Moral Understanding and Behavior

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

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

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

• Kohlberg (p.384 of Text)
  ○ Preconventional Level
  ○ Conventional Level
  ○ Postconventional Level
Reasoning About Moral Issues

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

• Development of Prosocial Behavior

• Skills Underlying Prosocial Behavior
  ○ Perspective taking / Empathy / Moral reasoning

• Situational Influences
  ○ Feelings of responsibility / Feelings of competence / Mood / Cost of altruism

• Socializing Prosocial Behavior
  ○ Modeling / Disciplinary practices / Opportunities to behave prosocially
Aggression

Aggression, defined as behavior meant to harm others.

- Change and Stability
  - Instrumental / Hostile / Reactive / Relational

- Roots of Aggressive Behavior
  - Biological contributions
  - Impact of the family
  - Influence of community and culture
  - Cognitive Processes

- Victims of Aggression