Social inclusion and exclusion are pervasive aspects of social life. Understanding when exclusion is legitimate or wrong reflects an understanding of morality. While there are times when exclusion is legitimate and fosters group functioning, there are also times when it reflects prejudicial biases and stereotypic expectations. How children weigh fairness and stereotypic expectations when making exclusion decisions is determined by their understanding of group norms, social identity, and friendships with children from other backgrounds.

In our contemporary global society, few topics are as timely or pressing as exclusion. Children and Social Exclusion: Morality, Prejudice, and Group Identity delves deeply into the origins of prejudice and the emergence of morality to explain why children include some and exclude others and sheds light on the origins of stereotyping, prejudice, and social justice.

By tackling these important issues from a global perspective, Children and Social Exclusion: Morality, Prejudice, and Group Identity illustrates how the concept of exclusion might be better understood in multiple cultures and reveals its implications in regions of conflict in the world.
Children and Social Exclusion
The study of children’s development can have a profound influence on how children are brought up, cared for, and educated. Many psychologists argue that, even if our knowledge is incomplete, we have a responsibility to attempt to help those concerned with the care, education, and study of children by making what we know available to them. The central aim of this series is to encourage developmental psychologists to set out the findings and the implications of their research for others – teachers, doctors, social workers, students, and fellow researchers – whose work involves the care, education, and study of young children and their families. The information and the ideas that have grown from recent research form an important resource which should be available to them. This series provides an opportunity for psychologists to present their work in a way that is interesting, intelligible, and substantial, and to discuss what its consequences may be for those who care for, and teach, children: not to offer simple prescriptive advice to other professionals, but to make important and innovative research accessible to them.

Children Doing Mathematics
Terezinha Nunes and Peter Bryant

Children and Emotion
Paul L. Harris

Bullying at School
Dan Olweus

How Children Think and Learn, Second Edition
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Young Children Learning
Barbara Tizard and Martin Hughes

Children’s Friendships
Judy Dunn

How Children Develop Social Understanding
Jeremy Carpendale and Charlie Lewis

Children’s Reading and Spelling: Beyond the First Steps
Terezinha Nunes and Peter Bryant

Children and Play
Peter K. Smith

Peer Groups and Children’s Development
Christine Howe
To Rob, Sasha, and Jacob for their love and affection, and to Marcia, David, and Sean, for their love and support (M.K.)

To Rachel, Kate, and Jonathan for their love and endless inspiration, and to my late father, Peter, who sadly died during the writing of this book, and Marion, my mother, and Neil, my brother, for their continuous love and support (A.R.)
## Contents

Series Editor’s Preface xi  
Preface xiii

### Chapter 1  Introduction: Exclusion and Inclusion in Children’s Lives  1
  
  Theories of Social Cognition, Social Relationships, and Exclusion  3  
  Types of Exclusion  6  
  Goals of the Book  7  
  Summary  7

### Chapter 2  The Emergence of Morality in Childhood  9
  
  Morality in Childhood  10  
  What Morality is Not  10  
  Criteria, Definitions, and Measurements of Morality  11  
  Morality Encompasses Judgment, Emotions, Individuals, and Groups  12  
  Social Precursors of Moral Judgment  13  
  Moral Judgment and Interaction in Childhood  19  
  Morality as Justice  23  
  Social Domain Model of Social and Moral Judgment  25  
  Moral Generalizability  30  
  Morality in the Context of Other Social Concepts: Multifaceted Events  32  
  Morality and Theory of Mind  34  
  Morality and Social-Cognitive Development  35  
  Summary  35
## Contents

### Chapter 3  Emergence of Social Categorization and Prejudice

- Social Categorization as a Precursor of Prejudice  
  38
- Explicit Biases in Young Children  
  44
- Cognitive Developmental Approach to Prejudice Development  
  47
- Development of Implicit Biases  
  50
- Relation of Implicit Bias to Judgment and Behavior: Is it Prejudice?  
  53
- Summary  
  57

### Chapter 4  Group Identity and Prejudice

- Is Group Identity Good or Bad?  
  60
- Social Identity Theory  
  62
- Social Identity Development Theory  
  64
- Theory of Social Mind and the Control of Prejudice  
  68
- Moral or Group Norms and the Control of Prejudice  
  70
- Processes Underlying the Control of Prejudice  
  73
- Developmental Subjective Group Dynamics  
  77
- Morality and Group Identity  
  81
- Summary  
  84

### Chapter 5  What We Know about Peer Relations and Exclusion

- Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Exclusion: Social Traits and Individual Differences  
  87
- Intragroup and Intergroup Exclusion: Ingroup/Outgroup Identity  
  90
- Social Reasoning and Exclusion  
  92
- Gender Exclusion in Early Childhood: Okay or Unfair?  
  94
- Comparing Gender and Racial Exclusion: Group Goals and Qualifications  
  97
- Interviewing Ethnic Minority and Majority Children and Adolescents about Exclusion  
  100
- Social Reasoning about Exclusion in Adolescence: Crowds, Cliques, and Networks  
  108
- Social Reasoning about Sexual Prejudice  
  108
- Exclusion in Interracial Encounters: Lunch Table, Birthday Parties, and Dating  
  109
Contents ix

Gender Exclusion in the Family Context: 113
  Children’s Views about Parental Expectations
Summary 116

Chapter 6 Intragroup and Intergroup Exclusion: 118
  An In-depth Study
  Group Dynamics: Conceptions of Groups in 118
    the Context of Exclusion
  Group Dynamics: Group Identity, Group-Specific 119
    Norms, Domain-Specific Norms
  Group-Specific Norms 123
  Deviance in Social Groups 123
  Group Identity 124
  Implications for Group Identity in Childhood 132
Summary 132

Chapter 7 Peer Exclusion and Group Identity Around 134
  the World: The Role of Culture
  Cultural Context of Exclusion 136
  Long-Standing Intergroup Cultural Conflicts 137
  Cultures with Intractable and Violent Conflict 138
  Recently Immigrated Groups 143
  Intergroup Exclusion Based on Indigenous Groups 151
Summary 152

Chapter 8 Increasing Inclusion, Reducing Prejudice, and 154
  Promoting Morality
  Intergroup Contact and Reducing Prejudice 156
  Intergroup Contact and Children 157
  Cross-group Friendships and Prejudice 158
  Intergroup Contact and Minority Status Children 163
  Reducing Implicit Biases through Intergroup 165
    Contact
  Reducing Prejudice through Extended Intergroup 166
    Contact
  Promoting Inclusion through the Mass Media 171
  Intergroup Contact and Promoting Moral 174
    Reasoning in Children
  Multicultural Education and Social Exclusion 176
  Factors that Reduce Childhood Bias 178
Summary 180
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 9</th>
<th>Integration of Morality, Prejudice, and Group Identity: A New Perspective on Social Exclusion</th>
<th>181</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theories about Peer Relationships</td>
<td>181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories about Social Exclusion</td>
<td>183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children as Active Participants</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgments, Beliefs, Attitudes, Attributions of Emotions, and Behavior</td>
<td>187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit and Indirect Measures of Prejudice and Exclusion</td>
<td>190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Integrative Social-Cognitive Developmental Perspective on Social Exclusion</td>
<td>191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Experience Factors that Promote Inclusion</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion and Prejudice</td>
<td>193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References 197
Index 223
This series, *Understanding Children’s Worlds*, is concerned with children’s social worlds, and their developing understanding of those worlds. The topics of exclusion and prejudice are clearly central to their social experiences, especially to their relationships with other children. What makes some children able to recognize and challenge stereotypic or prejudiced views of others? What experiences, in contrast, reinforce prejudice and bias? How well do we understand the development of individual differences in these early aspects of morality, and what are the trajectories in bias and prejudice from early childhood to adolescence and adulthood?

What is striking about this book is that Melanie Killen and Adam Rutland have brought together a notably wide range of ideas and research findings on these questions, a range that spans developmental psychology and social psychology – it is a bold vision that integrates very different ideas and theoretical approaches. Three themes stand out. First, Killen and Rutland summarize the early emergence of morality: how children view social exclusion as right or wrong, and the growth of their understanding of both explicit prejudicial views and implicit biases. Second, they consider children’s ideas on group identity and exclusion, and carefully distinguish prejudice and exclusion. They examine, for instance, how children think about excluding individuals from within their own groups, and how they evaluate exclusion of individuals from a different group (intragroup versus intergroup exclusion). Third, importantly they move on to consider what we know about exclusion in diverse cultures – rather than solely in laboratory studies.

Particularly valuable, they then consider interventions that attempt to promote positive inclusion and a sense of shared identity among children from different groups. They assess how successful programs that vary
intergroup contact, media exposure, and, importantly, cross-group friendship can be. Their integration of the ideas and findings of social and developmental psychology does indeed shed light on the developmental programs which, they argue, are fundamental for progress towards a fairer society.

Judy Dunn
Exclusion and inclusion are pervasive in children’s lives and continue throughout adulthood. Understanding why exclusion happens, how children think about it, and what it means for social development involves an analysis of individuals, groups, and relationships. Writing this book from our various perspectives, which included social cognition, moral development, social identity, and intergroup attitudes, we took a new view on exclusion and inclusion in children’s lives, one that enabled us to reflect on its fundamental role in social development. We have described how it is that through experiencing exclusion and inclusion, children develop morality (when to include, when not to exclude, and why) and form social identity (what groups do I belong to, what group norms do I care about?).

As a result of these developmental processes, children become capable of challenging or reinforcing prejudicial attitudes and stereotypic beliefs (sometimes explicitly and often implicitly). This is because children who develop social identity without invoking moral judgments appear to justify exclusion in contexts that reflect prejudice, discrimination, and bias. Yet children who develop an understanding of group dynamics and balance these concerns with fairness and equality are well positioned to reject or challenge stereotypic expectations and prejudicial beliefs. The factors and sources of experience that contribute to these diverse trajectories and perspectives reflect the core of this book. The tension between morality and social identity is complex, which makes it an intriguing and compelling topic to write about.

We emerged from this project with a strong sense that much is at stake in understanding children’s perspectives about exclusion and inclusion because of the different consequences to social exclusion and inclusion. Issues as important as social justice and fairness are invoked.
Stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are unfortunate outcomes of exclusion decisions that are made without a balance of all of the factors that are implicated. Thus, exclusion takes many forms throughout social life and its meaning is vast and varied.

We began this book as an integrative collaboration, crossing the boundaries of developmental and social psychology to understand exclusion in the child. Over the past 10 years, researchers in the fields of developmental, social, neuroscience, and cognitive psychology have investigated ingroup bias and outgroup threat in their research designs and empirical projects; at the same time, researchers from many different subfields of social science have delved into morality and moral judgment in the child. The convergence of interest on these topics from such diverse areas is astounding and engaging. We found that the areas of intergroup attitudes and morality were often dichotomized, however, and not well integrated. Even closer to our own areas of study, we have found that developmental research has not traditionally examined morality in the context of intergroup relations, and social psychology research on social identity has not typically studied moral reasoning. Thus, one aim of this book was to take an integrative approach for describing how intergroup attitudes, morality, and social identity emerge in the child and create the conditions for exclusion and inclusion.

We would like to thank our respective colleagues and graduate students for discussions and collaborations on the topics in this book. Melanie Killen thanks her colleagues Dominic Abrams, William Arsenio, Natasha Cabrera, Robert Coplan, David Crystal, Ileana Enesco, Nathan Fox, Silvia Guerrero, Dan Hart, Charles Helwig, Stacey Horn, Peter Kahn, Sheri Levy, Tina Malti, Clark McKown, Drew Nesdale, Larry Nucci, Ken Rubin, Martin Ruck, Judi Smetana, Charles Stangor, Elliot Turiel, Cecilia Wainryb, Allan Wigfield, and Amanda Woodward for many collaborations and conversations about social cognition, social development, morality, and exclusion, as well as for many research collaborations that served as the basis for most of her research. In addition, she is grateful to William Damon and Elliot Turiel for inspiring her to study the development of morality, and for providing an intellectually engaging community in graduate school, one that has endured for several decades post-graduate, to Jonas Langer for his encouragement, to Judi Smetana for her mentorship, and to Larry Nucci for his guidance. Melanie Killen also thanks her former doctoral students for their many contributions to the research program on social and moral development, for pushing the research agenda into new and original research directions, and for becoming collaborators on many of
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Chapter 1

Introduction: Exclusion and Inclusion in Children’s Lives

Acquiring morality, identifying with groups, and developing autonomy provide the foundation for social development in childhood and continue throughout adulthood. Understanding these foundational aspects of development helps to explain why children exclude and include peers, and how it is related to a larger part of becoming a member of a society and culture. When is exclusion legitimate and when it is wrong? What is involved when children exclude other peers and how is this related to exclusion as it happens in the adult world?

While children begin to understand the importance of including peers in their social exchanges, excluding other children from friendships and social groups is complicated. What is complicated is that inclusion is not always desirable, even from an adult perspective, and exclusion is not always wrong. Sports teams, music clubs, and social events often require abilities and talents that are necessary to join, and social events are often arranged in such a way that some type of decision rule about exclusion is used to make it work well. In fact, there are times when it would be viewed as negative to include someone in a group when the individual does not meet the expectations for the group goals (a slow runner will be excluded from a track team). In addition to meeting the criteria for inclusion there are other factors that are considered, which include what makes the group work well. For example, an overly aggressive individual or someone who has unhealthy intentions towards others might be excluded. This type of exclusion is more complicated because it refers to psychological traits which may be inferred by behavior that belies the actual talents of the individual. Moreover, psychological
traits are often attributed to individuals based on their group membership (e.g., girls are not competitive) and not their behavior, which then makes an exclusion decision wrong or unfair. Nonetheless, there are clearly times when it is legitimate to exclude others from social groups when the criteria for exclusion are viewed as reasonable to make groups work well.

Children have to figure out the conditions and criteria for inclusion and exclusion, and this is not easy. In fact, it is a life-long challenge, changing as the scope, nature, and definition of the social group evolves. Figuring this out involves determining a set of fair criteria for inclusion, which involves understanding and anticipating the consequences of exclusion for both the excluder and the excluded.

What makes it more complicated in childhood is that children get many mixed messages from peers and adults about exclusion and inclusion. In early childhood adults typically communicate messages to children to convey the idea that everyone should be included in all activities regardless of merit, shared interests, or group goals for achievement. For example, in early childhood adults often express the view that “we’re all friends.” With age, however, adults recognize that children’s friendships are a matter of personal choice and a result of psychological compatibility as opposed to a general expectation for pervasive inclusion. In fact, as children develop skills, interests, and talents, adults modify their expectations by condoning exclusion criteria for groups, such as competitive ones, as well as for achievement groups, such as tracking in schools based on academic skill, and even for friendship expectations.

To reinforce this pattern, most social groups in early childhood are mandated and created by adults. As children get older and form their own groups, however, they begin to establish their own boundaries, regulations, and norms, and adults often relinquish their role as “group norm creators.” Children begin to set group norms that are often associated with their group identity. Given that there will be disagreements about norms, these aspects of groups become foci for exclusion. Thus, expectations for inclusion and exclusion evolve rapidly for children, often without clear or explicit guidelines from adults. And yet, children evolve ways of conceptualizing their groups, along with establishing the criteria for inclusion and exclusion, and the norms associated with group identity.

Together, these factors make it clear that exclusion and inclusion are complex decisions, with significant consequences for child development, as well as for becoming an adult and a member of society. Some forms of exclusion are viewed as relatively minor, such as not inviting someone to join a lunch table, but other forms of exclusion are fairly major, such as
excluding someone from a group based on race or ethnicity. A central distinction between different forms of exclusion has to do with the reasons and motivations, such as excluding someone when there is no more room for someone to join or excluding someone because of their race, ethnicity, or religion. A fair amount of evidence suggests that the forms of exclusion that are negative in childhood are related to the types of bias, prejudice, and discrimination in adulthood that is reflected in exclusion decisions. When exclusion becomes extreme and turns into prejudice or victimization then the outcomes are negative for both the excluded and the excluder. By studying childhood exclusion we can learn about the roots of exclusion in the adult world.

Several major theories of development have been used to examine and explain exclusion and inclusion in childhood. These theories have focused on peer rejection in the context of children’s friendships, groups, social interactions, and social relationships. In general, these theories describe how children learn to get along with others, when and why they reject each other, with implications for charting the developmental pathway for how children become members of societies and cultures.

Theories of Social Cognition, Social Relationships, and Exclusion

Social Domain theory (Turiel, 2006), which stems from Piagetian approaches to moral development, has shown that children’s judgments about fairness emerges early in development, by 3.5 years of age, and that children distinguish rules about fairness from rules that make groups work well, referred to as societal understanding, or knowledge about the regulations that make groups function smoothly. This approach is important for understanding the basis for children’s inclusion orientations in which they believe that it is important to treat others fairly and equally. Holding such views enables children to challenge exclusionary judgments from peers, as well as prejudicial attitudes. This model has also demonstrated the types of group norms, rules, and regulations that children develop and apply to social interactions which reflect their knowledge about society and group functioning.

The Social Domain approach provides a way for determining when children evaluate an act as wrong for moral reasons, such as concerns about fairness and equality, and when they view an act as wrong for societal reasons, such as consensus about group norms, traditions, customs, and regulations. Children also evaluate acts and rules as a matter of
personal choice, in some contexts, which reflects a different domain of judgments and evaluations. Thus, this approach provides a way for understanding children’s reasons for exclusion and inclusion decisions, and when children view exclusion as wrong and unfair, as legitimate and necessary for groups to work well, or as a personal choice.

A second theory that provides a guide to understanding exclusion is Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1970; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which focuses on relationships between ingroups and outgroups, or intergroup attitudes and relationships. Intergroup attitudes refers to attitudes about social groups that focus on either the ingroup (the group that a person belongs to and identifies with) or the outgroup (a group that is different from one’s own group and often varies in status from one’s own group). In intergroup contexts individuals often do what they can to preserve their ingroup identity, which often means derogating or disliking the outgroup (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Validizic, 1998). Children and adults often exclude individuals from the outgroup to maintain a strong ingroup identity. This approach has demonstrated that intergroup attitudes often reflect stereotypic and prejudicial attitudes that underlie exclusionary decisions.

Children identity with different groups, some that are chosen, such as sports teams, and others that are not chosen, such as gender and race/ethnicity. When group identity becomes very salient and important to the child then there is a greater expectation that exclusion will happen and that children will condone it or justify it. Children have expectations about group norms that members of groups need to adhere to, and they will often exclude someone who does not conform to the group norms. Unfortunately, some norms have to do with how others should be treated and reflect prejudicial attitudes. Children often struggle with decisions about exclusion of peers from their own group who do not meet the expectations of their group as well as exclusion of others from different groups. This makes social interactions and relationships very complex.

A third theory that is relevant for understanding exclusion and inclusion is from the field of peer relationships and friendships. Hinde’s multilevel theory of social interactions, groups, and relationships has been used to understand individual differences in patterns of peer rejection (Hinde, Titmus, Easton, & Tamplin, 1985; Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 2006). Children who reject others often display aggressive behaviors, whereas children who are rejected are often extremely shy, fearful, and wary. It is also often the case that children who reject others have also been rejected by their peers. Personality differences also contribute to the patterns of peer rejection, and individual differences
in personality bear on the types of individual–group interactions that occur when a child is rejected by others.

For example, when children are asked to nominate who they like and who they dislike in a classroom context, some children are perceived as having a lot of friends and some are perceived as having no friends. This categorization system has shown that children who have no friends and are rejected by their peers are often the same children who bully others and are therefore rejected by their peers. Yet, sometimes children are rejected for reasons based on group membership (such as gender, race, and ethnicity) and which may have little to do with personality traits. Instead, it may have to do with group functioning, and who is perceived to “fit the group.” This means that exclusion has to be understood by considering a number of factors, including personality traits as well as group membership and group dynamics.

Finally, theories about how children process information and interpret social cues in children’s expressions, affect, and behavior have been useful for understanding exclusion and inclusion. Social Information Processing models (Crick & Dodge, 1994) focus on how children think about each step of a social encounter, particularly encounters that create conflict, such as exclusion and rejection. The first step involves interpretations of the intentions and social cues in the interaction, followed by decisions on how to act and what to accomplish. This work has been important for understanding exclusion because many situations in which children are excluded are the result of different interpretations (and misinterpretations) of the intentions of other children. For example, one child may be excluded from a game because the other children may think that he will be aggressive, that is, they expect the child to act like a bully, when, in fact, the expectations are based on stereotypes and not actual prior behavior. In this case, children’s interpretations of the intentions of another child lead to the exclusion and create social conflict.

Different interpretations of others’ actions are particularly related to exclusion when the intentions of the peer situation are ambiguous. One child may exclude another child from joining a lunch table because they think that the child does not want to join them due to being part of another group when, in fact, the child is shy and wants to join but does not know how to express it. This type of situation occurs often and contributes to exclusion. Thus, children’s “reading of the social expectations” of others has important relevance for understanding exclusion. When children have different expectations of what others might do then this often leads to exclusion of others, creating negative consequences for children who are excluded.
What these different theories tell us is that exclusion is not the same as bullying. While some types of exclusion turn into bullying there are many instances of exclusion in which the exclusion is legitimate because it is done to make groups work well, or in which the exclusion has negative outcomes but is the result of different interpretations of the same situation. In general terms, exclusion, unlike bullying or victimization, is not always negative because sometimes excluding others has to do with group inclusion criteria that are viewed as fair and legitimate.

Types of Exclusion

As we have indicated, figuring out and understanding decision-making about exclusion is a social-cognitive challenge that emerges in childhood and continues through adulthood. Exclusion occurs among friends, in social groups, and by institutions. Exclusion decisions are sometimes explicit, based on the motivation to make a group function well (“Everyone in this group has to be good at drawing so if you’re not good then you can’t join”), or the personal desire to choose a friend or partner (“I don’t want to play with her because we don’t like the same things”). Being the recipient of exclusion often involves recognition of the importance of group functioning and social desires, but sometimes this also means an awareness that the decision was unfair or wrong (“They didn’t let her in the club but that’s not right because they think she’s mean but she’s not;” “That group doesn’t let girls in and that’s unfair because they have all of the toys”).

How children develop morality and moral judgments, form group identities, and an understanding of groups, contribute to exclusionary decisions that have negative outcomes for social relationships as well as social development. In fact, our central thesis is that the basic conflict between moral orientations and prejudicial attitudes and biases that emerge in childhood are realized in situations involving inclusion and exclusion. Thus, studying why children include or exclude friends provides a window into their application of moral or prejudicial attitudes in actual social decision-making and exchanges. A child’s first experiences of exclusion from social groups occurs in early peer interactions in the home or school context and then extends to larger groups, particularly for groups in which group identity and group membership becomes salient. Exclusion occurs at many levels, from the dyadic to groups, from interpersonal to intergroup, and reflecting different levels of intentions and goals (Abrams, Hogg, & Marques, 2005).
Goals of the Book

A central goal of this book, then, is to discuss the emergence and origins of morality as well as bias and prejudice in order to understand why individuals exclude others, and how this emerges in childhood. How do children and adolescents approach situations that involve exclusion? When do children view exclusion as a matter of right or wrong? When does implicit and explicit prejudice factor into exclusion decisions and how do group norms bear on this process? Prejudice typically refers to negative evaluations of individuals because of the social groups they belong to (see Brewer, 1999; Brown, 1995), and is often contrasted with bias in favor of one's own group (i.e., ingroup) over others’ groups (i.e., outgroups), commonly known as ingroup bias, which does not necessarily involve the expression of negative attitudes towards other groups.

The consequences for children’s peer relationships and interactions are that the experience of social exclusion creates negative consequences whether the exclusion was motivated by direct prejudice or by ingroup favoritism. For example, if an African-American boy has no one to play with during recess because all the European-American children in his class prefer to play with children from their own racial group then the child’s experience is social exclusion even if no prejudiced attitudes were explicitly expressed. Further, the potential negative outcomes for social development exist for this child whether the exclusion was direct or indirect. What makes this issue so timely is that these types of exchanges are occurring around the world, with the increased mobility of ethnic groups and regional transitions of migration. Latino children in the United States, Muslim children in the Netherlands, Salvadoran children in Spain, and Serbian children in Switzerland are often in the situation of feeling left out of a group at school, and bringing the conditions that create this form of exclusion in childhood to light is an important first step towards creating more inclusive environments for all individuals.

Summary

Exclusion and inclusion from social groups is pervasive in social life. There are many reasons that exclusion occurs, and understanding explicit motivations as well as implicit biases that contribute to exclusion sheds light on the development of exclusion in children’s lives. This book is divided into eight chapters. We begin in Chapter 2, with an examination of the emergence of morality in childhood to demonstrate when and how