ANNUAL REVIEWS

Annual Review of Developmental Psychology

Creating Inclusive Environments: Enabling Children to Reject Prejudice and Discrimination

Adam Rutland,[1] Lindsey Cameron,[2] and Melanie Killen[3]

[1]Department of Psychology, University of Exeter, Exeter, United Kingdom; email: A.Rutland@exeter.ac.uk

[2]School of Psychology, University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom

[3]Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, USA

Annu. Rev. Dev. Psychol. 2024. 6:203–21

The *Annual Review of Developmental Psychology* is online at devpsych.annualreviews.org

https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-devpsych-120920-041454

Keywords

social inclusion, prejudice, children, adolescents, bystander, intervention

Abstract

Developmental psychology researchers who investigate the multifaceted nature of prejudice, shown within everyday peer interactions, emphasize the importance of creating inclusive environments for children where equity and justice are promoted. This article uses the Social Reasoning Developmental (SRD) model to explore how children and adolescents reason about social inclusion and exclusion, drawing on moral, social group, and psychological considerations. The role of bystanders in challenging social exclusion is highlighted, with a focus on promoting proactive bystander intervention to create inclusive environments. This review identifies age, group identity, group norms, intergroup contact, empathy, and theory of mind as key influences on children's and adolescents' bystander reactions. It emphasizes that interventions promoting inclusive peer and school norms, confidence in intergroup contact, empathy, and social perspective-taking can foster inclusive environments and empower bystander action that challenges intergroup social exclusion.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The psychological study of intergroup relations in childhood and adolescence has a long and distinguished history. Developmental psychologists have shaped the social psychological theories that are the cornerstone of our understanding of group relations (Allport 1954, Tajfel & Turner 1986) and generated theories specifically concerning the development of children's intergroup attitudes and prejudice (Aboud 2008, Bigler & Liben 2007, Nesdale 2004, Rutland et al. 2010). Until relatively recently, most of the research in this area had focused on tracking the developmental trajectory of children's intergroup attitudes, prejudice, and stereotypes and the impact of environmental and cognitive factors in shaping their development. This review charts the significant progress made by developmental psychologists as we move away from approaches that focus only on changing the individual child's prejudice and biases toward ones that concentrate on creating a more inclusive environment for all children, where everyday equity and justice are commonplace in children's attitudes and actions. These approaches consider children as active agents for change, with the skills and capacities to promote equity and inclusion and actively contribute to the creation of inclusive environments, where all children can thrive (Killen & Rutland 2022). To that end, this review focuses not simply on the development of prejudicial attitudes but on how intergroup bias is experienced in everyday interactions within childhood.

First, we consider the multifaceted nature of children's and adolescents' developing intergroup bias and prejudice. Then we move on to children's reasoning about social inclusion and exclusion in everyday peer group contexts. Next, we examine children's and adolescents' bystander responses to group-based exclusion, including the importance of group identity and group norms in determining bystander behavior and the effect of intergroup contact and social cognitive development in shaping children's bystander responses to group-based bullying. Finally, we outline intervention programs that aim to provide children and adolescents with the key skills and perspectives necessary to promote inclusivity within their peer relationships.

THE MULTIFACETED NATURE OF PREJUDICE IN CHILDHOOD

From an early age, children show explicit biases and prejudice based upon social categories, such as race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, and sexuality (e.g., Rutland et al. 2005a). These biases contribute to group-based bullying in children (Bayram Özdemir et al. 2018, Killen et al. 2013), which can result in significant psychological, social, and academic problems for victimized youth later in life. These explicit biases typically decline from middle childhood onward among majority-status groups (Aboud 2008) but remain into late childhood, adolescence, and adulthood at the implicit level and in the form of indirect biases (Rutland et al. 2005b). Documenting implicit and explicit biases in childhood demonstrates that the seeds of prejudice begin in early development.

Prejudice takes many forms, including implicit bias, social exclusion, victimization, and harassment. Further, children are the victims, perpetrators, and resisters of prejudice. This means that research on the origins of prejudice needs to examine the conditions that underlie why some children justify and perpetuate social inequalities and what enables other children to reject social inequalities. Group norms play a central role in this process. To understand how children respond to group norms that perpetuate inequalities, it is necessary to investigate children's motivations, intentions, explanations, and reasoning about prejudice and social exclusion and their impact on social relationships and experiences.

Developmental psychology has found age-related shifts in social cognitions and behaviors that could tell us more about how children come to reject social inequalities. While biases emerge, children also display a sense of fairness regarding how to allocate resources, take turns, and respect others' property. Infants and toddlers show a preference for characters that help (rather than hinder) others, share toys, and avoid inflicting harm on others (Sommerville 2023, Woo & Hamlin 2023). By the preschool years, children begin to understand what makes physical and psychological harm wrong (Dahl 2019) and the distinction between equality and equity, which emerges when they are asked to share resources among individuals with varying access to them (Elenbaas et al. 2020, Rizzo & Killen 2016). During childhood and before adolescence, children's moral cognition continues to become more complex as they recognize that groups often hold norms that are unfair, making it difficult to challenge these groups (Killen & Dahl 2021). By adolescence, a recognition emerges that societal pressures are often in place that create a status hierarchy. This is more of a critical consciousness that enables adolescents to understand that certain high status social groups have certain benefits and hold advantages compared to other lower status social groups (Diemer et al. 2016). Adolescents begin to learn about and recognize the societal and historical conditions that have created unequal opportunities for many in society. Thus, moral cognition develops in tandem with the emergence of group identity, norms, and group alliances. This intersection has the potential to lead to inconsistencies in the application of moral principles to everyday contexts, particularly when group norms conflict with moral principles of fairness, equality, and equity.

To investigate the origins and development of prejudice in the context of intergroup relationships, developmental scientists have drawn on theories focusing on social or group identity (Abrams & Rutland 2011), moral development (Killen & Smetana 2023), antiracism (Bonilla-Silva 2021), and critical consciousness (Diemer et al. 2016) to formulate specific theories of how children balance social or group identity and morality and what types of interventions are necessary for alleviating the deleterious outcomes of prejudicial attitudes in childhood. One of the most salient contexts to understand these processes is social inclusion and exclusion in peer contexts, as we discuss in the following section.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN CHILDHOOD

For children and adolescents, social inclusion and exclusion from peer groups is an ever-present part of everyday life, and social exclusion may be one of the first and most tangible forms of discrimination they come across. When social exclusion is supported by peers, it can preserve and increase the frequency of social exclusion by making it appear to be the group norm (McGuire et al. 2019). Social exclusion, and children's support for it or willingness to challenge it, is therefore important in creating inclusive environments.

Children can be included or excluded from social groups on many occasions and for different reasons, some legitimate and others illegitimate. In their everyday peer interactions, they can witness others being excluded or included from social groups, and they must evaluate and reason about the rightfulness of such acts and how they should respond. Social exclusion in the context of prejudicial attitudes is distinct from social exclusion based on personality or competencies that do not match the goals of the group (Killen et al. 2012). For example, when a student is excluded from the track team because of their religious identity (e.g., Muslim), this has a different social and psychological meaning since the exclusion is based upon prejudice. This is not the case when a student is excluded from a track team because they are a slow runner (e.g., competencies) or due to their personality (e.g., they are an overly aggressive child). The first action is an example of prejudice, the second is an example of when competencies do not match the goals of the group (in the case of track, the goal is to have fast runners on the team), and the third is an example of social exclusion based on personality. Children do not always differentiate these different types of reasons for exclusion. With increasing age, children understand that intergroup exclusion (exclusion due to group identity) is different from other types of social exclusion, which are based, for example, on interpersonal (e.g., personal dislike due an individual's personality) or practical (e.g., a birthday party at a small house must limit the number of invitees) characteristics.

Bias-based social exclusion within intergroup contexts occurs when someone is targeted because of their social identity or social group membership (e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality). It is commonly experienced among young people belonging to marginalized groups (Bucchianeri et al. 2016) and is a form of discrimination. While all forms of bullying hurt young people, victims of bias-based bullying, including social exclusion, are more likely to experience serious negative outcomes, with significant deleterious effects on educational, psychological, and health outcomes, as well as on substance abuse and school attendance (e.g., Birkett et al. 2009, Russell et al. 2012).

SOCIAL REASONING DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL

Finding an equilibrium between maintaining group identity, group or society's norms, and the desire to be moral and treat all others fairly is a fundamental part of social development and a challenge for children when reasoning about social exclusion. How children uphold this sense of equipoise within their interactions has become a significant area of study in child development research (Rutland et al. 2022) and is central to a new approach to studying social exclusion and inclusion within intergroup contexts. This approach is the Social Reasoning Developmental (SRD) model, and it has recently been used to understand how children develop their ability to balance moral, group, and psychological concerns when evaluating and reacting to intergroup social exclusion.

The SRD approach pulls from theory and research in both developmental psychology and social psychology, namely Social Domain Theory and Social Identity Theory, to understand social exclusion in childhood and adolescence (Killen & Rutland 2011, Rutland et al. 2010). According to Social Domain Theory (Turiel 2015), children's and adolescents' social reasoning can reflect moral, societal, and psychological considerations. Moral considerations relate to issues of fairness

and well-being and are generalizable, obligatory, and inalterable. By contrast, societal reasoning refers to context-specific social concerns about establishing and maintaining social identities and group norms plus supporting group processes designed to promote the smooth functioning and protection of social groups. Psychological reasoning involves personal considerations, autonomy, and individual choices (Nucci & Turiel 2009).

Social Identity Theory–inspired approaches (Abrams & Rutland 2011, Nesdale 2008) argue that group memberships form an integral part of the self-concept and influence the individual's attitudes and evaluations, including evaluations of social exclusion. These social identities mean individuals are motivated to make favorable evaluations based on in-group membership and are thus more vulnerable to showing both in-group and out-group biases. Developmentalists using social identity approaches have demonstrated that children reinforce their sense of social identity by excluding out-group others from their social in-group (Nesdale 2004, Verkuyten & Steenhuis 2005), by portraying a favorable perception of themselves to others in their peer group (Rutland et al. 2005b, Rutland 2004), and by excluding in-group members who diverge from established peer group norms (Abrams & Rutland 2008).

The SRD model contends that children's and adolescents' judgments in intergroup exclusion contexts are multifaceted and that the reasoning they use can be moral (unfairness, wrongfulness of discrimination) or group-based (group identity, norms, and status) and involves psychological knowledge (theory of mind, mental state knowledge of others, and autonomy) (Killen & Rutland 2011). Evaluations of situations that involve social exclusion often comprise all three types of reasoning. These are the types of questions that children and adolescents typically reason about when judging bias-based social exclusion: Is it fair or unfair? Does the group view the inclusion of an out-group member as disloyal? Does the out-group member understand my perspective and have access to why I am being exclusive?

The SRD model also anticipates developmental trends from late childhood into adolescence in individuals' evaluations of intergroup social exclusion. Research (e.g., Killen et al. 2012, Tenenbaum & Ruck 2012) indicates that with age, evaluations of social exclusion are increasingly judged based on considerations other than just morality. These evaluations can also include attention to group identity, group norms, and the intergroup context (i.e., relations between different social groups within society). Younger children are more likely to use explicit stereotypes to condone exclusion than adolescents, but with age, children use more intergroup- and intragroup-based social reasoning (i.e., about group identity, group norms, and group dynamics) instead of explicit stereotypes. They also use moral reasoning at a more sophisticated level with reference to the unfairness of discrimination or unfair competition between social groups (e.g., exclusion based upon group membership contravenes the moral principle of fairness as it is based upon prejudice, or competition with a winner is acceptable as long as each social group has a fair chance to win).

The ways youth interpret and reason about social exclusion depend on several individual and contextual variables, including group identity, peer group norms, and societal norms. For example, Burkholder et al. (2021) showed the importance of group identity when they found that 8–14-year-old American children who identified as higher in wealth (i.e., high status) evaluated inter-wealth exclusion less negatively than did children who identified as lower in wealth (i.e., low status). The importance of group identity was also evident in research by Grütter and colleagues (2022), which demonstrated that Nepalese children and adolescents from a higher- compared with a lower-wealth group were less likely to expect that students from a low-wealth group would be included in an academic context because of negative stereotypes.

Research has shown that peer group norms also impact evaluations of whether to exclude deviants who do not conform to group expectations (Gönültaş et al. 2024, Hitti & Killen 2015). For example, Hitti & Killen (2015) found that children assessed exclusion from the peer group

negatively, but it was viewed as more right to exclude a deviant peer who wanted to allocate resources contrary to the group's moral norm of equality (e.g., the equal distribution of resources) compared with a deviant peer who wanted to wear a different shirt, thus going against the group's social-conventional norm (e.g., wearing a certain type of shirt). Societal norms are also important according to a study by Rutland et al. (2015), which demonstrated that children could prefer out-group over in-group deviants depending on the deviant's conformity to societal norms. In-group deviants were less liked than out-group deviants when they behaved in line with a societal norm, thereby threatening their group's distinctiveness relative to the out-group by making the in-group look like all others in wider society (including the out-group).

Social developmental psychologists have highlighted the multifaceted nature of prejudice in the everyday interactions of children. They have studied bias-based social exclusion and the moral reasoning children use to justify their reactions to such events in peer interaction. Children and adolescents do not only evaluate and reason about intergroup social exclusion; they also witness it and must decide how to respond. Social developmental psychologists have also recently studied the crucial role bystanders (i.e., witnesses) can play in challenging bias-based social exclusion, since bystanders who challenge are key to eradicating this damaging form of discrimination by creating inclusive environments.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION AND PROSOCIAL HELPING WITHIN INTERGROUP CONTEXTS

Those not excluding or being excluded in any peer group situation can be considered bystanders. Bystanders react to social exclusion in many ways, eventually resulting in the backing (and reinforcement) of social exclusion or the challenging of social exclusion and encouragement of inclusion (Malti et al. 2015). Understanding and encouraging active, helpful bystander reactions are therefore pivotal in reducing exclusionary behavior and creating an inclusive environment for all, and research on bystander roles has informed many antibullying programs (Salmivalli 2010).

Peers are present in many bullying and social exclusion incidents (Hawkins et al. 2001), and by challenging them, can effectively reduce bullying, creating an antibullying culture in schools by establishing peer group norms that are inclusive and promoting bystander challenging when prejudice occurs (Frey et al. 2015). With regard to bias-based bullying and social exclusion, peer onlookers or bystanders, who are empowered to challenge this form of discrimination, play an important role in the eradication of prejudice in school. They do this not only through protecting victims by directly challenging individual incidents of prejudice and exclusion but also by contributing to an inclusive school environment where exclusion and prejudice are unaccepted and actively opposed. However, a typical form of response is either to ignore it or to expect someone else to deal with it. Furthermore, active, helpful, prosocial bystander intervention in response to both nonbiased and bias-based bullying can often decline with age (e.g., Palmer et al. 2015, 2017).

By applying developmental intergroup theories and findings to this phenomenon, social developmental research has identified several contextual and individual factors that inhibit or facilitate active, prosocial bystander responses to help victims, with important practical implications (Thornberg et al. 2020). Younger children are often more likely to report intentions to help the victim than are adolescents (e.g., Palmer et al. 2015, 2017). For example, Palmer and colleagues (2017) examined (12–15-year-old) ethnic minority and majority adolescents' intended responses to a racist victimization scenario. They found prosocial bystander behaviors (e.g., tell a teacher, tell the perpetrator it is wrong) were the most reported, followed by passive (ignore it) and then aggressive (I would start a fight with the perpetrator) responses. Prosocial bystander responses declined with age, while aggressive responses increased with age. Different responses were also

observed among ethnic minority- and majority-status children, with ethnic minority-status girls reporting the highest prosocial intentions.

Generally, active bystander responses to bullying decline with age; however, this is not necessarily always the case. The SRD model (Rutland & Killen 2015) suggests that children typically reason about bias-based bullying or exclusion using moral reasoning, with a focus on moral principles of fairness and welfare, whereas adolescents adopt a more multifaceted approach, often drawing on the same moral principles but also focusing on group-based and psychological reasons for their bystander response (Killen & Rutland 2011, Palmer et al. 2015, Sierksma et al. 2014). There are number of individual and contextual factors that are known to influence the intended bystander responses of children and adolescents to bias-based social exclusion or bullying.

Group Identity, Group Status, and Bystanders

Whether adolescents identify with the social group that the bully or victim belongs to and the status of the social group within the intergroup context impact bystander intentions. This was evident in a study on intergroup name-calling (Palmer et al. 2015), which examined how children's (aged 8–10) and adolescents' (aged 13–15) bystander helping intentions were affected by the group membership of the victim and the aggressor (either an in-group-school victim and out-group-school aggressor or an out-group-school victim and in-group-school aggressor). Generally, prosocial intentions declined between childhood and adolescence; however, when adolescents identified with their group and the victim was an in-group member, adolescents' helping increased. In other words, the expected decline in helpful responses was constrained when they shared the same group membership as the victim. Other research has highlighted the facilitating role of inclusive identities in boosting adolescents' intentions of acting on behalf of the victims of homophobic bullying (António et al. 2020).

Studies have also shown that the social identity or group membership of both the victim and the excluder (i.e., the perpetrator) are related to children's and adolescents' actual bystander behavior when a peer is socially excluded due to their group membership. For example, Yüksel et al. (2021) investigated prosocial bystander behavior in an online game scenario (Cyberball) involving the exclusion of both immigrant and nonimmigrant peers within intergroup and intragroup contexts. Children (aged 8–10) and adolescents (aged 13–15) observed a victim being excluded by peers, with the group membership and status of both the victim and excluders highlighted in either prototypical (majority-status peers excluding a minority-status victim) or non-prototypical (minority-status peers excluding a majority-status victim) intergroup contexts. In intragroup contexts, exclusion involved peers from the same group. Adolescents exhibited more direct prosocial bystander behavior than children in intergroup contexts, but not in intragroup contexts. Only adolescents showed increased direct prosocial bystander behavior in prototypical intergroup contexts compared with non-prototypical ones. These findings support the SRD approach, suggesting that from late childhood to mid-adolescence, direct bystander behavior becomes more influenced by the group membership and status of both excluders and victims.

Similar differences due to age and group membership were found by Yüksel et al. (2022), who examined children's (aged 8–10) and adolescents' (aged 13–15) indirect bystander reactions (e.g., judgments about seeking help and from whom) when witnessing social exclusion, as well as the social–moral reasoning behind their reactions. This study found that the likelihood of indirect bystander reactions decreased from childhood to adolescence. Children were more inclined to seek help from a teacher or an adult, while adolescents were more likely to seek help from a friend. Children justified their reactions by emphasizing trust in teachers and friends, whereas adolescents referenced group loyalty, group dynamics, and psychological reasons. These findings

highlight how age and group identity (or membership) interact to influence how children and adolescents indirectly react as bystanders to bias-based social exclusion.

Developmentally, between late childhood and adolescence, knowledge of the status associated with a group identity (e.g., whether a group is relatively advantaged or disadvantaged, stigmatized or non-stigmatized) is progressively included into decisions about intergroup social exclusion (McGuire et al. 2019). With age, children become more focused on information about social status differences, reporting more prosocial bystander intentions (Palmer et al. 2022, 2023) and behaviors (Mulvey et al. 2018, Yüksel et al. 2021), particularly when the out-group members are from marginalized minority-status groups (e.g., immigrants). Differences in bystander response have also been observed between minority- and majority-status adolescents.

For example, Palmer et al. (2022) examined bystander responses to intergroup social exclusion in Cypriot national and non-Cypriot immigrant preadolescents in Cyprus, a context where there has been a long history of intergroup conflict. Palmer and colleagues (2022) found children identifying as immigrants (i.e., non-Cypriots, minority status) were equally likely to challenge as bystanders the intergroup social exclusion of Cypriot and non-Cypriot victims. Cypriot children reported higher bystander challenging when Cypriot victims were excluded compared with when non-Cypriot victims were excluded. These findings suggest that minority-status children are less likely than majority-status children to show in-group bias in their bystander challenging behavior. This study emphasizes the importance of bearing in mind the social identity and status of bystanders and the related events that might influence their bystander responses to intergroup social exclusion and bias-based bullying (also see Mulvey et al. 2018). Numerous studies have also shown that more positive and open attitudes toward the social group or identity of the victim propel bystanders to actively intervene in a helpful way (e.g., Abbott & Cameron 2014).

Recent research has also shown that the perceived status of the victim's national group impacts children's and adolescents' bystander responses to the social exclusion of immigrants. Palmer et al. (2023) explored age-related variances in bystander reactions concerning peer exclusion scenarios involving British national and immigrant (from Australia or Turkey) peers of differing perceived intergroup status within Britain (i.e., Australian immigrants having a relatively higher status compared with Turkish immigrants). British children (aged 8–11) and adolescents (aged 13–16) were presented with scenarios depicting the exclusion of peers from different backgrounds and indicated their bystander responses. Perceived similarity and bystander self-efficacy were examined as potential factors influencing bystander reactions. Results showed that children were more inclined to directly challenge exclusion when the excluded peer was British or Australian compared with Turkish. Conversely, adolescents displayed consistent response patterns across nationalities, being equally likely to challenge exclusion regardless of the peer's nationality. Notably, with Turkish peers, moderated mediation analysis indicated that bystander self-efficacy for challenging exclusion increased with age, which, in turn, correlated with higher rates of direct challenging. These findings underscore the significance of group identity status, perceived group similarity, and bystander self-efficacy in shaping age-related differences in bystander reactions to immigrant peer exclusion surrounding a stigmatized national identity.

Group Norms and Bystanders

Group norms are also an important influence on how adolescents evaluate and reason about bystander intervention in bias-based bullying. For example, Mulvey et al. (2019) showed that a positive school environment, with inclusive school norms, was positively associated with bystander intervention among sixth- and ninth-grade adolescents, and Palmer et al. (2015) confirmed that, from childhood to adolescence, bystander reactions to intergroup name-calling were associated with what bystanders thought their peers would do. Recent research has shown that from early to

late adolescence, peer norms were increasingly related to adolescents' social evaluations around challenging the social exclusion of bystanders (Gönültaş et al. 2024). Gönültaş and colleagues (2024) investigated how peer norms influence adolescents' judgments and reasoning regarding bystander responses to the social exclusion of immigrants. The study involved 431 British adolescents (11–16 years old), randomly assigned to different experimental conditions reflecting inclusive or exclusive in-group and out-group peer norms. Participants then read a hypothetical scenario where a British peer excluded a Turkish immigrant peer, and another British peer challenged this exclusion. They rated individual and perceived peer group evaluations of the challenger and justified their evaluations. Additionally, they assessed the likelihood of peer group support if they challenged immigrant exclusion. Results indicated that late adolescents were more inclined to perceive positive group evaluations of bystander challenging when exposed to inclusive in-group norms compared with exclusive norms. Late adolescents also perceived higher peer support for inclusivity when out-group norms were inclusive, unlike early adolescents.

These findings suggest a developmental shift during adolescence where both in-group and out-group norms influence social evaluations and perceived group support for bystander challenging. Moreover, inclusive in-group norms indirectly correlated with an increased likelihood of bystander challenging behavior through perceived group support across both age groups. Gönültaş and colleagues' (2024) findings emphasize the importance of promoting inclusive peer group norms in schools to encourage bystander intervention against immigrant exclusion, thus fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all adolescents.

Group norms are also an important influence on how adolescents evaluate and reason about others' bystander behaviors. This process often becomes reciprocal, with norms influencing adolescents' judgments and reasoning about others, which in turn changes others' behavior and so reinforces the descriptive norm about how the group typically behaves. A study conducted by Gönültaş et al. (2022) showed that adolescents evaluate and reason about others' bystander behaviors differently than children do. This study examined how British children and adolescents evaluate individuals who challenged social exclusion within their peer group, particularly concerning the exclusion of British and immigrant (Turkish or Australian) newcomers within school settings. British children (aged 8–11) and adolescents (aged 13–16) heard hypothetical scenarios where a group member sought to exclude a newcomer from group activities. Another group member then challenged this exclusion. Results showed that both children and adolescents were aware of group norms, as they viewed the challenger more positively individually than they perceived their group would. Adolescents demonstrated greater divergence between individual and group evaluations, particularly regarding the exclusion of British peers. When the excluded peer was an immigrant, adolescents were more likely than children to evaluate the challenger positively in both individual and group contexts. Children tended to justify their evaluations based mainly on social and group norms, especially regarding immigrant exclusion, while adolescents additionally placed more emphasis on the concepts of fairness, rights, and equality.

These findings suggest that exclusionary group norms related to immigrants emerge in childhood, but reasoning in adolescence is more nuanced than in late childhood, with consideration given to both moral and group concerns. Overall, this research suggests that interventions targeting inclusive group norms may effectively reduce prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants from an early age.

Intergroup Contact and Bystanders

Developmental psychologists have tested the link between intergroup contact, specifically the opportunity for meaningful interactions and friendships across social group lines (i.e., cross-group friendship), and children's responses to group-based bullying and social exclusion (e.g., Abbott &

Cameron 2014). Abbott & Cameron (2014) examined assertive bystander intentions in response to intergroup name-calling. In this case, the intergroup context was a British perpetrator and an immigrant victim. Participants reported assertive behavior intentions [e.g., I would try to make Person A (victim) feel better], as well as empathy, cultural openness, and intergroup contact. This study found greater intergroup contact was related to higher levels of empathy, higher levels of cultural openness, and reduced intergroup bias, which in turn were associated with greater assertive bystander intentions.

The link between experiences of diversity and responses to group-based bullying has also been illustrated in other contexts of historical intergroup conflict. Palmer et al. (2022), in their study of bystander response among Cypriot and non-Cypriot preadolescents, found that Cypriot participants with higher levels of contact with non-Cypriots were more likely to intend to help non-Cypriot victims. Gönültaş & Mulvey (2021) also highlighted the important role of contact in predicting bystander behaviors. In their research, in which adolescents were presented with a bias-biased intergroup bullying scenario, nonimmigrant students in schools providing more intergroup contact were more likely to say they would intervene.

Recent research has shown in non-conflict situations that intergroup contact also plays an important role in motivating adolescent bystanders to intervene when an immigrant youth is experiencing bias-based bullying. For example, Hitti et al. (2023) investigated the pathways to bystander responses in incidents of generalized and bias-based bullying involving immigrant-origin victims. The participants were 168 adolescents (mean age 14.54 years) of both immigrant and nonimmigrant backgrounds, and the study assessed their likelihood of intervening on behalf of either an Arab or Latine victim. The study examined whether contact with immigrants and desires for social contact with immigrant-origin peers mediated the effects of individual (shared immigrant background and discriminatory tendencies) and situational (inclusive peer norms) intergroup factors on active bystander responses. Results showed that the desire for social contact consistently mediated effects for both victim groups, while contact with immigrant peers was associated only with responses to Latine victims. This study showed that the wish for social contact with an immigrant peer can be a significant driver in linking low-bias and inclusive peer norms to adolescents' intentions to actively intervene on behalf of an immigrant peer, in both bias-based and generalized bullying situations.

Extended or indirect contact (i.e., having contact with the out-group through the experiences of others from your group) is also known to be related to prosocial bystander responding to bias-based bullying and social exclusion. For example, António et al. (2020) examined the relationship between extended contact (having heterosexual friends who have homosexual friends) and assertive bystander intentions among heterosexual 12–18-year-olds. Analyses revealed that adolescents with greater levels of extended contact reported more assertive bystander intentions in response to a gay bullying incident via increased emotional empathy for the victim. These findings highlight the importance of opportunities for contact (direct and extended) for building young people's capacity for assertive bystander intentions and behaviors, which are key for the creating of inclusive environments for children. Through these experiences, young people build the required empathy and connection with others that provide the motivation to intervene and to be active agents for establishing an inclusive environment. Importantly, research suggests that intergroup contact is not always related to positive intergroup attitudes and the promotion of an inclusive environment for children; rather, it can depend on the nature of the contact (quality and positivity) and what children gain from the contact (McKeown & Dixon 2017). Further research is needed to examine the precise role of different forms or types of contact in shaping bystander intervention responses.

Individual Differences and Bystanders

There are a number of individual differences factors that are known to influence the bystander responses of children and adolescents to social exclusion and bias-based bullying. Empathy for the victim is important in predicting bystander response to group-based bullying. Gönültaş & Mulvey (2023) examined Turkish adolescents' bystander responses to bias-based bullying toward refugees. Adolescents with a more advanced theory of mind (ToM) and greater empathy for the victim saw intergroup bias-based bullying as less acceptable and were more likely to actively challenge the perpetrator. Other research (Gönültaş & Mulvey 2021) has found that adolescents with higher ToM abilities perceived bias-based bullying as less acceptable and were more likely to engage in supportive actions, such as talking to the victim. These findings suggest that individuals with stronger ToM skills may be more motivated to act in a prosocial manner by understanding the victim's perspective.

Research has also highlighted the need to understand the relationship between social cognitive skills and intergroup processes when understanding and developing interventions aimed at bystander reactions to bias-based bullying. A study by Gönültaş & Mulvey (2021) found an interaction between ToM and perceived positive peer norms regarding immigrants, showing that adolescents with higher ToM abilities and positive perceptions of peer norms were more likely to exhibit active bystander responses, such as seeking help and talking to the victim. This suggests that youths with higher ToM not only consider the victim's perspective but also shape their responses on the basis of their group's norms. Interventions that rely solely on ToM might not be enough to challenge bullying, as adolescents may also seek approval from their peer group for their behaviors.

Other research has highlighted the specific role of emotional empathy in prosocial bystander intervention in response to witnessing homophobic bullying (António et al. 2020). In an immigrant context, Gönültaş & Mulvey (2023) also found that higher levels of empathy toward victimized individuals were linked to viewing bullying as more unacceptable and being less likely to support the bully explicitly while being more inclined to challenge the bully directly. These findings support previous research indicating the significance of ToM and empathy in bystanders' responses to bullying, particularly in intergroup contexts (Caravita et al. 2010). The results also align with an intervention study that demonstrated some effectiveness of educational programs aimed at increasing perspective-taking and empathy in promoting prosocial behavior toward out-groups and reducing social exclusion and intergroup aggression (Willems et al. 2024).

INTERVENTIONS TO ENCOURAGE INCLUSIVITY WITHIN INTERGROUP CONTEXTS

Bystander behavior can play an important role in facilitating inclusive and welcoming environments for children from all social groups, and this is why antibullying organizations and researchers are increasingly working together to devise and rigorously evaluate interventions that aim to promote prosocial or defender bystander behavior in schools (e.g., Kärnä et al. 2011). Abbott et al. (2020) devised and evaluated the impact of a role-play intervention on young people's (aged 12–13) bystander intentions in response to a bias-based intergroup name-calling scenario. The intervention used different role-play methods to empower young people to stand up to bullying by boosting defender self-efficacy. One of the main barriers to engaging in defender behavior in young people is not knowing what to say or do. Previous research had found defender and collective self-efficacy are related to increased defender behaviors in response to witnessing bullying (Thornberg et al. 2020). Role-play can provide examples of specific, desirable responses and provide an opportunity to put these into practice, as well as to observe their positive outcomes.

Therefore, it was expected that a role-play intervention, where participants practice bystander defender behaviors, would boost defender self-efficacy and increase bystander intentions to intervene effectively in bullying scenarios. Compared with those in the control group, young people exhibited significantly higher defender self-efficacy and greater defender intentions following the role-play intervention (Abbott et al. 2020).

Recent social developmental research reviewed here suggests that active peer bystanders could significantly contribute to the creation of inclusive environments for children where prejudice and discrimination are eradicated. Routes to achieve this include promoting a group norm for helpful intervention when faced with bias-based bullying and social exclusion, enhancing self-efficacy about being an active bystander, and emphasizing the moral obligation to treat all peers fairly. These could be particularly effective with preadolescents and adolescents. In addition, interventions to provide positive intergroup contact with different social groups could help to empower young people to take helpful bystander actions in response to bias-based bullying and social exclusion, though the impact on majority- and minority-group children should be monitored.

Confidence in Contact and Openness to Contact

Cross-group friendships, high-quality relationships that cross group boundaries (e.g., based on ethnicity, religion), are a powerful prejudice-reduction tool in childhood and adolescence (Wölfer et al. 2016). Young people with more cross-group friendships report more positive out-group attitudes and trust and reduced intergroup anxiety (Feddes et al. 2009, Turner et al. 2007). Among ethnic minority youth, cross-group friendships can also serve a protective function, reducing the negative impact of discrimination on socioemotional well-being and school outcomes (Bagci et al. 2014, Benner & Wang 2017). It is for this reason that cross-group friendships are an important pathway toward, and indicator of, inclusive learning environments for children.

Evidence, nonetheless, demonstrates that mere exposure to diverse others does not necessarily lead to meaningful interactions taking place: Children do not always seize the opportunity or have the necessary skills and competencies to develop cross-group friendships. Compared with same-group friendships, cross-group friendships can be resource-depleting, difficult to initiate, and harder to maintain (Paolini et al. 2004). It is essential that children and teachers are supported to develop the capacities and capabilities to form and maintain these important relationships, which are key to the development of inclusive environments for children.

One capability is known as confidence in contact. Confidence in contact reflects a state of readiness for positive interactions with a member of another group, whereby children (and adults) have the necessary confidence, skills, beliefs, and experience for successful intergroup contact. Individuals with high confidence in contact are more likely to respond positively to, and to engage with, cross-group peers in diverse settings (Turner & Cameron 2016). A unique aspect of this model is its focus on preparation for diverse interactions, including the role of previous successful and positive contact experiences, situational factors (e.g., social norms, diversity climate), and individual characteristics (e.g., intergroup anxiety) that may promote confidence in contact and, in turn, successful interactions and friendships across group lines.

Two recent studies conducted among British children have provided evidence for this framework. One study revealed that prior contact, indirect contact, social norms regarding contact, and intergroup anxiety predicted higher-quality cross-ethnic friendships via confidence in contact (Bagci et al. 2020). A follow-up study replicated this finding and identified parental cross-ethnic friendship quality as a further predictor of confidence in contact.

Confidence in contact may also have a role to play in transforming cross-group friendships into positive attitudes and behaviors and thus in creating an inclusive environment for children.

This is evident in a study conducted in Turkey, which found that native Turkish children's confidence in contact strengthened the positive relationship between friendships with Syrians and positive intergroup outcomes (more positive out-group attitudes, lower intergroup anxiety, less social distance) (Bagci et al. 2023).

While building confidence in one's ability to hold successful intergroup interactions is important for children, it is also important that teachers develop these capabilities. It is likely that confidence in contact is essential to the success of equality and diversity education programs that promote an inclusive environment among school staff and children. Teachers need knowledge, skills, and confidence in their ability to teach in this domain to effectively develop the essential skills required for navigating diverse contexts (Chahar Mahali & Sevigny 2022). Lack of effective teacher training and time spent on preparation are consistently highlighted as barriers to culturally responsive teaching (e.g., Gay 2002). For example, research in the field of intercultural competence and culturally responsive education highlight the role of years of teaching experience and prior experience of cultural diversity in strengthening the self-efficacy of adopting these teaching methods (Chahar Mahali & Sevigny 2022, Chu & Garcia 2014, Cruz et al. 2020). Additionally, higher confidence in one's ability to deliver culturally responsive teaching is also associated with lower diversity-related burnout among teachers (Gutentag et al. 2017). Building confidence in contact among all teachers and educators is important if we are to develop more inclusive environments where both teachers and children are active in challenging biased-based bullying and social exclusion.

Developing Inclusive Youth to Change Group Norms

Recently, developmental psychologists have worked closely with educationalists and schools to develop programs aimed at promoting inclusive school contexts, in which both youth and their teachers openly discuss social exclusion and discrimination based on group membership (Killen & Rutland 2022, Killen et al. 2022). For example, a program named Developing Inclusive Youth (DIY) was created to provide children with intergroup contact (direct and indirect) and classroom discussions that would enable them to challenge social norms and expectations that justify exclusion based on gender, race, ethnicity, wealth status, and immigrant status (Killen et al. 2022). DIY was designed to reduce bias, promote intergroup friendships, and help children challenge unfair norms that perpetuate prejudicial attitudes and social exclusion within school contexts. This program was motivated by the SRD model (Rutland et al. 2010) and intergroup contact theory (Tropp et al. 2014). SRD proposes that direct and indirect contact, along with the use of reasoning to justify rejecting or legitimizing social exclusion, has the potential to create positive change regarding the desire to play with diverse peers and the rejection of stereotypes and biases about others.

The program provides an individualized guided reflection experience in the form of an online tool that depicts peer scenarios in which children make difficult decisions about whom to include or exclude in a group context. The targets of exclusion include group identities based on gender, ethnicity (African American, Arab, Asian, European American, Latine), wealth status, and immigrant status. The tool asks children to describe the feeling states of the characters, evaluate peer decisions to include or exclude, make decisions about what the characters should do, and provide reasoning. As an example, the gender scenario involves a girl who asks the boys if she can join their science project team, to which one boy whispers to a friend that girls are not good at science while another boy whispers back that his sister is good at science. Several exchanges are made after, and children interacting with the story are asked to decide what should happen and why.

The second part of the program offers a group-based facilitated discussion, which occurs immediately following the use of the online tool. Led by a trained teacher, students sit together

in a circle in their classroom and discuss the peer scenarios for 30 min, including responding to prompts about whether these types of encounters have been experienced by the students at school. Students report experiences of being excluded because of their skin color, being a girl, being from another country, and having other group identities. The teacher helps guide the discussion by asking children for their viewpoints and their suggestions for solutions.

To test the proposed theory of change, a randomized controlled trial was implemented in 48 US classrooms for children in grades 3, 4, and 5 ($N = 983$) with the DIY program (Killen et al. 2022). Children were from a large mid-Atlantic school district and were 58.5% White, 17.5% multiethnic, 8.3% Asian American, 5.6% African American, 4.2% Latine, and 5.4% not reported. At each grade, one classroom was the intervention group and used the tool, and the other classroom was the control group (business as usual). Outcome measures were administered by a pretest and post-test survey and included four measures: (*a*) likelihood of interracial and same-race inclusion and wrongfulness of interracial and same-race exclusion, (*b*) trait attributions (smart, nice, hard-working versus not smart, mean, and lazy) to diverse peers, (*c*) math and science competency beliefs, and (*d*) reported play contact with diverse peers.

The findings revealed positive changes for students in the intervention compared with the control group, and third graders changed even more than fifth graders did. No overall results were shown for differences by the gender or ethnicity and race of the participants, surprisingly. The classroom conversations revealed the different ways in which children challenged the norms.

The following is a quote from a transcript made during one of the class discussions as part of the study. This exchange took place during a fourth-grade teacher–student discussion when the students talked about what makes prejudice wrong (Killen 2024, p. 57).

> 4th grade: Park scenario where a Latinx boy is excluded from playing on the swings by a White boy.
>
> **Teacher:** "What might we be thinking about this week?"
>
> **Student:** "Well, I think we're thinking about like, no matter who you are, if you're someone's friend, or if you're not, or if you're of a different race, it's still, everybody still needs to be fair to you, and you need to be fair to other people."
>
> **Teacher:** "Why?"
>
> **Student:** "Because no matter who you are, you're just – you're part of the civilization. You're part of humanity. You're not like an alien from another planet."
>
> **Teacher:** "Yes, hmm. I couldn't have said it better myself."

This discussion has the potential to positively reshape group norms within the classroom. One student articulates what makes prejudice wrong and implies that humans have a certain obligation to treat one another fairly. Other children joined in the conversation to add their thoughts about why it is wrong to exclude others.

During focus groups, teachers reported that the class bonded from the experience by sharing stories and creating solutions. Teachers also revealed that they learned things about their students that they never knew they experienced. Further, teachers provided examples where children discussed lessons learned from the program when reading articles in class or discussing current events.

There are many ways to extend this research and utilize the DIY program as a means of facilitating an inclusive environment within schools where youth openly think and talk about intergroup social exclusion and biased-based bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not tolerated, and both youths and teachers actively challenge it when it happens.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Recent research in social and developmental psychology has focused on determining how to foster inclusive environments that enable children to reject prejudice and discrimination. This research shows the importance of providing children with the skills, experiences, and reasoning to resist biases and prejudice and to promote inclusivity, thereby fostering environments where all children can thrive. Despite biases emerging from an early age, this research shows that we should focus not only on reducing prejudice but also on empowering children to challenge unfair treatment of others, as this helps establish a norm of inclusion with the environment. Children's evaluations of social inclusion and exclusion reveal complex interplays between moral, group, and psychological reasoning, and the SRD model has been utilized in recent research to understand how children balance these factors when evaluating intergroup social exclusion.

Furthermore, research suggests that bystanders can play a key role in combating bias-based bullying and social exclusion within intergroup contexts and help create an inclusive environment. This research has examined the social cognitive basis of prosocial bystander responses to bias-based bullying among children and adolescents. Researchers have explored factors such as social norms, moral reasoning, empathy, group dynamics, and intergroup contact in understanding how bystanders respond to instances of bullying and social exclusion based on bias. Interventions aimed at promoting prosocial bystander behavior have shown promising results, including role-play interventions and educational programs focused on challenging social norms and enabling intergroup contact. Social and moral reasoning are key to promoting inclusive environments. Research suggests that confidence in contact, or the readiness for positive interactions with members of other groups, is a crucial factor in promoting cross-group friendships and reducing intergroup bias. Programs such as DIY, which draw from both the SRD and intergroup contact models of prejudice and social exclusion, can foster inclusive environments by encouraging open discussion about bias, prejudice, and discrimination and empower both youth and teachers to challenge unfair norms and behaviors.

Overall, developmental psychological research indicates that approaches to reducing bias-based bullying and social exclusion need to consider children's and adolescents' social and moral development, focus on promoting empathy and inclusive norms, and provide opportunities for positive intergroup interactions, creating environments where bias-based bullying and social exclusion are actively challenged and not tolerated by children and teachers. Creating inclusive classrooms that promote justice and fairness enables all children to learn, thrive, and feel a sense of belonging to the group. These experiences provide children with a motivation for academic success and a desire to contribute positively to society.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors are not aware of any affiliations, memberships, funding, or financial holdings that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this review.

LITERATURE CITED

Abbott N, Cameron L. 2014. What makes a young assertive bystander? The effect of intergroup contact, empathy, cultural openness, and in-group bias on assertive bystander intervention intentions. *J. Soc. Issues* 70:167–82. **https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12053**

Abbott N, Cameron L, Thompson J. 2020. Evaluating the impact of a defender role-play intervention on adolescent's defender intentions and responses towards name-calling. *Sch. Psychol. Int.* 41(2):154–69. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034319893410**

Aboud FE. 2008. A social-cognitive developmental theory of prejudice. In *Handbook of Race, Racism, and the Developing Child*, ed. SM Quintana, C McKown, pp. 55–71. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley

Abrams D, Rutland A. 2008. The development of subjective group dynamics. In *Intergroup Attitudes and Relations in Childhood Through Adulthood*, ed. SR Levy, M Killen, pp. 47–65. New York: Oxford Univ. Press

Abrams D, Rutland A. 2011. Children's understanding of deviance and group dynamics: the development of subjective group dynamics. In *Rebels In Groups: Dissent, Deviance, Difference and Defiance*, ed. J Jetten, MJ Hornsey, pp. 135–57. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell

Allport GW. 1954. *The Nature of Prejudice*. New York: Doubleday Anchor

António R, Guerra R, Moleiro C. 2020. Stay away or stay together? Social contagion, common identity, and bystanders' interventions in homophobic bullying episodes. *Group Process. Intergroup Relat.* 23(1):127–39. **https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430218782741**

Bagci SC, Cameron L, Turner RN, Morais C, Carby A, et al. 2020. Cross-ethnic friendship self-efficacy: a new predictor of cross-ethnic friendships among children. *Group Processes Intergroup Relat.* 23(7):1049–65. **https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430219879219**

Bagci SC, Rutland A, Kumashiro M, Smith PK, Blumberg H. 2014. Are minority status children's cross-ethnic friendships beneficial in a multiethnic context? *Br. J. Dev. Psychol.* 32:233–47. **https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12028**

Bagci S, Turnuklu A, Tercan M, Cameron L, Turner R. 2023. Have some confidence in contact: Self-efficacy beliefs among children moderate the associations between cross-group friendships and outgroup attitudes. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* 53:101–11. **https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12929**

Bayram Özdemir S, Sun S, Korol L, Özdemir M, Stattin H. 2018. Adolescents' engagement in ethnic harassment: prejudiced beliefs in social networks and classroom ethnic diversity. *J. Youth Adolesc.* 47(6):1151–63. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-017-0795-0**

Benner AD, Wang Y. 2017. Racial/ethnic discrimination and adolescents' well-being: the role of cross-ethnic friendships and friends' experiences of discrimination. *Child Dev.* 88(2):493–504. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12606**

Bigler RS, Liben LS. 2007. Developmental intergroup theory: explaining and reducing children's social stereotyping and prejudice. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* 16(3):162–66. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2007.00496.x**

Birkett M, Espelage DL, Koenig BW. 2009. LGB and questioning students in schools: the moderating effects of homophobic bullying and school climate on negative outcomes. *J. Youth Adolesc.* 38(7):989–1000. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-008-9389-1**

Bonilla-Silva E. 2021. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*. Lantham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. 6th ed.

Bucchianeri MM, Eisenberg ME, Neumark-Sztainer D. 2016. Weightism, racism, classism, and sexism: shared forms of harassment in adolescents. *J. Adolesc. Health* 59(4):402–8. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.05.018**

Burkholder AR, Elenbaas L, Killen M. 2021. Giving priority to race or wealth in peer group contexts involving social inclusion. *Dev. Psychol.* 57(5):651–61. **https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001178**

Caravita SC, Di Blasio P, Salmivalli C. 2010. Early adolescents' participation in bullying: Is ToM involved? *J. Early Adolesc.* 30:138–70. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431609342983**

Chahar Mahali S, Sevigny PR. 2022. Multicultural classrooms: culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy among a sample of Canadian preservice teachers. *Educ. Urban Soc.* 54(8):946–968. **https://doi.org/10.1177/00131245211062526**

Chu SY, Garcia S. 2014. Culturally responsive teaching efficacy beliefs of in-service special education teachers. *Remedial Spec. Educ.* 35(4):218–32. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932513520511**

Cruz RA, Manchanda S, Firestone AR, Rodl JE. 2020. An examination of teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. *Teach. Educ. Spec. Educ.* 43(3):197–214. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406419875194**

Dahl A. 2019. The science of early moral development: on defining, constructing, and studying morality from birth. *Adv. Child Dev. Behav.* 56:1–35. **https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.acdb.2018.11.001**

Diemer MA, Rapa LJ, Voight AM, McWhirter EH. 2016. Critical consciousness: a developmental approach to addressing marginalization and oppression. *Child Dev. Perspect.* 10:216–21. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12193**

Elenbaas L, Rizzo MT, Killen M. 2020. A developmental-science perspective on social inequality. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* 29(6):610–16. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721420964147**

Feddes AR, Noack P, Rutland A. 2009. Direct and extended friendship effects on minority and majority children's interethnic attitudes: a longitudinal study. *Child Dev.* 80(2):377–90. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2009.01266.x**

Frey KS, Pearson CR, Cohen D. 2015. Revenge is seductive, if not sweet: why friends *matter* for prevention efforts. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* 37:25–35. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2014.08.002**

Gay G. 2002. Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *J. Teach. Educ.* 53(2):106–16. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053002003**

Gönültaş S, Argyri E, Yüksel A, McGuire L, Palmer S, et al. 2024. Peer group norms affect adolescents' bystander judgments and reasoning. *Peace Confl. J. Peace Psychol.* In press

Gönültaş S, Argyri EK, Yüksel AŞ, Palmer SB, McGuire L, et al. 2022. British adolescents are more likely than children to support bystanders who challenge exclusion of immigrant peers. *Front. Psychol.* 13:837276. **https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.837276**

Gönültaş S, Mulvey KL. 2021. The role of immigration background, intergroup processes, and social-cognitive skills in bystanders' responses to bias-based bullying toward immigrants during adolescence. *Child Dev.* 92:e296–316. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13476**

Gönültaş S, Mulvey KL. 2023. Do adolescents intervene in intergroup bias-based bullying? Bystander judgments and responses to intergroup bias-based bullying of refugees. *J. Res. Adolesc.* 33:4–23. **https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12752**

Grütter J, Dhakal S, Killen M. 2022. Socioeconomic status biases among children and adolescents: the role of school diversity and teacher beliefs in Nepal. *Child Dev.* 93:1475–92. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13796**

Gutentag T, Horenczyk G, Tatr M. 2017. Teachers' approaches toward cultural diversity predict diversity-related burnout and self-efficacy. *J. Teach. Educ.* 69(4):408–19. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487117714244**

Hawkins DL, Pepler DJ, Craig WM. 2001. Naturalistic observations of peer interventions in bullying. *Soc. Dev.* 10(4):512–27. **https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9507.00170**

Hitti A, Gönültaş S, Mulvey KL. 2023. What motivates adolescent bystanders to intervene when immigrant youth are bullied? *J. Res. Adolesc.* 33:603–17. **https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12829**

Hitti A, Killen M. 2015. Expectations about ethnic peer group inclusivity: the role of shared interests, group norms, and stereotypes. *Child Dev.* 86(5):1522–37. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12393**

Kärnä A, Voeten M, Little TD, Poskiparta E, Kaljonen A, Salmivalli C. 2011. A large-scale evaluation of the KiVa antibullying program: grades 4–6. *Child Dev.* 82:311–30. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01557.x**

Killen M. 2024. The inclusive classroom: making schools more welcoming for all can make for a fair and just society. *Sci. Am.* 330(5):52–57. **https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0524-52**

Killen M, Burkholder AR, D'Esterre AP, Sims RN, Glidden J, et al. 2022. Testing the effectiveness of the *Developing Inclusive Youth* program: a multisite randomized control trial. *Child Dev.* 93:732–50. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13785**

Killen M, Dahl A. 2021. Moral reasoning enables developmental and societal change. *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* 16(6):1209–25. **https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691620964076**

Killen M, Rutland A. 2011. *Children and Social Exclusion: Morality, Prejudice, and Group Identity*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. **http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9781444396317**

Killen M, Rutland A. 2022. Promoting fair and just school environments: developing inclusive youth. *Policy Insights Behav. Brain Sci.* 9(1):81–89. **https://doi.org/10.1177/23727322211073795**

Killen M, Rutland A, Abrams D, Mulvey KL, Hitti A. 2013. Development of intra- and intergroup judgments in the context of moral and social-conventional norms. *Child Dev.* 84:1063–80. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12011**

Killen M, Rutland A, Ruck M. 2012. Promoting equity and justice in childhood: policy implications. *Soc. Policy Rep.* 25(4):1–25. **https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2379-3988.2011.tb00069.x**

Killen M, Smetana JG, eds. 2023. *Handbook of Moral Development*. New York: Routledge. 3rd ed. **https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003047247**

Malti T, Strohmeier D, Killen M. 2015. The impact of onlooking and including bystander behavior on judgments and emotions regarding peer exclusion. *Br. J. Dev. Psychol.* 33:295–311. **https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12090**

McGuire L, Elenbaas L, Killen M, Rutland A. 2019. The role of in-group norms and group status in children's and adolescents' decisions to rectify resource inequalities. *Br. J. Dev. Psychol.* 37(3):309–22. **https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12274**

McKeown S, Dixon J. 2017. The "contact hypothesis": critical reflections and future directions. *Soc. Personal. Psychol. Compass* 11:e12295. **https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12295**

Mulvey KL, Boswell C, Niehaus K. 2018. You don't need to talk to throw a ball! Children's inclusion of language-outgroup members in behavioral and hypothetical scenarios. *Dev. Psychol.* 54(7):1372–80. **https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000531**

Mulvey KL, Gönültaş S, Goff E, Irdam G, Carlson R, et al. 2019. School and family factors predicting adolescent cognition regarding bystander intervention in response to bullying and victim retaliation. *J. Youth Adolesc.* 48:581–96. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-018-0941-3**

Nesdale D. 2004. Social identity processes and children's ethnic prejudice. In *The Development of the Social Self*, ed. M Bennett, F Sani, pp. 219–45. New York: Sage

Nesdale D. 2008. Peer group rejection and children's intergroup prejudice. In *Intergroup Attitudes and Relations in Childhood Through Adulthood*, ed. SR Levy, M Killen, pp. 32–46. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press

Nucci L, Turiel E. 2009. Capturing the complexity of moral development and education. *Mind Brain Educ.* 3(3):151–59. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-228X.2009.01065.x**

Palmer SB, Cameron L, Rutland A, Blake B. 2017. Majority- and minority-ethnic status adolescents' bystander responses to racism in school. *J. Commun. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* 27:374–80. **https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2313**

Palmer SB, Filippou A, Argyri EK, Rutland A. 2022. Minority- and majority-status bystander reactions to, and reasoning about, intergroup social exclusion. *J. Exp. Child Psychol.* 214:105290. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2021.105290**

Palmer SB, Gönültaş S, Yüksel AŞ, Argyi EK, McGuire L, et al. 2023. Challenging the exclusion of immigrant peers. *Int. J. Behav. Dev.* 47(1):9–20. **https://doi.org/10.1177/01650254221128275**

Palmer SB, Rutland A, Cameron L. 2015. The development of bystander intentions and social-moral reasoning about intergroup verbal aggression. *Br. J. Dev. Psychol.* 33:419–33. **https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12092**

Paolini S, Hewstone M, Cairns E, Voci A. 2004. Effects of direct and indirect cross-group friendships on judgments of Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland: the mediating role of an anxiety-reduction mechanism. *Personal. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* 30(6):770–86. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203262848**

Rizzo MT, Killen M. 2016. Children's understanding of equity in the context of inequality. *Br. J. Dev. Psychol.* 34(4):569–81. **https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12150**

Russell ST, Sinclair KO, Poteat VP, Koenig BW. 2012. Adolescent health and harassment based on discriminatory bias. *Am. J. Public Health* 102(3):493–95. **https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2011.300430**

Rutland A. 2004. The development and self-regulation of intergroup attitudes in children. In *The Development of the Social Self*, ed. M Bennett, F Sani, pp. 261–80. East Sussex, UK: Psychol. Press

Rutland A, Cameron L, Bennett L, Ferrell J. 2005a. Interracial contact and racial constancy: a multi-site study of racial intergroup bias in 3–5 year old Anglo-British children. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* 26:699–713. **http://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2005.08.005**

Rutland A, Cameron L, Milne A, McGeorge P. 2005b. Social norms and self-presentation: children's implicit and explicit intergroup attitudes. *Child Dev.* 76:451–66. **http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2005.00856.x**

Rutland A, Hitti A, Mulvey KL, Abrams D, Killen M. 2015. When does the in-group like the out-group? Bias among children as a function of group norms. *Psychol. Sci.* 26:834–42. **https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615572758**

Rutland A, Killen M. 2015. A developmental science approach to reducing prejudice and social exclusion: intergroup processes, social-cognitive development and moral reasoning. *Soc. Issues Policy Rev.* 9:121–54. **https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12012**

Rutland A, Killen M, Abrams D. 2010. A new social-cognitive developmental perspective on prejudice: the interplay between morality and group identity. *Perspect. Psychol. Sci.* 5:279–91. **https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610369468**

Rutland A, Palmer SB, Yüksel AŞ, Grütter J. 2022. Social exclusion: the interplay between morality and group processes. In *Handbook of Moral Development*, ed. M Killen, JG Smetana, pp. 219–35. New York: Routledge

Salmivalli C. 2010. Bullying and the peer group: a review. *Aggress. Violent Behav.* 15(2):112–20. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2009.08.007**

Sierksma J, Thijs J, Verkuyten M, Komter A. 2014. Children's reasoning about the refusal to help: the role of need, costs, and social perspective taking. *Child Dev.* 85(3):1134–49. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12195**

Sommerville JA. 2023. Developing an early awareness of fairness. In *Handbook of Moral Development*, ed. M Killen, JG Smetana, pp. 153–67. New York: Routledge. 3rd ed.

Tajfel H, Turner JC. 1986. The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. S Worchel, WG Austin, pp. 7–24. Chicago: Nelson Hall

Tenenbaum HR, Ruck MD. 2012. British adolescents' and young adults' understanding and reasoning about the religious and nonreligious rights of asylum-seeker youth. *Child Dev.* 83(3):1102–15. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01755.x**

Thornberg R, Hunter SC, Hong JS, Rönnberg J. 2020. Bullying among children and adolescents. *Scand. J. Psychol.* 61:1–5. **https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12610**

Tropp LR, O'Brien TC, Migacheva K. 2014. How peer norms of inclusion and exclusion predict children's interest in cross-ethnic friendships. *J. Soc. Issues* 70(1):151–66. **https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12052**

Turiel E. 2015. Moral development. In *Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science: Theory and Method*, ed. WF Overton, PCM Molenaar, RM Lerner, pp. 484–522. Wiley. 7th ed. **https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118963418.childpsy113**

Turner RN, Cameron L. 2016. Confidence in contact: a new perspective on promoting cross-group friendship among children and adolescents. *Soc. Issues Policy Rev.* 10(1):212–46. **https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12023**

Turner RN, Hewstone M, Voci A. 2007. Reducing explicit and implicit outgroup prejudice via direct and extended contact: the mediating role of self-disclosure and intergroup anxiety. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* 93(3):369–88. **https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.3.369**

Verkuyten M, Steenhuis A. 2005. Preadolescents' understanding and reasoning about asylum seeker peers and friendships. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* 26:660–79. **https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2005.08.002**

Willems RA, Sapouna M, De Amicis L, Völlink T, Dehue F, et al. 2024. Encouraging positive bystander responses to bias-based bullying in primary schools through a serious game approach: a non-randomized controlled evaluation of the 'GATE-BULL' program. *Int. J. Bullying Prev.* 2024. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-024-00243-8**

Wölfer R, Schmid K, Hewstone M, van Zalk M. 2016. Developmental dynamics of intergroup contact and intergroup attitudes: long-term effects in adolescence and early adulthood. *Child Dev.* 87:1466–78. **https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12598**

Woo BM, Hamlin JK. 2023. Evidence for an early-emerging moral core. In *Handbook of Moral Development*, ed. M Killen, JG Smetana, pp. 168–83. New York: Routledge. 3rd ed.

Yüksel AŞ, Palmer SB, Argyri EK, Rutland A. 2022. When do bystanders get help from teachers or friends? Age and group membership matter when indirectly challenging social exclusion. *Front. Psychol.* 13:833589. **https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.833589**

Yüksel AS, Palmer SB, Rutland A. 2021. Developmental differences in bystander behavior toward intergroup and intragroup exclusion. *Dev. Psychol.* 57:1342–49. **https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001202**