investigators prior to World War II, most child psychologists in the postwar period were interested in family relations and their developmental significance. My work constituted a rediscovery of child-child relations. Along with many other investigators, I’ve been able to show that peer relationships have considerable developmental significance in their own right, that these relationships are linked together conjunctively with family relations in social development, and that children’s friendships are both advantages and disadvantages in social development depending on who a child’s friends are and the quality of these relationships.
We’ve come a considerable distance since I began to work in this field. Observational methods and schemes for on-line recording of observational material have been refined: Laboratory procedures have been worked out so that children can be used as reliable tutors or experimenters for one another; statistical models have been developed so that more than one measure can be studied at a time; and longitudinal designs can be used effectively to study causal relations developmentally. Newly available video recording equipment, sensitive recording devices, computers and computer-controlled laboratory materials, and advanced quantitative methods aided greatly in this work.

These observational methods have allowed my studies to be conducted in and around nursery and elementary schools, anywhere that children can be observed together. Supportive teachers and cooperative children are the essential ingredients of the research settings I use. Sometimes observations are made while children are at recess; at other times, children may be observed in twosomes or threesomes at a computer, at a board game, or at indoor play. Sometimes the classroom is the research laboratory.
My work contributes to practice in various ways: (1) The studies dealing with social acceptance and rejection assisted in identifying common behavioral patterns associated with socialization risk that must be familiar to teachers and special educators if they are to be effective in dealing with troubled children. (2) My studies of same-age and mixed-age relations between children showed that mixed-age socialization sometimes benefits children more than same-age socialization, especially among socially withdrawn children. These studies also showed that tutoring effects vary with age relations. (3) My studies of children’s friendships show that conflicts between friends are more common than conflicts between nonfriends and that conflict management is generally better between friends than nonfriends. (4) Friends frequently make better collaborators in cognitive tasks than nonfriends; indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that friends distract one another or make poor cognitive partners, as many teachers think.

**Affectional bonds.** Long-lasting bonds between a child and a parent.

Table 3.2

Characteristics Shown by Securely Attached Infants at Later Ages

**Sociability.** Securely attached infants get along better with their peers, are more popular, and have more friends. With strange adults they are more sociable and less fearful.

**Self-esteem.** They have higher self-esteem.

**Relationship with siblings.** They have better relationships with siblings, especially if both siblings are securely attached; if both are insecurely attached, the relationship is maximally antagonistic.
Dependency. They show less clinging and attention-seeking from a teacher and less
“negative seeking” (getting attention by being bad) in preschool years.

Tantrums and aggressive behavior. They show less aggressive or disruptive behavior.

Compliance and good deportment. They are easier to manage in the classroom, requiring little overt control by the teacher, but they are not overly docile.

Empathy. They show more empathy toward other children and toward adults. They do not show pleasure on seeing others’ distress, which is fairly common among avoidant children.

Behavior problems. The results are mixed, but there are a number of studies that show that securely attached infants are less likely to show behavior problems at later ages.

Problem solving. They show longer attention spans in free play and more confidence in attempting solutions to tasks with tools. They use the mother or teacher more effectively as a source of assistance.


Researchers are just beginning to appreciate the importance of friendly peer relationships in learners’ overall emotional development.

Prosocial behaviors. Intentional, voluntary behaviors intended to help others.
What role do friendships play in the personal-social development of my learners, and how can I enhance friendly relationships?

Can learners be taught helping or prosocial behaviors?

**Social cognition.** How one thinks and becomes concerned about other people’s actions and feelings.

**Empathy.** The ability to read someone else’s feelings and match them to the observer’s own feelings.

Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages in the Development of Empathy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1: Global empathy.</strong> Observed during the first year. If the infant is around someone expressing a strong emotion, he may match this emotion, such as beginning to cry when he hears another infant crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2: Egocentric empathy.</strong> Beginning at about 12 to 18 months, when the child has a fairly clear sense of his separate self, children respond to another’s distress with some distress of their own, but may attempt to “cure” the other person’s problem by offering what they themselves would find most comforting. They may, for example, show sadness when they see another child hurt, and go to get their own mother (or father) for help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stage 3: Empathy for another’s feelings. Beginning as young as 2 or 3, and continuing through elementary school, children note others’ feelings, partially match those feelings, and respond to others’ distress in nonegocentric ways. Over these years, children distinguish a wider and wider (and more subtle) range of emotions.

Stage 4: Empathy for another’s life condition. In late childhood or adolescence, some children develop a more generalized notion of others’ feelings and respond not just to the immediate situation but to the other individual’s general situation or plight. So a young person at this level may become more distressed over another person’s sadness if they know that sadness is chronic, or if they know that the person’s general situation is particularly tragic, than if they see it as a more momentary problem.
Applying Your Knowledge:

Encouraging Interpersonal Understanding

• Be sensitive to the cognitive demands required for different levels of thought about friendships. Do not expect a first-grader to be able to understand another child’s perspective. Similarly, however, do expect and encourage empathy from adolescents.

• Provide opportunities for learners to develop friendships and work out differences, and respect social class and ethnic differences about the development of friendships and the resolution of disputes.

• Above all, as with self-esteem, allow children to construct friendships and their friendship schemata out of the direct experience of working and cooperating with others. This means, for example, encouraging cooperative learning activities, as well as encouraging different groups of children to work and play together.
### Table 3.4  
**Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Reasoning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level I</strong></td>
<td><strong>Preconventional level:</strong> Children at this level reason in terms of their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>own needs. Answers to moral dilemmas are based on what they can get away with.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral values reside in good and bad acts, not people or standards. Cultural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rules and labels of good and bad, right and wrong, are interpreted in terms</td>
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<td></td>
<td>of punishment, reward, exchange of favors, or the physical power of those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>who advocate the rules and labels. Children are concerned about external,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>concrete consequences to themselves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td><strong>Punishment and obedience orientation:</strong> Children worry about avoiding</td>
<td>Heinz should not steal because he would be punished by authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>punishment by adults or people with superior power and prestige. They are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aware of rules and the consequences of breaking them. The physical</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consequences of an action determine its goodness or badness—“might makes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>right.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td><strong>Instrumental relativist orientation:</strong> Children want to satisfy their own</td>
<td>Heinz should steal because he is worried about his wife and she isn’t sick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>needs (and occasionally the needs of others) if they can get away with it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They are motivated by self-interest and are aware that relationships are</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dominated by concrete reciprocity (you scratch my back and I’ll scratch</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yours), not loyalty, gratitude, or justice. They assume that everyone has</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to look out for himself and is obligated only to those who help him.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Level II**  
**Conventional level:** Moral value resides in performing good and right roles. Children are concerned with meeting external social expectations. They value meeting the expectations of family, group, or nation by conforming to the expectations of significant people and the social order. There is active support and justification of conventional rules and roles.

**Stage 3**  
**Interpersonal concordance orientation:** Children earn approval by being “nice.” They are concerned about living up to “good boy” and “good girl” stereotypes. Good behavior is what pleases or helps others and what is approved of by them. Children are aware of the need to consider the intentions and feelings of others; cooperation is seen in terms of the Golden Rule.

**Stage**  
**Description**  
**Stage 4**  
**Authority-maintaining orientation:** Children are motivated by a sense of duty or obligation to live up to socially defined roles, and to maintain the existing social order for the good of all. They are aware that there is a larger social system, which regulates the behavior of the people within it. They assume that the social order is the source of morality and that laws should be maintained even at personal expense.

**Level III**  
**Postconventional autonomous, or principled level:** Children make a clear effort to define moral values and principles that have validity and application apart from the authority of groups or individuals and apart from their own identifications. There is a concern for fidelity to self-chosen moral principles. Moral value resides in conformity to shared standards, rights, and duties.
Stage 5  **Social-contract legalistic orientation:** Right actions tend to be defined in terms of general individual rights and standards that have been critically examined and agreed on by the whole society. There is an emphasis on procedural rules for reaching consensus because of awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions. Aside from what society agrees on, it is possible to change the law in terms of rational considerations of social utility. Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract are the binding elements of obligation.

Stage 6  **Universal ethical principle orientation:** The person defines right by decisions of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles that appeal to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical; at heart they are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individuals. There is an orientation of letting one’s conscience be a directing agent and of letting mutual respect and trust dominate interpersonal relationships.

Questions marked with an asterisk are answered in the appendix.