



## Aiding Moral – Ethical Development From Birth to 5 Years

Hazar Imam constantly reminds us to be ethical in our lives

The question for us is how do we practice this and how do we teach our children?

Effective parents help their children learn that rules come from ethics, not ethics from rules.

A values based home fosters personal responsibility and initiative in each child!

Pluralistic families place emphasis on others. They teach compassion by first being kind to their own children, and by letting them know how important it is to be kind to one another.

“Treat others the way you want to be treated” is the core message they imbibe from the very beginning.

Most Important -Walk your talk.

You can try the following to inculcate a more ethical outlook in your child early.

**Trustworthiness:** Be honest. Don't cheat or steal. Be reliable. Be loyal.

**Respect:** Treat others with respect. Be tolerant of differences. Good manners and language.

**Responsible:** Do what you're supposed to do. Be disciplined & accountable for your choices.

**Fairness:** Play by the rules. Take turns & share. Be open-minded. Don't take advantage.

**Caring:** Be kind. Be compassionate. Express gratitude. Forgive others. Help people in need.

**Citizenship:** Vote. Be a good citizen. Obey laws. Respect authority. Protect the environment.



You may also consider...

Step 1

Define the morals that you feel are most important. Rank morals and teach them one at a time so your children aren't overwhelmed and have a proper chance to learn the importance of each facet of morality.

Step 2

Encourage self direction by explaining how to understand feelings. Self direction entails teaching your children to use their own feelings and sense of responsibility to decide whether something is right or wrong, and to decide the course of action.. Talk to your children and create several hypothetical instances where they would need to assess their feelings to make a choice, like accidentally taking a toy that doesn't belong to them.

Step 3

Explain natural consequences of bad or improper choices. For instance, if your children continually fight with friends, note that one day their friends may not want to play with them. If your children are caught lying, explain that it can make people doubt their stories. Also teach that good morals also have good consequences. Always being responsible means that someone may ask for their help, and always being kind could net them more friends to play with.

**Early Childhood Education & Development**





## Unravel the Drawing

“The urge to draw must be quite deep within us, because children love to do it”  
- David Hockney

Children love to draw. They can often utilise drawings to express their experience and emotions. Their work is often a very colourful reflection of their petite inner world as well as their point of view of their role in the family and relationship to family members. Drawings may also show the child’s strengths as well as fragility.



Very often drawings are simply created as a fun pass time however, sometimes we can discover a much deeper meaning behind the drawings that we observe.

Often parents are keen to find hidden meanings in the drawings created by their children, but should be very cautious about over-interpreting it. It is good to use the drawing as an opportunity to talk with the child about what they have drawn and allow the child to tell you what the drawing means to them.

The following interpretations have been gathered by researchers and could be one way of interpreting the meanings behind different drawings that children make:

- Impulsive child: Big figures, no necks, and asymmetry of limbs
- Anxious child: Clouds, rain, flying birds, no eyes on the figures
- Shy child: Short figures, no nose or mouth, tiny figures and arms close to the body
- Angry child: Big hands and teeth, long arms, crossed eyes
- Insecure child: Monstrous figures, tiny heads, no hands, and slanted figures



Of course all children are different and the points discussed may not necessarily be applicable to all children and all of the drawings that they create.

However, if you want to learn more about interpreting children’s drawings, here’s some books that can help: .

- Children and Pictures: Drawing and Understanding  
By Richard P. Jolley

- Understanding Children's Drawings  
By Cathy A. Malchiodi

And here’s some interesting websites if you’d like to read further:

<http://www.learningdesign.com/Portfolio/DrawDev/kiddrawing.html>

<http://mary-h.com/timeline/index.html>

[http://www.amshq.org/conference/neworleans/handouts/Zambo\\_Children\\_Art.pdf](http://www.amshq.org/conference/neworleans/handouts/Zambo_Children_Art.pdf)

<http://www.carolynboriss-krimsky.com/documents/chapter3.pdf>





## Developing Independent Learning

The ability to develop 'self-regulated' children, wherein a child is self motivated to perform all actions by his/herself is a fundamental aspect, which relates to emotional, social, cognitive and motivational skills. Self-awareness engages children to take increasing control of their own mental processing, helping them to think, reason, learn and remember.

### Strategies to aid thinking skills:

1. Parents should encourage positive and metacognitive self-talk whilst conducting tasks enabling the child to understand, practice the process and to accept and make adjustments when they make errors.
2. Help develop a child's working memory whilst learning another skill such as singing while colouring or listening to stories while eating. Overlearning and ensuring that other skills become automatic, reduces the load on the working memory. Any skill that requires minimal activity in the working memory, improves the use of thinking skills. Beginning early helps take it further for e.g. taking care of one self while at the same time, completing an important assignment.

### Skills in Practice:

Simply teaching metacognitive strategies i.e. the ability to learn, think and do in a particular pattern is unlikely to develop children as independent learners; children need to be provided with opportunities for individual practice on tasks which require effortful thinking.

3. Work with a child to encourage focusing attention on important tasks like learning to read at the earliest stages. Modelling or personal experience works best.
4. For older children, encourage *transfer of knowledge*, emphasising connections within and beyond a given learning. For example when day care operators and pre schools make learners put things away in places, roll up mats, stack books and at the same time have recitals and readings, music and movements thus establishing a routine instead of assessment which inculcates dual learning and independent thinking and application.
5. Avoid excessive prompting. This may be necessary in early stages of developing thinking skills, but the ultimate goal is self-regulation.



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