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## Promoting Equity, Tolerance, and Justice in Childhood

**Melanie Killen**
University of Maryland

**Adam Rutland**
University of Kent
Canterbury

**Martin D. Ruck**
Graduate Center
City University of New York

## Abstract

Children around the world are affected by discrimination and social exclusion due to their age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, indigenous background, or other statuses. When considering the negative consequences of discrimination and social exclusion on children's development and well-being, it is of paramount importance to examine the psychological origins of prejudice and discrimination in order to create effective intervention programs. Legal mandates are only one step towards the elimination of prejudice and discrimination; there is also a need for interventions to change social interactions and behavior. Surprisingly, such interventions are rarely informed by developmental theory and research. Taking an international perspective, this *Social Policy Report* describes a developmental framework on how children understand the cultural hierarchies, status, and power related to social groups as well as the social exchanges that contribute to both prejudice reduction and the promotion of equity and justice concepts. Hierarchies in the child's world reflect the organization of the peer culture, which often reflects categories of status from the adult world (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, and gender), but are manifested differently. Understanding these hierarchies provides an important window into how prejudice is formed and manifested in development. Effective interventions require understanding how it is that children experience discrimination as victims and also as perpetrators of exclusion, and how adults are powerful sources of both negative and positive influences. We identify relevant research findings on the positive and negative aspects of peer relationships, adult-child interactions, and changes in social cognitive development that bear on reducing prejudice and promoting concepts of equity and justice. Childhood, when attitudes are only just beginning to formulate and develop, is the time for implementing effective interventions designed to promote equity, tolerance, and justice.

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# From the Editors

This issue of *Social Policy Report* addresses a topic that pervades everything from world affairs to dinner invitations. It has been the backdrop of a hotly debated redistricting effort in a school district near my home and of national conversations about immigration. The paper and accompanying commentaries collectively consider the role of schools, parents, professional organizations, and government in supporting tolerance and reducing prejudice. How do we foster tolerance and social equity in children? How can schools minimize prejudice and intolerance for individuals who are not like us? These issues of children's rights, tolerance, and equity are complex. Yet, I am struck by the power of contact. Who we invite (and don't invite) to dinner matters. As described in more detail by Melanie Killen, Adam Rutland, and Martin Ruck, research has documented the effectiveness of cross-group contact and friendships in reducing attitudes of prejudice. The authors provide a developmental framework that emphasizes the importance of peer relationships, adult-child interactions, and social cognitive development when developing interventions to promote tolerance.

Richard Cole, in the first commentary, provides his perspective as a civil rights attorney who has worked with several schools on equity issues and race relations. Maykel Verkuyten's commentary focuses on the importance of considering the role of parents in addressing tolerance. In the third commentary, Lonnie Sherrod discusses SRCD's role in this work. Yes, there are policy and research implications of the literature reviewed in this report—but there are also implications for each of us as citizens, neighbors, and family members.

— Kelly L. Maxwell (Issue Editor)
Samuel L. Odom (Lead Editor)
Donna Bryant (Editor)

# Promoting Equity, Tolerance, and Justice in Childhood

According to reports by international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), it is estimated that millions of children worldwide are affected by discrimination and prejudice (Child Rights Information Network, 2009; Minority Rights Group International, 2010; Save the Children, 2006). Children around the world face discrimination due to their age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, indigenous background, and other statuses. As a result of the continued discrimination that children experience, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, UN General Assembly, 1989) was formed to recognize inherently the dignity of children and their entitlement to fundamental rights and freedoms. The Convention, which has been ratified by all countries of the world except the United States and Somalia, reflects fundamental assumptions and values about the treatment of children, their protection, and their participation in society (Petren & Himes, 2000; Ruck & Horn, 2008).

The CRC includes rights to the adequate provision of resources and services to enable children to develop their skills and abilities to the fullest. While the CRC does not explicitly define discrimination, the Human Rights Committee suggests that the term should be understood as implying "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms" (Human Rights Committee, General Comment 18, Non-discrimination, 1992).

In addition to freedom from discrimination (Article 2), the CRC also contains specific articles promoting the child's right to a nationality (Article 7), the right to an identity (Article 8), and freedom of religion (Article 14). As well, the CRC protects the rights and well-being of specific groups of children who may be particularly vulnerable to discrimination, including refugee children (Article 22), disabled children (Article 23), and children of minority and indigenous communities (Article 30). Finally, the themes "best interests of the child" and "evolving capacities of the child," which are used frequently throughout the CRC, have direct significance not only for the fulfillment and exercise of children's rights but also for the development of age-appropriate interventions and curricula challenging traditions and attitudes that serve to perpetuate discrimination and prejudice. A 2000 UN report on the effects of racial discrimination against children noted that "research in this area is scant, and tends to focus on some countries or minorities to the neglect of others" (UN General Assembly, 2000).

Legal frameworks and decisions are essential in laying the foundations for equity and justice and challenging social exclusion and discrimination in childhood (Frankenberg & Orfield, 2007; Kurlaender & Yun, 2001) The mandates articulate societal beliefs or norms and often provide the legal power to enforce action against the denial of rights and the perpetuation of discrimination. Yet, legal mandates are only the first step towards freedom from prejudice. The next step involves changes in social interactions and relationships that impact psychological attitudes to reduce prejudicial orientations (Tenenbaum & Ruck, in press; Tropp, 2006; Verkuyten, 2008). When considering the negative consequences that arise from childhood experiences of discrimination and social exclusion, it is of paramount importance to examine the psychological origins of prejudice and discrimination in order to determine the factors necessary for creating effective intervention programs.

Surprisingly, interventions to promote equity, tolerance, and justice in childhood are not widespread and are rarely informed by developmental theory and research. As an illustration, a recent review of programs conducted by political scientists and social psychologists

regarding the effectiveness of intervention programs to reduce prejudice focused predominantly on adults rather than children. Reviewing experimental (laboratory) and non-experimental (field-based) studies on interventions for prejudice reduction (which the authors defined as "a causal pathway from some intervention to a reduced level of prejudice," p. 341), Paluck and Green (2009) examined over 900 published and non-published articles and reports. The authors reviewed studies on multicultural education, cooperative learning, media interventions, work place diversity initiatives, peace education, intergroup contact, moral and values education, and intercultural and sensitivity training as well as other various techniques and interventions. The authors concluded that few programs were shown to be effective (Paluck & Green, 2009).

Only a few child-focused interventions were included in the review, and these programs focused specifically on the use of reading materials for children (extended contact in which children were read stories about members of other groups [see Cameron & Rutland, 2006]) and media-based intervention programs such as *Sesame Street* (Cole et al., 2003). However, the review did not address the developmental factors that contribute to prejudice nor the factors that promote equity and justice in children's lives. Where does it begin, and how does it emerge? To effectively promote equity, tolerance, and justice, it is necessary to use a developmental model to understand how prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion arise, manifest, and change over the course of the lifetime.

A previous *Social Policy Report* on prejudice reduction in school settings in the United States focused specifically on child populations (Pfeifer, Spears Brown, & Juvonen, 2007), and the authors, who were developmental scientists, reviewed school-based curricula such as cooperative learning, multicultural curricula, and anti-bias training. These programs were shown to be effective in producing modest gains in positive attitudes and were validated by a number of empirical studies. The authors pointed out, however, that some of the evaluations of these programs overlooked the social context and conditions that maximize the reduction of prejudice. The report demonstrated the ways that these programs helped to make desegregation a positive learning environment for all children (Pfeifer, Spears Brown, et al., 2007). An important conclusion was that future research should take developmental factors into account.

The current *Social Policy Report* focuses on the wider topic of discrimination, exclusion, and bias as it exists in the school, community, and home, and incorporates an international perspective, expanding the report to include the global context of these phenomena. Further, it focuses on the developmental factors that need to be emphasized in programs, such as the moral predispositions that are realized in children's inclusive and spontaneous moral orientations to reject exclusion as well as the more negative side of prejudice and bias that also emerges early in childhood, to demonstrate the complexity of the larger issue. We drew from the developmental literature to describe a developmental framework that we believe is necessary to create developmentally-informed intervention programs and to address the contexts of discrimination and prejudice.

## Developmental Framework

Some of the fundamental developmental propositions that have to be understood for effective interventions pertain to the interactional nature of learning, acquisition of concepts, and social interactional basis by which children acquire social understanding that contributes to, or resists, negative treatment of others. Development is not the outcome of only biology or environmental input but is instead the outcome of cognitive interpretations of complex individual-environment interactions that reflect how children acquire social orientations and become members of societies and cultures (Turiel, 2002). This is different from a learning theory model in which children imitate parents or adults as a means of acquiring new concepts (for more on this point, see Aboud & Amato, 2001). Instead, children abstract, interpret, transform, and evaluate social events in their world, all of which are the result of a complex social cognitive developmental process (Piaget, 1970). Early in life children are capable of making moral judgments about fairness, societal judgments about groups, and psychological judgments about individuality and personal choice (Nucci, 2001; Smetana, 2006).

From the beginning of childhood, children are bombarded by a range of conflicting messages, both positive and negative, about individuals based on group membership (such as gender, race, ethnicity, culture), and they make sense of these different messages with respect to their own experience and social cognitive interpretations of the world. Adults are an important source of influence on children's development, but only one. Peer interactions and relationships are important as well. Children, through their social cognitive development, make decisions about which of the many conflicting messages that

they receive are right or wrong. We depict how these three central aspects of development—peer relationships, adult-child interactions, and social cognitive development—are important to take into account in programs designed to reduce prejudice and discrimination (see Table 1).

Extensive developmental research over more than 30 years has shown that children interpret a wide array of messages in their environment (which are often conflicting) by making judgments through social evaluative processes based on their social experiences. This has been shown through social information processing and social cognitive developmental research (Dodge & Rabiner, 2004; Turiel, 2006). Thus, to be effective in reducing prejudice and discrimination, interventions have to address the types of social experiences children have with peers and adults, incorporate children's interpretations and evaluations of these experiences, and provide a strategy for enabling children and adolescents to make decisions that reflect fairness and justice.

Addressing discrimination and exclusion also requires investigating how children understand the cultural hierarchies, status, and power related to social groups as well as the history of interactions and social exchanges that groups experience (Pfeifer, Ruble, et al., 2007; Rowley, Kurtz-Costes, Mistry, & Feagans, 2007). It also requires understanding how it is that children experience discrimination as victims and are also perpetrators of exclusion, and that adults are powerful sources of both negative and positive influence. Further, it is necessary to understand that children's worlds reflect hierarchies that are distinct from and similar to the adult world. The hierarchies in the child's world reflect the organization of the peer culture, which often reflects categories of status from the adult world (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, gender) but are manifested differently, which needs to be incorporated into programs for intervention. Understanding these hierarchies provides a window into how prejudice is formed and manifested in development.

Many forms of prejudice are locally rooted whereas others reflect broad societal messages that cross cultures. Whether discrimination is about gender, race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, socioeconomic status, religion, or an overlap of these categories has to be considered. In many cases, children experience dis-

**Table 1. Judgments and Relationships that Reduce Prejudice**

| | Specific Concepts | Major Conclusions |
|---|---|---|
| **Peer relationships and positive contact** | Direct cross-group friendships | Negative attributions of intentions, anxiety, support of racial exclusion, and negative intergroup attitudes will be reduced by direct intergroup contact involving cross-group friendships |
| | Extended or indirect intergroup contact | Explicit ingroup bias and outgroup prejudice will be reduced if children are aware of cross-group friendships between members of the ingroup and outgroup |
| **Adult-child interactions and socialization** | Teaching about the history of discrimination and current biases that perpetuate prejudice | Teaching about the historical context for how and why a group comes to be associated with low status (e.g. through maintaining hierarchical status in a culture, economic viability) reduces discriminatory attitudes |
| | Direct and indirect messages from parents | Parental messages to support the goals of mutual respect, fairness, and inclusiveness reduce prejudice |
| | Parental socialization to prepare minority children for the world of discrimination | Increasing children's public regard and sense of ingroup identity increases academic motivation and success as well as positive intergroup relationships |
| **Social cognitive judgments and attitudes** | Moral judgment and fairness reasoning | Prejudice, stereotyping, and exclusion based on group membership will decrease if children engage in moral reasoning and use moral principles (e.g., fairness) when evaluating groups |
| | Common ingroup identity | Outgroup dislike will diminish with the development of a common inclusive group identity |
| | Social norms | Explicit ingroup bias and outgroup prejudice will decrease among children who show self-presentation in line with inclusive social norms |
| | Diminished perceived outgroup threat | Explicit outgroup prejudice is less likely if a perceived threat from an outgroup is reduced and not over-exaggerated |

crimination and prejudice as members of multiple groups, such as low-income ethnic minority adolescents (Chavous, Rivas-Drake, Smalls, Griffin, & Cogburn, 2008; Fisher, Jackson, & Villarruel, 1998). In a given cultural context, discrimination based on race may be the most salient (and confounded with socioeconomic status), whereas gender discrimination may have more negative outcomes for children than racial prejudice in a different culture. In many contexts in the world, gender discrimination is more explicitly condoned than racial/ethnic discrimination due to the stereotypic expectations about gender roles in society (Bigler & Liben, 2007; Brown & Bigler, 2004).

Thus, there are many factors that contribute to why discrimination and prejudice occur. In childhood, morality, group identity, group status, and the societal context are central factors as depicted in Table 2. Social developmental theories and research have demonstrated how these issues are central to children's experiences and perpetuation of prejudice. In this report, we use these constructs as general guides for identifying the factors that are relevant for intervention programs. Extensive research has demonstrated that children display spontaneous moral orientations in their treatment of others through sharing, helping, and third party intervention to resolve conflicts (Brownell, Ramani, & Zerwas, 2006; Smetana, 1984; Vaish, Carpenter, & Tomasello, 2009) as well as make moral judgments about being fair, equal, and inclusive. These capacities are necessary for resisting negative treatment from others as well as challenging negative treatment towards others. Yet, applying fairness and equality concepts in situations in which others are identified as members of outgroups is complex and difficult (Killen & Rutland, 2011)—and constitutes a point of focus for intervention programs.

Children's memberships in and identification with groups warrant a central focus for intervention, particularly as participation in multiple groups increases with age. Group membership leads to group identity which involves status and identification with groups and has the potential to lead to ingroup preference and outgroup dislike (Nesdale, 2004; Rutland, Abrams, & Levy, 2007). We also describe the societal context of discrimination and exclusion, which are relevant to children's experiences of exclusion and prejudice (Abrams & Christian, 2007). Thus, essential components for intervention programs include knowing how children experience and perpetuate social exclusion through affiliations with social groups, how children apply fairness principles to exclusion contexts, and the messages received from peers and adults about status and hierachies. As described below, children's identification with groups is related to the emergence of prejudice (Rutland, Killen, & Abrams, 2010), and their development of morality is connected to resisting and rejecting exclusion based on race, ethnicity, and gender.

We identify four common misperceptions about discrimination and prejudice in childhood: 1) children are not aware of experiencing discrimination until adolescence, 2) changing children's attitudes is a top-down process whereby adults teach children to be tolerant, 3) childhood prejudice is a result of imitation and learning negative attitudes from adults, and 4) discrimination experienced in childhood is not related to adult forms of prejudice. A developmental framework provides an alternative perspective that reveals the influence of peer and adult-child relationships on prejudice and discrimination and

**Table 2. Key Factors for Designing Interventions to Promote Equity, Tolerance, and Justice**

| Key Factor | Examples |
|---|---|
| **Moral**<br>Inter-individual treatment | Negative: Discrimination/ inequality/ unfair treatment/denial of rights<br>Negative: Prejudice and social exclusion<br>Negative: Explicit and implicit bias<br>Positive: Fairness and justice<br>Positive: Empathy and prosocial treatment<br>Positive: Rights, inclusiveness, and protection from harm |
| **Group Identity**<br>Group memberships in a cultural context | Gender<br>Race/Ethnicity<br>Nationality<br>Culture<br>Religion |
| **Group Status**<br>Group status and identity within groups | Status<br>Power<br>Hierarchical position<br>Social capital and economic status<br>Peer cliques and crowds<br>Social networks |
| **Societal Context**<br>Societal and historical context that underlies experiences of inequity and injustice | Recent immigrants<br>Long-term immigrants (denial of citizenship even after one generation)<br>Indigenous<br>Asylum seekers<br>Descendants of slavery |
| **Psychological Outcomes**<br>Psychological outcomes of negative experiences | Anxiety, depression, loneliness<br>Academic anxiety<br>Low public self regard |

documents the emergence in childhood of both bias and ingroup preference, on the one hand, and mutual respect and justice notions, on the other hand. In this report, we review research evidence addressing these common misconceptions and then describe intervention research and recommendations for other forms of intervention.

We propose that 1) developmentally-designed, empirically-oriented intervention studies with children are sorely needed; 2) developmental research on the factors that contribute to children's experiences of discrimination, such as peer relationships, adult-child interactions, and social cognitive judgments, has to be communicated to the wider policy and social psychology audiences; 3) the wider policy arena is largely unaware of the specific developmental evidence that contributes to effective intervention in childhood; and 4) if interventions are to be effective, childhood is the time for implementation, when attitudes are only just beginning to formulate and develop.

Below we outline how, despite many legal mandates aimed at confronting discrimination and social exclusion, children still experience the denial of equity and justice in their lives. We focus on the origins and emergence of prejudice and discrimination in childhood and discuss how it can have negative effects on children's well-being. The early emergence of social exclusion based upon prejudice indicates that interventions aimed at challenging individual's attitudes and behavior need to focus on the early years of life (i.e., childhood and adolescence) to ensure attitudes and behaviors do not become too ingrained and resistant to change. This is essential because most interventions aimed at reducing discrimination have focused on adults and have been informed by theory in political science or social psychology but not developmental science. We conclude with recommending key factors and strategies that should be considered and adopted when promoting the emergence of equity and justice in children's lives.

## Denial of Equity and Justice in Children's Lives

Despite numerous pronouncements at both the national and international level condemning prejudice and discrimination and the denial of equity and justice to children, there is still much evidence that children in their everyday life are not afforded equity and justice. To date, the extant work on the topic of children's experiences of discrimination and related intergroup relations has been conducted primarily in North America, Australia, and Europe (see edited volumes, Levy & Killen, 2008; Quintana & McKown, 2008; Rutland et al., 2007), but research in other countries is emerging, particularly in South Africa and Asia. Most of the existing work on children's experiences of prejudice and discrimination has focused on perceptions of individual racial and ethnic discrimination across multiple settings (Brown, 2008; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). The history of race relations in the United States with respect to slavery, civil rights, and more recent immigration from Central and South America has made research on discrimination and exclusion based on race (i.e., skin color) highly salient (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Similarly, changing patterns of immigration throughout Europe have clearly impacted on majority-minority relations regarding immigrant status and bear on the available developmental science research on the topic (Cameron, Rutland, Brown & Douch, 2006; Verkuyten, 2008).

In multiple cultural contexts, gender exclusion has remained a salient issue of concern for children in the areas of educational opportunities, access to resources, academic achievement, occupational aspirations, social relationships, and domestic roles (see Bigler & Liben, 1992). One area that we will not cover, but is germane, is sexuality and sexual prejudice; we direct readers to the recent *Social Policy Report* by Russell and colleagues that focused explicitly on this topic (Russell, Kosciw, Horn, & Saewyc, 2010).

## Experiences and Perceptions of Discrimination

Perceptions of discrimination provide a measure of how often children experience it, as well as who is experiencing it. Yet, perceiving oneself to be the target of discrimination depends not only on actual experiences of discrimination but also on characteristics of the perceiving child. For example, a strong ethnic or racial identity can moderate the effects of perceived discrimination or serve as a group "lens" that leads children to over interpret events in terms of group membership (Phinney, 1990; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Sellers, Morgan & Brown, 2001; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). We will come back to this issue when we detail the psychological interpretations of discrimination from children's and adolescents' point of view.

In general, developmental research has demonstrated that many ethnic minority children report perceptions of discrimination in public settings. For example, in the United States, Fisher et al. (2000) found that 75% of African American and 65% of Hispanic adolescents

reported that because of their race or ethnicity they were hassled by a store clerk or security guard. In addition, minority children and adolescents also report being hassled by the police (Fisher et al., 2000) or suspected of wrongdoing (Simons et al., 2002) because of their race or ethnicity. A recent study on the experience of discrimination among a diverse group of refugee youth in Australia reported similar findings with 13% of respondents experiencing discrimination by police and 20% reporting incidents of discrimination in public settings, such as in stores and on public transportation (Gifford, Correa-Velez, & Sampson, 2009).

Children and adolescents also perceive discrimination by teachers and staff in educational settings (Crystal, Killen, & Ruck, 2010; Goggtay et al., 2004; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). For example, in a large-scale multi-ethnic Canadian study, Ruck and Wortley (2002) found that Black, South Asian and Asian high school students were all more likely than White students to perceive discrimination with regard to how students from their racial or ethnic group were treated by teachers and how they were disciplined at school (Ruck & Wortley, 2002). Further, in the United Kingdom, Lansdown, Gidney, and Woll (2000) reported evidence of differential treatment of ethnic minority British students, with Black and Afro-Caribbean boys being 4 to 5 times more likely than their White counterparts to be permanently excluded from school for the same offense. Taken together, these findings are consistent with a number of other studies indicating that racial discrimination and differential treatment by adults is common among ethnic minority students in school settings.

Discrimination stemming from interaction with peers also appears to be a common type of differential treatment experienced by young people. For example, 67% of a large sample of African American 10- to 12-year-olds reported that they had been insulted by a peer because they were African American (Simons et al., 2002). Fisher et al. (2000) documented similar findings: a majority of East Asian (84%) and South Asian (73%) adolescents reported being the victim of racially derogatory name calling compared to 36% of African American and 47% of Hispanic adolescents. Racial and ethnic bullying and name calling are common forms of racial discrimination directed towards ethnic minority children and youth in a large number of countries including Australia, Canada, United States, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ireland and others (e.g., Aboud & Joong, 2008; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002) For ethnic minority status children and adolescents around the world, discrimination and differential treatment are major sources of social exclusion and marginalization, and testimony to their denial of equity and justice. These findings reveal that children are aware of discrimination and are both the recipients and the perpetrators of discriminatory behavior.

For ethnic minority status children and adolescents around the world, discrimination and differential treatment are major sources of social exclusion and marginalization, ...

Research has also documented high rates of discrimination experienced by children on the basis of gender, even in countries with explicit legal statutes that prohibit it (Brown & Bigler, 2005). While explicit gender discrimination in North America, for example, is against the law, stereotypes and social exclusion based on gender are still pervasive, resulting in negative social and academic outcomes (Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, & Blumenfeld, 1993; Gillen-O'Neel, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2011). Because it is so readily condoned and reflects conventional expectations about gender roles, children view gender exclusion, overall, as more legitimate than exclusion based on race (Killen, Sinno, & Margie, 2007). By limiting certain experiences based solely on gender, such as engaging in gender-identified skills and academic arenas (e.g., studying mathematics or engineering), individuals are less likely to develop and feel competent in skills related to these domains. Gender roles, traditions, customs, and rituals, prescribed by societal standards, are reflected in children's and adolescents' social environment and are pervasive in the adult world (Horn, 2006; Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002). Overall, research shows that discrimination and prejudice are a key part of daily life for many children and adolescents; consequently, they are regularly denied equity and justice.

## Developmental Origins of Discrimination and Prejudice

An important set of issues pertains to the source of this discriminatory treatment: Where does it come from? Historically, there was an assumption that children learned prejudice from adults, who transmit negative messages and often explicit stereotypes. However, very few studies found significant correlations between parental attitudes and children's level of prejudice (see Aboud & Levy, 2000). While few studies find a one-to-one correlation between parental levels of prejudice and children's level, adults (and parents) clearly are a significant source of influence on children's development of group identity, exposure to other groups (e.g., outgroups) and the value of intergroup tolerance and mutual respect (e.g., authority sanctioning of tolerance is related to prejudice reduction in Allport's [1954] intergroup contact theory, see below). Adults and parents are also significant sources of influence regarding direct and indirect messages about group distinctiveness (see Bigler & Liben, 2006). Despite these studies, it has been difficult to draw strong causal inferences regarding the effect of parental attitudes on children's attitudes because of the lack of well-designed longitudinal or experimental studies.

Meanwhile, researchers have found that studying children's cognitive and social cognitive abilities and competences, as well as their social identity, social relationships and exchanges with peers and adults, provides some answers for understanding how prejudice emerges. Moreover, addressing prejudice and discrimination is important for all children, not just for those who are the recipients of negative treatment. Intervention needs to address the general attitudes of children towards others who are perceived as members of outgroups. Further, intervention programs have to account for the factors that contribute to intergroup attitudes given that children in the majority group are often, but not always, perpetrators of prejudicial attitudes.

In part due to recognition of the situation described above, there has been a new emphasis of research in the past decade, from multiple theoretical perspectives, on how children experience discrimination and prejudice, with a focus on how it emerges in the context of childhood interactions with peers and adults. This new body of research has demonstrated the ways in which children experience prejudice from the adult world as well as from the peer world, and the precursors and consequences of this type of inter-individual treatment. Not surprisingly, this research reflects an international focus due, in large part, to changing demographics and migration patterns around the world that have created heterogeneously ethnic and cultural communities for children that were once homogeneous. With diversity come challenges and also new opportunities to learn about different cultures. The challenges that are faced by members of cultures living together pertain to the negative stereotypes and outgroup threat that emerge, which are often communicated to children.

As delineated in Table 2, group status and group identity are both factors that must be included in programs for intervention. Status is reflective of one's role in the cultural hierarchy and the associated power that comes with such an identified status. For example, girls often experience lower status than boys; similarly, ethnic minority individuals, who often are from low socioeconomic strata, tend to experience lower status than ethnic majority individuals. Prejudice is typically shown towards social groups that lack status, prestige, power, and social capital within society (e.g., asylum seekers, the poor or members of low income populations), and these forms of prejudice are highly likely to result in discrimination and negative outcomes (i.e., well-being, depression, anxiety) for children belonging to these groups. Sometimes negative attitudes may also be expressed towards social groups that maintain high status within society. Further, the minority-majority status schema does not address issues of inter-ethnic conflict and intergroup conflict in schools and neighborhoods that reflect tensions between groups of the same status. Yet the source of tension is often a result of group positions within a culture in which discrimination and negative attitudes are displayed and sometimes promoted. Therefore, when considering policies and interventions to promote equity and justice, there is a need to closely examine the social status of groups in any given society or culture.

Immigrants, and especially asylum seekers, are typically low status groups in many societies, and they experience much prejudice and discrimination (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, & Schulz, 2001). Research suggests that negative attitudes toward immigrants have become common across Europe and North America in recent years (Zick, Pettigrew, & Wagner, 2008). Despite the fact that majority children interact with their immigrant counterparts in school as well as other peer settings, only recently have developmental studies begun to examine young people's attitudes toward and perceptions of immigrants (Brown, 2008; Cameron et al., 2006).

In the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and other parts of Europe, fears about asylum-seekers and immigrants have become a major issue in debates about multiculturalism, immigration, and assimilation (see Lynn & Lea, 2003; Muss, 1997). Verkuyten and Steenhuis (2005) examined ethnically Dutch preadolescents' friendship attitudes about Dutch and Moroccan peers living in the Netherlands, plus asylum-seeker peers wishing to live in the Netherlands. They found that ethnic Dutch preadolescents evaluated asylum-seeking peers more negatively than Dutch or Moroccan peers. In addition, studies conducted with ethnic Dutch adolescents (12- to 18-year-olds) found less tolerance for the political rights of Muslims than similar rights for non-Muslims (Verkuyten & Slooter, 2007). Ethnic majority adolescents held more negative beliefs and showed less tolerance toward Muslim practices (e.g., wearing a head scarf) that were at odds with participants' own values and had greater societal implications. The findings are due in large part to the role of Dutch national identity and the ongoing negative political discourse surrounding Muslims and Islam in the Netherlands.

In the United States, concerns over Latino immigration and illegal immigrants are especially strong (see Deaux, 2006; Espenshade & Belanger, 1998). Brown (2011) recently examined 5- to 11-year-old European American children's attitudes about immigrants and illegal immigration. Many children in that study were aware of the current immigration debate and held positive attitudes concerning legal immigration. While the majority of children were opposed to illegal immigration, they nevertheless believed that immigrants with a job should have the right to stay in the country. Further, the majority of children believed that American's anti-immigration sentiments were due to ethnic/cultural discrimination. Finally, in terms of children's attitudes based on immigrants' country of origin, children were more likely to hold negative attitudes toward Mexican immigrants than children of other countries of origin. These findings provide evidence for the ways that membership in different groups, with different social statuses, contributes to experiences of discrimination and prejudicial attitudes.

In Table 2, we also indicate that the societal and historical context for a group is related to experiences of discrimination and must be considered in intervention programs. The historical context for discrimination in a given context has to be understood. The salience of group identification category changes over time, and the basis for negative inter-individual treatment is contingent on the reason for marginalization of a given cultural group. As one example, explicit gender discrimination has diminished over time in European countries and North America but has continued to contribute to extreme gender inequality and maltreatment in the Middle Eastern and African countries where females experience explicit denial of rights, lack of access to education, and lack of autonomy. Regarding the historical context, African Americans who were brought to the United States in slavery experienced a negative campaign to dissolve families over a 150-year period, which is in contrast to other U.S. immigrant groups that migrated for better education and welfare within the past few decades, moving to the United States from educated and intact familial arrangements.

The historical context in Europe reflects a dramatic set of changes in the past two decades, with immigrants from Northern Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe relocating to Northern European countries, such as Scandinavia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the Netherlands not previously integrated by ethnicity, religion, or nationality (see Hitti, Mulvey, & Killen, 2011; Jugert, Noack, & Rutland, 2011; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). As another example, Central Americans migrating to Spain have experienced exclusion from the mainstream European Spanish communities, despite the shared heritage and common language (Enesco, Guerrero, Callejas, & Solbes, 2008). Educating children about the historical factors that contribute to patterns of discrimination (and the reasons why) helps to reduce normative societal expectations that contribute to prejudice, bias, and exclusion (Hughes, Bigler, & Levy, 2007).

## Prejudice Reflected in Peer Relationships is Distinct from Personality Factors

While the majority of child development research has focused on well-being, most of this research has examined the trajectories of aggression and social withdrawal from an individual differences social deficit model, pointing to its negative psychological consequences. An individual social deficit model is one in which individual personality factors, such as temperamental and social-emotional traits, are identified and shown to contribute to maladaptive peer relationships that have a host of negative outcomes such as depression, loneliness, social withdrawal, and poor academic achievement (Bierman, 2004; Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 2006). Along with this focus has been one on the general societal stress factors

such as poverty and dysfunctional parenting conditions that contribute to poor social skills, dysfunctional peer and adult-child relationships, and the lack of readiness for school success. These approaches to childhood well-being have successfully diagnosed personality traits that contribute to maladaptive outcomes, explaining why, for example, one child becomes a bully and another child becomes a victim by focusing on temperament (extreme lack of inhibition such as aggression and lack of social control vs. extreme shyness, fearfulness, and wariness). Further, these dispositions predict maladaptive social relationships as well as negative outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and social withdrawal. The focus is on developmental psychopathology, that is, when children's behavior does not reflect mainstream or "normative" childhood profiles. Interventions are designed to train children who are rejected and victimized to learn new social skills.

Mainstream social expectations expressed by parents and the wider society also contribute to childhood discrimination and prejudicial experiences and, in many cases, reflect normative expectations about what it means to be socialized, adjusted, and acculturated (Fisher et al., 1998; McLoyd, 2006; Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003). Moreover, well-adjusted children have the potential to perpetuate negative inter-individual peer treatment, sometimes explicitly but often implicitly. Hierarchies, status, and power exist in children's worlds as well as the adult world. Children who are members of high status groups are also at risk for perpetuating negative treatment of others based on status and societal expectations. As an example, ethnic majority children often perpetuate negative societal expectations about ethnic minority children, contributing to the cycle of prejudice (Killen & Rutland, 2011). As another illustration, boys who hold negative expectations about girls based solely on group membership (gender) can contribute to gender discrimination as well (Arthur, Bigler, Liben, Gelman, & Ruble, 2008).

The long-term consequences of experiencing prejudice are not necessarily the same as those associated with rejection stemming from individual differences in personality traits and temperament (e.g., shy, fearful, wariness). For example, African American children who experience low public regard report feeling stressed over a year-long period, and this stress is connected to academic achievement (Cooper, McLoyd, Wood, & Hardaway, 2008); the negative outcomes continue into young adulthood (Rivas-Drake, 2011). Public regard is a construct identified by Sellers and colleagues for children's view about societal perspectives on their own group membership (Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006).

While the problems of prejudice and discrimination exist around the world, the most detailed documentation of the negative outcomes regarding these experiences for children has been from research on ethnic minority status in the United States, and most pointedly focused on African American children. Within the U.S. context, research has expanded to understand the multiple ways in which prejudice has negative outcomes for ethnic minority children from different cultural backgrounds, such as Asian, Latino, and Middle Eastern, on social, familial, and school measures of well-being (Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2011). Nonetheless, the general problems that are associated with childhood discrimination and well-being pertain to the international community and are reflected in the CRC, which is becoming a strong focus for research and, very recently, for intervention programs.

One of the crucial differences between forms of peer exclusion stemming from stereotypes or prejudice and social rejection derived from temperament or individual differences has to do with the nature of intervention. Whereas a shy and fearful child who is victimized may need social skills training, it would be inappropriate to assume that an African American girl (or Muslim boy) who is victimized needs social skills training. Instead, the intervention has to focus at the group level source of the victimization. This is not to say that there are no social deficits associated with prejudice and discrimination or that social skills training is not necessary. Instead, the point is that there is another level of information that must be ascertained before determining the appropriate form of intervention. Adults, educators, policy-makers, and parents need to be informed about children's expectations of others based on group membership so as to determine how to promote equity in the world of peer relationships, which has implications for the origins and emergence of prejudice for humankind.

Extensive research in social psychology with adult populations over the past 50 years has demonstrated that discrimination, prejudice, and bias often stem from normative expectations in societies, messages that are disseminated as an outcome of social categorization, social identity, and group processes (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2006; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). In fact, social psychology research on prejudice underwent a change in focus in the 1960s from explanations about prejudice based on individual psychopathology, as formulated by personality

psychologists (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950), to approaches that investigated intergroup attitudes (e.g., dislike of the outgroup, preference for the ingroup), proposing that negative feelings and beliefs stem from general processes of social categorization and identification with groups.

The past 15 years have witnessed a burgeoning body of research in child development and developmental science that has confirmed and extended the social psychological account of exclusion and bias by providing evidence for how children's categorization and group identity contributes to the experience of social exclusion. This includes the perpetuation and experience of social exclusion in daily encounters and social exchanges on the playground, in the cafeteria, and eventually in the workforce. Contrary to what some theories have predicted or what some adults might expect, children experience and perceive discrimination, social exclusion, bias, and prejudice; they are not immune to it, nor are they oblivious to it. Depending on the severity and how it is defined, children report discrimination and discuss explicit prejudice and bias (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003; Killen et al., 2007). Effective interventions must account for the multifaceted nature of prejudice in childhood.

## How Do Children Perpetuate Prejudice?

Early research on majority status children's prejudice focused on young children's assignment of negative and positive traits based on race, revealing the cognitive constraints associated with not fully understanding how to weigh multiple dimensions simultaneously (Aboud, 1988). Young children often assigned positive traits to their own group and negative traits to the outgroup, while older children assigned positive and negative traits to both groups. This ability was related to general cognitive development capacities such as categorization and flexibility of thought. These studies found that trait assignment reflecting ingroup bias emerged during the preschool period and declined around 9 years of age. With age, ingroup bias is applied to peer interaction contexts that involve friendship and group interactions (Graham, Taylor, & Ho, 2009). Thus, research expanded to include new ways of examining discrimination and prejudice in childhood, drawing from other areas of psychological research such as moral judgment, social identity theory, group identity, social cognitive development, and social categorization theory. This expansion of the research enabled new knowledge to be accumulated to widen the focus of how prejudice and discrimination manifests from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

The expansion of the research agenda also revealed the complexity of prejudice in childhood, focusing on distinctions between the type of prejudice, how it manifests, factors that contribute to the perpetuation of prejudice in peer interactions, the role of peer exchanges in reducing prejudice, and the negative consequences that ensue when children experience and perpetuate prejudicial attitudes (for reviews, see Levy & Killen, 2008; Quintana & McKown, 2007; Rutland, Abrams, & Levy, 2007). These research programs provide essential information for creating and implementing effective intervention programs.

## Children's Well-Being, Moral Judgment, and Peer Relationships

Children's early social and moral orientations are important foundations for challenging, resisting, and rejecting discrimination and social exclusionary practices in peer contexts. Extensive research over several decades has documented children's moral judgments (Smetana, 2006), engagement and spontaneous caring for others (Hastings, Zahn-Waxler, & McShane, 2006), their prosocial perspective (Eisenberg, 2000; Rubin et al., 2006), and gravitation to peers and group affiliation (Nesdale & Lawson, 2011). Early moral orientations do not decrease with age; instead, group functioning and conventional reasoning increases with age as children become more aware of group dynamics, group functioning, conventions and traditions of groups. This increase can create potential conflicts, particularly in intergroup settings in which the group or group dynamics are important (Rutland et al., 2010).

While children are aware of group dynamics, they often reject stereotypic expectations when deciding who to include in a group, even when the outsider might not fit the expectations (e.g., including a boy to play with dolls or a girl to play with trucks; Conry-Murray & Turiel, in press; Killen, Pisacane, Lee-Kim, & Ardila-Rey, 2001). There is evidence that children's cross-race friendships are similar in most ways regarding the quality of relationship to same-race friendships (Aboud, Mendelson, & Purdy, 2003). With age, children also reject parental messages to refrain from cross-race friendships (Killen et al., 2002). While there is evidence to demonstrate that bias and ingroup preference exists in childhood, there are also data to support the spontaneous moral orientation in early childhood (Vaish et al., 2009). This early orientation can

be channeled to reject stereotypes and biases, especially when peer and adult messages support the motivation to act in a fair and just manner towards others.

## Recommendations for Interventions in Childhood

This section of the report includes recommendations for interventions, focusing on peer-to-peer, adult-child (including parent-child and teacher-child) interactions, and children's social cognitive development. Supplementing this brief review are six examples of interventions, depicted in boxes, which were chosen to demonstrate the international efforts, respectively, in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Europe, Northern Ireland, and South Africa to promote equity, tolerance, and justice in children's lives. Child development experts and researchers were contacted and invited to submit a brief statement about how their programs address the issues reflected in this *Social Policy Report* (for citations regarding the findings, contact the authors identified in the boxes). It should be noted that the six examples do not, by any means, reflect an exhaustive list, but instead are illustrative of the burgeoning efforts to address these important issues. In the section below, we discuss how gearing interventions to focus on social interactions and children's social cognition and moral judgment have the potential to reduce prejudice and foster equity in childhood.

### TEACHING TOLERANCE Organization – USA

www.tolerance.org

Sent from: Maureen Costello, Director, Teaching Tolerance
Email: maureen.costello@splcenter.org

Teaching Tolerance creates free education resources that promote understanding among students while maintaining rigorous academic standards. Since 1991, the Teaching Tolerance project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has kept diversity issues at the forefront of American education. Through our award-winning self-titled magazine, curriculum kits, website, and other programming, Teaching Tolerance has touched the hearts and minds of millions of students and teachers with lessons about respect, equality, and social justice. For students targeted by bigotry, school can be an exercise of survival, and learning can be difficult. Even a single incident of exclusion or biased-based bullying can affect a student's academic performance.

Teaching Tolerance materials positively impact the attitudes and behaviors of both students and teachers. Our resources have helped deepen their understanding of diversity, raise awareness of social problems, and increase behaviors that counteract these issues. Educators also report that the materials help them to better serve diverse student communities. All of our materials are free to any educator who requests them, with many of the resources available online to overcome any geographical barriers. Each year Teaching Tolerance touches the lives of more than 12 million students from all 50 states.

### Peer Relationships as a Factor for Reducing Children's Prejudice

Peer relationships, and specifically cross-group friendships, are a central factor for reducing prejudice (Tropp & Prenovost, 2008). In fact, social psychological theories about intergroup contact indicate that peer relationships are the most significant factor that reduce prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). The underlying theory behind the intergroup contact hypothesis is that contact with others from another group should expose individuals to stereotype disconfirming information resulting in more positive attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward this group (Allport, 1954). Intergroup contact hypothesis also identifies the optimal conditions that must be met for contact with members of outgroups to reduce prejudice, with the most significant findings related to cross-group friendship (Tropp & Prenovost, 2008). These optimal conditions include: 1) *equal status* between groups (i.e., no group is seen to be valued or respected more than another), 2) support of *institutional authorities* like schools (i.e., authority figures are seen to support and promote positive contact between those from different groups), 3) *common goals* (i.e., each group shares the same goals when individuals from each group meet), and 4) *cooperation* rather than competition between groups (i.e., when the individuals from each group meet they work together to achieve their common goals).

In reality, it may be difficult to create equal status between groups because in any given society groups often vary in their degree of social status. Nonetheless, research suggests that if the contact situation can be set up so each group thinks they have equal status with the other group (e.g., through creating a new activity in which both groups can excel or share a common sense of identity), then the likelihood of more positive intergroup attitudes will be higher (e.g., Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2001). Research also suggests that attitudes can be improved if institutional authorities (e.g., teachers, national and local governments, as well as NGOs) help establish shared norms and

standards for intergroup contact that make it more acceptable and, therefore, more likely to occur (see Pettigrew, 1998). Finally, contact between groups is most effective when groups cooperate to work towards a common goal. Research suggests that when members of different groups work together and rely on each other, such cooperative interdependence reduces negative intergroup attitudes and limits discrimination (e.g., Maras & Brown, 1996; Slavin, 1995).

Research into the effectiveness of the contact hypothesis among children has focused on the relationships between intergroup contact in the form of friendship or common ingroup identity and increases in moral reasoning and prosocial attitudes as well as reductions in outgroup dislike. A meta-analysis of studies examining the influence of contact on children's ethnic or racial intergroup attitudes concluded that contact between children of different groups results in less prejudice, especially when Allport's optimal conditions are in operation within the schools (Tropp & Prenovost, 2008). Research has also indicated that from an early age, ethnically diverse schools or classrooms typically promote more positive inter-ethnic attitudes than more ethnically homogenous schools or classrooms (Feddes, Noack, & Rutland, 2009; McGlothlin & Killen, 2010; Rutland, Cameron, Bennett, & Ferrell, 2005).

However, child development research also shows that compared to same-ethnic friendships, cross-ethnic friendships are relatively rare, less stable than same-ethnic friendships and decrease with age (Kao & Joyner, 2004; Schneider, Dixon, & Udvari, 2007). Therefore, in the context of such segregation, direct contact between different ethnic groups is uncommon. Given this situation, it is reassuring to find evidence that merely being aware of cross-ethnic friendships between members of one's own group and another group can also reduce prejudice (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). This is known as the *extended contact* effect. The idea is that a child's intergroup attitudes can become more positive by just hearing that a member of her own group has a friendship with a child from a different social group. This form of indirect contact means the child is experiencing intergroup contact circuitously via understanding their group is extending its boundaries to connect with outgroup children.

Recent research suggests that extended contact interventions can help reduce prejudice and promote positive attitudes to other groups in both adolescents and young children (Cameron & Rutland, 2008; Cameron, Rutland, Hossain, & Petley, 2011). Cameron and colleagues developed extended contact interventions for children as young as 5 years. These interventions presented to children intergroup contact through illustrated story reading that portrayed friendships between ingroup and outgroup members (e.g., White English children and non-White refugee children). Cameron and colleagues found that intergroup bias was reduced, suggesting that the extended contact stories enabled children, who live in an ethnically homogenous area, to view intergroup friendships to be normative

### SESAME TREE – Northern Ireland

www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/sesame/

Sent from: Charlotte Cole,
VP for International Research, Sesame Street, NYC
Email: charlotte.cole@sesame.org

As Northern Ireland works toward building a shared future, the local Sesame Street project, *Sesame Tree*, is a powerful vehicle for addressing issues of diversity, reconciliation, and mutual respect. The series' own Muppet characters—Hilda, an energetic, inquisitive Irish hare and Potto, an eccentric monster, and other friends—engage young children while addressing important messages about social inclusion. With live action films presenting real children from diverse regions of Northern Ireland, *Sesame Tree* strives to humanize the "other" and foster positive community relations.

A randomized control trial and a naturalistic study examined the educational impact of *Sesame Tree* on a range of skills such as inclusiveness of others, interest in cultural events associated with their own and the other's community, and seeing one another as similar or different in relation to the Catholic/Protestant divide (Connolly, Kehoe, Larkin, & Galanouli, 2008; Larkin, Connolly, & Kehoe, 2009). The studies showed that exposure to the *Sesame Tree* show was associated with increased willingness to be inclusive of others (although effects differed between children from the Protestant and Catholic communities). Findings point to the need for carefully planned, age-appropriate and specific content when presenting messages of cross-group respect and understanding and to the importance of tailoring program curricula to the differing needs of opposing groups.

Connolly, P., Kehoe, S., Larkin, E., & Galanouli, D. (2008). *A cluster randomised controlled trial evaluation of the effects of watching Sesame Tree on young children's attitudes and awareness* (Report to Sesame Workshop). Belfast, Northern Ireland: Center for Effective Education, Queens University Belfast.

Larkin, E. Connolly, P., & Kehoe, S. (2009). *A longitudinal study of the effects of young children's natural exposure to Sesame Tree on their attitudes and awareness*. Belfast, Northern Ireland: Center for Effective Education, Queens University Belfast.

and legitimate. Extended contact served to change the norms and expectations about friendship from one based on a notion that friendships are not just composed of same-group relationships but also consist of cross-group relationships.

## Adult-Child Interactions, Communication, and Discourse

Adult levels of prejudice do not determine children's levels, but the messages (direct and indirect) and the forms of communication, discourse, and teaching between adults (as parents and teachers) and children are significantly related to children's group identification and ingroup preference (Bigler & Liben, 2007; Hughes et al., 2007; Levy et al., 2005). Teachers who identify children by group membership (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender) perpetuate categories that create ingroup/outgroup relationships and potential bias and prejudice. One of the few highly successful and theoretically driven organizations to conduct interventions in which adults convey messages to promote tolerance, mutual respect, and justice has been Sesame Street Workshop (see box), and has done so not just in the United States but around the world (Cole, Labin, & del Rocio Galarza, 2008). Collaborating with developmental psychologists and educators, *Sesame Street* has developed media-based interventions focused on areas of high conflict and tension to promote discussion between parents and children, as well as to convey messages to children about intergroup attitudes. Starting in the United States in the latter half of the 20th Century, *Sesame Street* focused on enhancing learning through teaching early reading and math and did so by exposing U.S. children to adults from different racial and ethnic minority groups not previously shown on television. The success of this effort led to the creation of media-based interventions around the world to reduce outgroup threat, increase self-identity, and enhance moral judgments about fairness and equality.

One such show, aired in the Middle East, was evaluated for its effectiveness on children's perceptions of social exclusion and friendship relationships (Cole et al., 2003). The evaluation was designed to focus on the extent to which moral judgment and social inclusion of an outgroup member increased as a function of extended contact. The program involved young children's viewing of a newly produced *Sesame Street* show designed to promote prosocial values in Palestinian (Ramallah), Jewish (Tel Aviv), Jordanian (Amman), and Palestinian-Israeli (Acre) children (Brenick et al., 2010; Cole et al., 2003). The show was a co-production of Israeli and Palestinian children's media providers with Sesame Workshop, and it included bilingual episodes and cross-over segments in which characters from Shara'a Simsim (the Palestinian street) visited characters on the Israeli street (Rechov Sumsum) and vice versa. Here there is, if not explicitly stated, a form of *extended contact* because children from each side of the conflict in the Middle East learned of someone from their group having a positive friendship (i.e., holding hands, laughing, and playing games together) with someone from the other group. These broadcasts also highlighted the religious and ethnic traditions of each respective society, illustrating such core themes as acceptance, friendship, and the

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS—Council of Europe

www.coe.int/t/DG4/AUTOBIOGRAPHY/

Sent from: Martyn Barrett, Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Surrey, Academic Director, Centre for Research on Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism (CRONEM)
Email: Martyn.Barrett@surrey.ac.uk

In 2009, the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE)* was published by the Council of Europe. This educational tool is designed to foster the development of the intercultural competences required for responding positively and effectively to encounters with people from other cultural backgrounds. Designed by a multidisciplinary team of experts, including developmental psychologists, the AIE was piloted successfully in 14 countries prior to publication. The AIE aims to equip students with the following intercultural competences: respect for cultural otherness; empathy for cultural others; multiperspectivity; tolerance of ambiguity; skills of interpreting other cultures; awareness of intercultural communication processes; skills of interaction; and critical cultural awareness.

The AIE consists of a series of questions that ask the student to think about a particular intercultural encounter which they themselves have experienced, about how they responded to the encounter, how they think others in the encounter responded, how they thought and felt about it at the time, and how they think and feel about it now. The sequence of questions is designed to scaffold the student's thinking about the encounter. The AIE is used repeatedly over a period of time in relationship to different intercultural encounters, and through this repeated use, the student's intercultural competences are gradually enhanced. There are two version of the AIE, a *Standard* version aimed at older students who can use the AIE on their own, and a *Younger Learners* version intended for children up to the age of about 10-12 years. Both versions of the AIE, and a range of supporting materials, can be freely downloaded from the website.

appreciation of similarities and differences.

The pre-test/post-test assessment involved individually administered interviews with children in which they were asked to evaluate peer interaction encounters involving exclusion based on cultural membership. The evaluations of this intervention demonstrated that in all cultural contexts there were increases in the expectation that children from different cultural backgrounds could be friends and that it would be wrong to exclude someone on the basis of cultural membership. When presented with moral reasoning problems (e.g., exclusion from a group based on gender or cultural membership) after exposure to *Sesame Street*, a majority of children responded with positive or inclusive moral explanations (see for more details, Brenick, et al., 2007).

Similar effects from broadcast media interventions are seen with Macedonian, Albanian, Roma, and Turkish children who all showed increases in positive attitudes towards members of their own and the other group(s) after viewing *Nashe Maalo (Our Neighborhood)*, a children's television program that represented children from each of the four ethnicities in an effort to promote mutual respect and understanding (Cole et al., 2008). Other positive effects of viewing *Nashe Maalo* included higher ratings of self-perception, higher percentages of correctly identifying the other ethnic languages, and higher percentages of willingness to invite children from another ethnic group into their home (Common Ground Productions, Search for Common Ground in Macedonia, & Sesame Workshop, 2000). These findings are all the more impressive given the high level of conflict between these groups. Overall, the studies described above suggest the effectiveness of the moral judgment, cross-group friendships, and contact approaches included in Table 2.

A type of intervention commonly used in many societies is multicultural education that focuses on promoting tolerance, awareness of discrimination, cultural understanding, and the reduction of prejudice. Multicultural approaches in the areas of education and societal change include the complex problem of both celebrating diversity by respecting cultural identities and, at the same time, recognizing that such identities are often viewed in negative terms by the majority group (Verkuyten, 2008). Multicultural interventions are often not founded upon research evidence drawn from psychology or any other social science. Nonetheless, there are some examples of research that have examined the effectiveness of different sources of influence within a school context (e.g., storybooks, videos, games, and activities) to promote multicultural awareness. For example, one intervention conducted with fourth grade children in Hawaii held over a 10-week period used a variety of methods (e.g., multicultural bingo, hands-on activity) to encourage children to address their ethnic and cultural differences and similarities. This study found the teachers, but not the children, reported more cooperative social interaction among the different ethnic groups (Salzman & D'Andrea, 2011). Other research suggests that multicultural interventions

### THE BANDUNG PROJECT TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR ETHNIC DIVERSITY—Indonesia

www.unaglobal.org/en/projects/The_Bandung_Project_in_Indonesia

Sent from: Frances Aboud, Professor, McGill University, on behalf of the Quantitative Evaluation Learning Group
Email: Frances.aboud@mcgill.ca

The mission is to provide multi-ethnic materials and activities for children age 3 to 8 years in order to promote respect for ethnic diversity and inclusion in the formative early childhood years. Indonesian educators and families support the concept of ethnic diversity within a framework of national unity. In keeping with this goal, Peace Generation booklets and school activities have been widely disseminated and accepted by primary schools around Indonesia. Education media developer Pak Irfan Amalee, in collaboration with Mizan Publishing, received national and international recognition for his 10 booklets addressing prejudice, discrimination, and bullying among school children. Early childhood educators have expressed a need for materials that will enhance literacy at the same time as they develop social-moral competencies regarding ethnic diversity.

After reviewing programs used around the world to enhance respect and inclusion of ethnic diversity, an approach that suited the Indonesian context entailed the use of storybooks about close friends from different ethnic/religious groups. The friendship bond provides a warm, exciting and accepting relationship in which children can participate vicariously by identifying with one or more of the children. The main message concerns multiethnic friendship and how the bond of friendship (and unity of Indonesian nationality) introduces children to ethnic practices and differences in a positive light. The hub partnership started with Una, Peace Generation, and Irfan Amalee. The partnership broadened after a Mini-Conference entitled "Multicultural Lessons for Young Children" held on May 13, 2010 in Jakarta. Three preschool programmers were willing and interested in examining the literacy and social benefits of story books. The membership in the partnership is expanding, and the story books will be used to promote positive friendships.

can often be ineffective and even have detrimental effects on children's intergroup attitudes: highlighting certain stereotypical activities (e.g., songs or cultural practices), sometimes reinforce negative ethnic stereotypes (Bigler, 1999).

There has been, however, some research that suggests multicultural education helps create a school climate that promotes positive attention to cultural diversity, deals with negative interactions between children from different groups, and promotes tolerance to others from diverse cultures (see Verkuyten, 2008). For example, research in the United States shows that explicitly teaching 6-to 11-year-old European-American children about historical racial discrimination can improve their racial attitudes (Pfeifer, Ruble, et al., 2007). Hughes, Bigler, and Levy (2007) showed that European-American children who learned about historical racism held more positive and less negative attitudes towards African Americans, and they also showed an increase in the degree to which they valued racial fairness.

Since 1985, the Dutch education system legally required schools to follow a multicultural curriculum to improve children's understanding of cultural differences, limit prejudice and discrimination, and promote moral reasoning about showing fairness to those from all groups (although with the recent backlash towards multiculturalism many of these requirements have changed; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). In reality, many Dutch schools implement little multicultural education, and, even when it is undertaken, there is a lack of research examining effectiveness. Rare examples of such research are the studies by Verkuyten and colleagues about the effects of multicultural education on children and adolescent's experiences of social exclusion and their intergroup attitudes (Verkuyten, 2008). As mentioned previously, ethnic victimization in the form of racist name calling is a common form of bullying in schools (Njoroge, Benton, Lewis, & Njoroge, 2009). Verkuyten and Thijis (2002) examined how this type of social exclusion amongst Dutch, Turkish Dutch, Moroccan Dutch, and Surinamese Dutch pre-adolescents is related to school (de) segregation and multicultural education. They surveyed 10- to-12-year-olds from 178 classrooms in 82 elementary schools across the Netherlands. A multilevel analysis showed that personal experience and perceptions of ethnic name calling, teasing, and exclusion in the playground were determined independently by classroom settings and structure. In particular, Verkuyten and Thijs (2001) found that children experienced less exclusion if they believed they could tell the teachers about unfair behavior towards them and that the teacher would take action. Dutch children also reported more awareness of ethnic exclusion if they said their classes spent more time discussing multicultural issues (e.g., the need to be fair to others from different countries and recognize different cultures within the class and society). Other studies have also shown that 10- to 13-year-old Dutch and Turkish Dutch children reporting higher levels of multicultural education in the classroom showed less ethnic intergroup

### PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH CHILDREN'S RIGHTS EDUCATION— Canada and the United Kingdom

www.cbu.ca/crc and
www3.hants.gov.uk/education/childrensrights/

Sent from: Katherine Covell, Professor, Department of Psychology, Cape Breton University, and Executive Director, Children's Rights Centre, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada.
Email: Katherine_Covell@cbu.ca

Children's rights education describes a values framework for schooling that has as its core the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It requires that educational practices are consistent with the Convention, especially the right of all children to meaningful participation, and that the teaching of rights is integrated into all curricula. Curricula and programs of children's rights education have been developed and assessed in Canada and the United Kingdom. Evaluation data consistently have shown their capacity to promote social justice and equity (Covell & Howe, 2001; Howe & Covell, 2005). Children's attitudes toward each other become more positive, respectful, and supportive, including their attitudes toward minority children and those with educational challenges. Their attitudes reflect increased concern for all others, increased support for the rights of others, and a collective sense of social responsibility. For example, children become more interested in social justice issues such as discrimination, peace, war, injustice, and hunger. These attitudinal changes are impelled in part by the more adult-like understanding children gain of the nature of rights—as entitlements for all whose enjoyment requires respect. Children and their teachers report fewer social problems in school, most notably decreased bullying and fighting, the use of rights discourse to settle differences, and more positive behaviors in school.

Covell, K., & Howe, R. B. (2001). *The challenge of children's rights for Canada*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
Howe, R. B., & Covell, K. (2005). *Empowering children: Children's rights education as a pathway to citizenship*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

bias (Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2001).

These studies indicate that the local multicultural context within the classroom can help limit ethnic exclusion and the development of negative ethnic intergroup attitudes. Verkuyten (2008) contends that the actual practices in the classroom (e.g., teachers who dealt with examples of ethnic exclusion and discussed the need for fairness towards all cultures) help establish a positive inclusive group norm within the classroom that discourages social exclusion. In contrast, more formal aspects of multicultural education (e.g., teaching children about cultural traditions held by different ethnic groups) acted to limit negative attitudes by improving children's knowledge and understanding. Verkuyten and Thijs (2001, 2002) also found that ethnic minority Dutch children reported more ethnic victimization and exclusion if they attended ethnically non-mixed schools (i.e., where White Dutch children were clearly in the majority), and White Dutch children showed more ethnic intergroup bias if they attended these same ethnic non-mixed schools. These findings suggest the ethnic composition of a school influences the level of social exclusion and intergroup bias shown by children.

## MONITORING CHILD WELL-BEING: A SOUTH AFRICAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Sent from: Andrew Dawes, Emeritus Professor at the University of Cape Town, and an Associate Fellow in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention at the University of Oxford.
Email: Adkinloch1@gmail.com

*Monitoring Child Well-Being: A South African Rights-Based Approach* arose from concerns about the lack of data, indicators, and measures in many areas and the need to provide a sound child well-being monitoring system for South Africa. Its unique rights-based perspective takes into account not only the status of children but also the contexts within which children grow and develop. It is also designed to monitor the performance of duty-bearers—those responsible for ensuring children's rights and well-being. The publication uses a common conceptual framework for the construction of indicators in the domains of child poverty, child survival and health (including mental health and disability), education and development (including early childhood), and protection (including child maltreatment, labor, and children in the justice system).

### Social Cognitive Judgments Related to Prejudice Reduction

As we have delineated, intervention programs should ascertain children's social cognitive understandings about morality (fairness, equality, and justice concepts), group identity (affiliations with groups, both ingroup and outgroup), group status, as well as the societal and historical context of prejudice and discrimination. Age-related changes from preschool to adolescence in each of these areas are robust, and incorporating how children conceptualize group identity, for example, is crucial for structuring an intervention program (Raabe & Beelman, 2011). Peer relationships and adult-child interactions have a different impact on promoting equity, tolerance, and justice in the preschool years, childhood, and adolescent years, due to the developing, changing, and evolving mental life of children, and specifically concepts about the social world.

As discussed above, while cross-group friendships are related to prejudice reduction, cross-group friendships also decline with age. Promoting cross-group friendships, however, requires knowledge about how children experience and think about friendships. With age, friendships are no longer just about common activities that you play together but reflect shared interests, shared group identity, and concerns about group dynamics (how to make groups work effectively). Moral judgments about the fair treatment of others, and specifically peers, changes from a focus on turn-taking in small groups to allocating resources with individuals in other cultures and communities. Children's knowledge about these constructs changes dramatically with age, and taking this information into account results in programs that are developmentally appropriate from a social-cognitive perspective. Teaching children about prejudice, without determining their interpretation and conceptualization about friendships, groups and the application of moral concepts and societal conventions to friendship, group, and adult-child interactions, will not be effective. Given the complexity of issues surrounding prejudice and discrimination in adulthood, it is important to intervene early when children are just becoming aware of and forming groups that may lead to potential prejudice; moreover, stereotypes and biases that are not checked or challenged become deeply entrenched by adulthood.

## Conclusions

Children are the future of society and the leaders of the next generation. Discrimination, prejudice, and bias contribute to individual, societal, and global stress, tension, conflict, and, in extreme cases, genocide. Reframing "child well-being" to include sources that stem not only from individual personality and psychopathological origins but also to the social cognitive developmental origins that include early categorization, group identity, moral judgment, and intergroup attitudes is essential. Early categorization and group identity, in particular, often reflect hierarchical societal arrangements and status. Implementing interventions that specifically target these expectations, messages, and constructs to promote equity, tolerance, and justice is an important step towards fostering a more just and fair world. ■


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Correspondence concerning this report should be addressed to Melanie Killen, Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology, 3304 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20742-1131. Email: mkillen@umd.edu

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## Commentary

# The Vital Role of Social Science in Successfully Combating Discriminatory Harrassment in K-12 School

**Richard W. Cole**
**Boston, MA**

Through their extensive literature review, authors Killen, Rutland, and Ruck examine the range of complex factors impacting youth's concepts and perceptions about equity, tolerance, and justice. While recognizing the role of individual psychological characteristics and experiences, they identify social categorization, group identity, moral judgment, and intergroup attitudes as significant in how discriminatory stereotypes and prejudice develop. Despite the extensive array of persuasive social science literature they cite, the authors point out that, "[s]urprisingly, interventions to promote equity, tolerance, and justice in childhood are not widespread and are rarely informed by developmental theory and research"(Killen, Rutland & Ruck, p.3).

Regrettably, this bleak observation confirms my two decades of experience working in K-12 schools on issues of equity and discriminatory harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, and religion. The widespread lack of familiarity among K-12 educators is alarming. Discriminatory harassment and student conflicts rooted in prejudice and group-based stereotypes pervasively damage school climate and jeopardize student safety, often causing serious educational and emotional harm to students. Further, federal anti-discrimination laws place significant legal responsibilities on K-12 educators to take effective disciplinary, corrective, and remedial actions. Such actions are needed to stop severe, persistent, and pervasive forms of harassment, prevent their reoccurrence, and remedy harmful effects on individual victims, other students, and the overall school community (US Dept. of Education). Nevertheless, the widespread lack of fluency with the research and its application is not surprising. Promoting equity, tolerance, and justice while addressing and remediating stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination is hardly a priority in schools of education, in educator professional development, or in school improvement plans or anti-bullying initiatives.

In their research review, the authors identify the contact hypothesis as an established intervention-based strategy for promoting young people's attitudes of equity, tolerance, and justice and overcoming stereotypes and discrimination (Killen, Rutland & Ruck, p. 13–16). Educators and social scientists found compelling support for the contact hypothesis through its implementation in the racially and ethnically diverse public schools of the City of Lynn, Massachusetts (Cole, 2007). In response to a federal court constitutional challenge to Lynn's school integration plan, two renowned social science experts, including Dr. Melanie Killen, carefully assessed the value and success of applying the contact hypothesis in this diverse urban school setting. These experts connected social science theory and research with the extensive efforts by Lynn schools to promote equity, tolerance, and justice. They established that through Lynn's long-term application of the four essential conditions of the contact hypothesis, its schools and students made extraordinary gains on multiple measures (academic, educational, school climate, social, race relations, and intergroup conflict). A leading national expert on education and educational equity supported their findings. In affirming the constitutionality of Lynn's integration plan, the federal courts relied extensively on the social science research and the experts' study of the city's schools (Comfort v. Lynn School Committee, 2005).

The authors' research review highlights how vital it is for educators and other K-12 professionals to

familiarize themselves fully with the relevant developmental theory and research. Also, they must learn how to practically apply these teachings on an individual, intergroup, and school-wide basis. It is critical not only for assessing the causes and motivations for children's discriminatory attitudes and behaviors but also for tailoring strategies to successfully prevent and remedy discriminatory harrassment.

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## Commentary

# Cross-Ethnic Friendships and Parents

**Maykel Verkuyten**
**Ercomer, Utrecht University**

In their *Social Policy Report*, Melanie Killen, Adam Rutland, and Martin Ruck provide an informative, balanced, and useful overview of the developmental research on childhood discrimination and prejudice. They discuss four common misperceptions, identify lacunas in the research literature, and present important recommendations for interventions. A main recommendation is based on social psychological research and relates to the critical role of intergroup contact for reducing children's prejudices. In addition to what Killen et al. write about this, I briefly want to raise some other issues, in particular the role of parents in stimulating cross-ethnic friendships. In doing so, I will identify relevant research directions for the further development and implementation of successful interventions.

A recent meta-analysis indicates clear positive effects of intergroup contact on reducing children's prejudice (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011; Tropp & Prenovost, 2008). Even slight contact opportunities in school appear to be enough to foster a decrease in prejudice, and cross-group friendships is a particularly powerful factor for reducing ethnic and racial prejudice. Thus, contact-based interventions in schools is an especially important way of improving children's prejudicial attitudes, in particular the attitudes of majority group children (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011). However, contact-based programs are difficult to implement in schools in which minority members are absent, and—as I will argue—the effectiveness of these programs might also depend on the parents.

Sociologists use the framework of *preferences*, *opportunities*, and *third parties* for examining intergroup friendships (Kalmijn, 1998). First, research on homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001) and the *similarity-attraction* mechanism shows that people often have a preference for similar others that makes same-ethnic friendships more likely than cross-ethnic friendships. How strong this preference is for children is probably affected by their socialization and can be expected to be related to parents' ethnic attitudes. Longitudinal research indicates that the inter-generational transmission of ethnic attitudes is not a one-way process, but that the impact of the parents on their (adolescent) children is larger than vice versa (e.g., Vollebergh, Iedema, & Raaijmakers, 2001). In addition, children's preferences might also be related to the social network of their parents, but there is no research on this. Following the extended contact effect as discussed by Killen et al., it can be argued that the ethnic diversity of the parents' social network may provide norms or information by which the image of the ethnic outgroup can be improved. Furthermore, this network might also affect the opportunities for children to meet members of other ethnic groups.

Whether preferences result in actual friendships depends on the *opportunity* structure, the extent to which children meet same- and cross-ethnic others. This points to the role of parents' social networks and school choice for their children, along with school composition. For example, parents' strategies to avoid desegregation policies may have led to a *White flight* from mixed schools in the United States in the 1970s and is also a current phenomenon in other countries. Parents may resist multi-ethnic schools because they are concerned about the negative effects on their children's school achievement or they may disapprove of specific norms and values of other cultural groups.

The third element of the framework concerns *third parties* that are not directly part of the contact but can have an influence on cross-ethnic attitudes and relations. Parents and schools are third parties—or influential authorities—that can affect the preferences, opportunities, and behaviors of children. For example, research has found that parents consider academic performance as well as prosocial and deviant behavior of possible friends when trying to influence the friendship selection of their children

(e.g. Knoester, Haynie & Stephens, 2006). A similar influence may occur for cross-ethnic friendship whereby parents have an influence through parental peer management strategies like monitoring, guiding, prohibiting, and supporting their children's behavior.

Parents and schools are two influential third parties that together can have an influence on children's inter-ethnic friendships and, therefore, should be considered in combination. There is research on the transmission of ethnic attitudes between parents and children, and there are various studies on the effect of school characteristics on children's inter-ethnic relations (e.g., Moody, 2001). But the former type of research does not take the role of the school into account, and the latter type ignores the role of parents. However, it can be expected that for schools to have a positive effect on inter-ethnic friendships, parents also must support ethnic integration. For example, working together on common tasks with cross-ethnic classmates can have a positive effect on the number of cross-ethnic friendships for children socialized to be open to ethnic differences, whereas it may trigger feelings of threat or resistance for children who were taught to reject ethnic others. More generally, the optimal contact conditions at school might have a positive effect for children with parents who are open, but a negative effect for children with parents who are resistant to cross-ethnic friendships. In addition, parents' support for cross-ethnic friendships can be expressed by their own cross-ethnic contacts and by peer management strategies that favor or hinder cross-ethnic contacts of their children. This would mean that the effect of the optimal contact conditions at school on cross-ethnic friendships depends on parents' own ethnic integration and their peer management strategies regarding cross-ethnic contacts.

Killen and colleagues have produced a timely and important report. They give an overview of what is known and what needs to be investigated, and they discuss how children's well-being can be improved by addressing discrimination, prejudice, and bias. In addition to their discussion, I have tried to argue that it is important to more systematically consider and examine the role of parents themselves and in relation to what schools can and try to do.

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## Commentary

# Equity and Justice in Developmental Science

**Lonnie Sherrod**
**Society for Research in Child Development**

Diversity is one of the five parts of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)'s strategic plan. The Society has a long history of attention to race and ethnicity. One of SRCD's most longstanding committees is the one focusing on ethnic and racial issues (Ethnic and Racial Issues, ERI). The Society also assists three caucuses focusing on ethnic minority children (Black caucus, Asian caucus, and Latino caucus). For more than a decade, SRCD has sponsored the Millennium Scholars Program which brings ethnic minority undergraduates in the United States to the Biennial Meeting. The SRCD Governing Council (GC) recently formed a task force to address human capital issues and minority representation in the field. The goals of the task force include addressing *recruitment* issues, that is, how to bring more members from under-represented groups into the organization and into the field of developmental science. SRCD was one of the co-sponsors of a leadership retreat on the role of professional associations and scientific societies in enhancing diversity in science, held in Washington, DC in February 2008.

Nonetheless, there are numerous dimensions of diversity other than race and ethnicity. As a result, GC formed a task force to address what else SRCD should be doing to address diversity broadly defined. SRCD, being a scientific organization, is interested in why diversity matters in childhood, what we know about why it matters, how it has been investigated, and what are its consequences for childhood well-being. The task force concluded that the most productive way to pursue diversity from a scientific perspective would be by attending to issues of prejudice, discrimination, equity, justice, rights, and intergroup relations. As the world becomes more global and children grow up in increasingly heterogeneous communities, research on issues of equity and justice becomes even more important to developmental science.

Research on the development of civic engagement, which is of concern to me, has been increasing in recent decades. Nonetheless, a citizen is too often defined as someone who participates by voting, for example, and who obeys laws, and generally contributes to the well-being of society. However, we also want citizens to notice social injustices and take actions to correct them, whether it be voting or taking more drastic action. Yet in our work, we find that adolescents rarely see this as an aspect of citizenship (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008; Sherrod, 2008). This may have to do with how citizenship is measured in adolescence given that other lines of developmental science research have demonstrated that young children as well as adolescents care about equality and fair treatment of others. In this case, for example, if these different lines of research were better integrated, then we would have a fuller understanding of what it means to be an active citizen and how that is reflected in the development of the individual from childhood to adulthood.

Equity and justice reflect goals for healthy child development, and this should be recognized by both developmental scientists and citizens. Healthy child development includes equity and fair treatment, not just safety, food, and shelter. This is especially true for the development of citizenship, and it is also true globally, which is a large part of the justification for the UN Convention on the Rights of Children.

Reflecting the importance of the topic to scientific inquiry, most academic professional organizations have an activity concerned with human rights or social justice. For example, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has a coalition on human rights in which SRCD participates. Hence, it is appropriate that SRCD—as one of the major developmental science organizations

in the field—takes some responsibility for promoting equality and justice within developmental science. The Committee on Equity and Justice will do this.

The GC approved the charge of the Committee on Equity and Justice to be addressing the legitimacy of research on prejudice, discrimination, social justice, equity, intergroup relations, and rights within the field of developmental science, under the purview of SRCD. Three main goals will drive the committee's agenda: 1) Provide directives to move the child development research agenda forward in the area of equity and justice; 2) Address issues of research design and sampling, especially in empirical reporting of research studies; and 3) Connect equity and justice issues in developmental science to policy and programs at the national and international levels.

There will also be a research planning aspect to the Committee's agenda. It will foster the coherence of research by bringing together people in the field who work on different topics under the rubric of prejudice and discrimination, so as to better inform researchers within the field about different methodologies and theories. An effective and productive way to promote visibility of the field within the SRCD organization and membership is to also facilitate communication among researchers who work on the same set of problems but have few opportunities to exchange information about their research programs.

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# About the Authors

**Melanie Killen, Ph.D.** is Professor of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology and Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Training Program in Social Development at the University of Maryland. She conducts research on children's and adolescents' evaluations of social exclusion, prejudicial biases, intergroup attitudes, and moral development. She is the author of *Children and Social Exclusion* (2011) with Adam Rutland, the editor of *Social Development in Childhood and Adolescence: A Contemporary Reader* (2011) with Robert Coplan, and the editor of the *Handbook of Moral Development* (2006) with Judith Smetana. She served on the SRCD Governing Council and is Associate Editor of *Child Development*. She has received funding from NICHD and the National Science Foundation for her research on developmental social cognition, morality, and exclusion.

**Adam Rutland, Ph.D.** is Professor of Developmental Psychology in the Child Development Unit and Centre for the Study of Group Processes at the School of Psychology, University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom (UK). He undertakes research into the development and reduction of children's prejudice, group identity and children's intergroup attitudes, peer relations and cross-ethnic friendships, and children's understanding of group dynamics, group norms, and morality. He has published in journals including *Child Development, Developmental Psychology,* and *Perspectives on Psychological Science* and edited a special issue of the *International Journal of Behavioral Development* on "Social Identity and Intergroup Attitudes in Children and Adolescents" (2007) with Dominic Abrams and Sheri Levy. His research has received funding from the UK's Economic and Social Research Council, British Academy, and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

**Martin D. Ruck, Ph.D.** is an Associate Professor in the Ph.D. Programs in Developmental Psychology and Urban Education at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. His research examines the overall process of cognitive socialization—at the intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and cultural contexts—in terms of children's and adolescents' thinking about human rights, educational opportunity, and social justice. He has conducted recent research investigating the relation between intergroup contact and perceptions of racial exclusion in majority and minority children and youth as well as the role of social experience in children's understanding of nurturance and self-determination rights. His work has appeared in *Child Development, Journal of Early Adolescence, Journal of Research on Adolescence, Journal of Social Issues* and *Social Development*.

**Richard W. Cole, Esq.** is principal of Cole Civil Rights and Safe Schools Consulting in Boston, Massachusetts, www.colecivilrights.com. He is a nationally known civil rights attorney, former Assistant Attorney General and Civil Rights Division Chief in the Massachusetts Office of Attorney General. As a Civil Rights and Safe Schools Consultant, he provides guidance, technical assistance and training to educators and law enforcement in promoting school safety, race relations and equity and addressing harassment, bullying, and hate crimes in schools and cyberspace. He was national co-chair of the federal-state effort resulting in the acclaimed U.S. Department of Education's publication in 1999, *Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime—A Guide for Schools*. He is a graduate of Boston University School of Law and George Washington University.

**Maykel Verkuyten, Ph.D.** is a professor in Interdisciplinary Social Science at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, and academic director of the European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER) at the same university. His research interest is in ethnic identity and inter-ethnic relations.

**Lonnie Sherrod, Ph.D.** is Executive Director of the SRCD and Distinguished Lecturer in Fordham University's Applied Developmental Psychology Program (ADP). Dr. Sherrod has also served as Director of the ADP Program, Co-Director of CARES (Center on Action, Responsibility, and Evaluation Studies), Executive Vice President of the William T. Grant Foundation, Assistant Dean of the Graduate Faculty of the New School, and on the staff of the Social Science Research Council, which promotes new areas of interdisciplinary research.

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*Social Policy Report* (ISSN 1075-7031) is published four times a year by the Society for Research in Child Development. Its purpose is twofold: (1) to provide policymakers with objective reviews of research findings on topics of current national interest, and (2) to inform the SRCD membership about current policy issues relating to children and about the state of relevant research.

## Content

The *Report* provides a forum for scholarly reviews and discussions of developmental research and its implications for policies affecting children. The Society recognizes that few policy issues are noncontroversial, that authors may well have a "point of view," but the *Report* is not intended to be a vehicle for authors to advocate particular positions on issues. Presentations should be balanced, accurate, and inclusive. The publication nonetheless includes the disclaimer that the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Society or the editors.

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