

Healthy Human Development as a Path to Peace

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Abstract

What is the potential role of early childhood interventions for promoting peace? From our perspective, healthy human development during early childhood can lay the foundation for the child's acquisition of complex and specific capacities required to engage in peace-promoting behavior. This chapter focuses on children's capacity to create, maintain, and restore harmonious and equitable relationships with others. Obstacles and catalysts for healthy human development are identified, as are the competencies required for children to engage in harmonious and equitable relationships. Sustainable peace in a society requires a "systems approach" that reduces both direct and structural violence and promotes peaceful means and socially just ends. A model is proposed based on four sequential foundations: healthy human development, healthy primary relationships, prosocial interpersonal relations, and the adoption of a peace and social justice orientation toward out-group members. Three case studies are presented to clarify the key concepts and propositions we advance. Drawing on an agentic perspective, in which the child is a producer as well as the product of social environments, our concept of *peaceful* children implies not only healthy human development and the acquisition of specific developmental capacities for peace, but also the child's internalization of a set of values that support a commitment to relational harmony and social justice. In conclusion, suggestions for future research are offered.

Introduction

In this chapter, we offer evidence for the proposition that healthy human development lays the foundation for the development of peaceful children. When we refer to *peaceful* children, we are not implying docility in any form. To the contrary, our use of the term "peaceful" comports with the way in which

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scholars from the transdisciplinary field of peace and conflict studies use the term; namely, as the nonviolent pursuit of socially just arrangements between individuals and groups (Galtung 1996). We also share with peace scholars the view that peace is not sustainable without an approach that integrates non-violence with justice; moving seamlessly from justice to peace is what has been referred to as “justpeace” (Lederach 1999). Accordingly, we begin by discussing the meaning of peace and violence. Because we view healthy human development as one of the foundations for the development of peaceful children, we then examine what we know about barriers and catalysts for healthy development.

Our group, with representatives from anthropology, economics, psychology, and peace studies, began with wide-ranging discussions. We agreed that there is a sequence of developmental tasks and corresponding foundations that favor the development of a prosocial orientation in children. Prosocial children tend to be healthy, form secure attachments, engage in self-regulation, have a stable social identity, exercise agency, have well-honed social skills, and the capacity to reason and communicate (van IJzendoorn and Bakermans-Kranenburg, this volume). *Peaceful* children, in addition to having a general propensity toward prosocial behavior, appear to have specific capabilities that are particularly well-suited for engaging in peaceful behavior: the capacity for empathy, respect for others, and a commitment to fairness and trust in relationships with other individuals and groups. These capabilities, combined with peace-promoting social ecologies, leave the prosocial child well positioned to pursue peace and social justice in relation to others who are outside the child’s reference or identity group.

Throughout this chapter, we emphasize the importance of a strong developmental approach that will accommodate notions of sequential development, optimal timing for interventions, and multiple trajectories. Most importantly, we contend that pathways to peace vary with geohistorical contexts. In contexts where unfair conditions persist and pose risks to child development, the primary task is the mitigation of structural violence: a more equitable structural arrangement in access to resources is needed for healthy human development. In contexts of direct violence, the immediate goal of interventions is the creation of social ecologies (environments) that restore peace in and around the child. In contexts characterized by deep divisions between groups and conflictual relationships, the primary goal is to maximize the child’s engagement with harmonious relationships. When social injustices are the dominant feature of the geohistorical landscape, nurturing the child’s awakening sense of social injustice, agency, and nonviolent social activism is the most relevant intervention and pathway to peace.

In summary, from our perspective, *peaceful* children have the capacity to create, maintain, and restore harmonious and equitable relationships. Because these peace-promoting capacities are complex, we view healthy human development as potentially contributing to their development. We recognize that

children's commitment to relational harmony and social equity suggests an internalized set of values, in addition to being healthy and developing peace-promoting capabilities. Moreover, we recognize that there are gaps in our knowledge about paths favoring the development of peaceful children.

Peace and Violence

World War II made it abundantly clear that the field of international relations and its central organizing principle, *political realism*, could not deliver on the promise of preventing war. Shortly thereafter, the term "peace" entered the lexicon of social scientists and two academic cultures emerged: (a) *peace science*, which emphasized objective, quantitative, and analytical approaches to the generation of knowledge within the positivist tradition (Isaard and Smith 1982), and (b) *peace and conflict studies*, a transdisciplinary and value-explicit approach dedicated not only to an analysis of the causes and consequences of violence but also to the reduction and elimination of violence combined with the promotion of human well-being (Clemens 2012).

When "peace" entered the social science lexicon, scholars in the United States tended to focus on the causes and consequences of conflict, rather than on peace itself, in part because "peace" was associated with normative concepts and was politically suspect, especially during the McCarthy era (Kelman 1981). Our perspective here is more closely aligned with peace scholars in Europe (Galtung 1969, 1996) and the academic space occupied by peace and conflict studies, which examines not only the mitigation of direct interpersonal and collective violence but also structural violence. The latter is a pernicious form of violence that kills people just as surely as direct violence, but does so insidiously by depriving them of basic human need satisfaction. Worldwide, it has been estimated that about 1.5 million people per year die from direct violence (WHO 2009), while annually 14–18 million deaths are due to the structural violence of hunger, unsanitary water, and a lack of access to medical care (Gilligan 1997).

Direct and Structural Violence

Structural violence is reflected in vast disparities in income, wealth, health, and access to services, both within and between societies (Galtung 1969). It occurs where people are socially dominated, politically oppressed, or economically exploited. One way to think about structural violence is the number of deaths that could be avoided if human needs were satisfied equitably. For instance, structural violence occurs where relevant health care facilities exist in one area, but some people are persistently marginalized in terms of their access to quality care.

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Direct and structural violence can be distinguished in a number of ways (Christie 2006): Direct violence kills directly and quickly through bodily harm, whereas structural violence kills people indirectly and slowly through the deprivation of human need satisfaction. Direct violence is intermittent, dramatic, and often personal, whereas structural violence is chronic, normalized, and impersonal. On a global scale, structural violence can occur through (Kabeer 2010):

1. social inequalities that marginalize, devalue, and discriminate against people on the basis of their identity;
2. economic inequalities that distribute assets and opportunities unequally.
3. political inequalities that deprive people of voice and representation in matters that affect their well-being; and
4. spatial inequality in which geographic location can make it less likely that people will have access to goods and services.

In the context of early childhood, structural violence can be evidenced in the unequal exposure to risk and protective factors (Dawes and van der Merwe, this volume). As a form of structural violence, global poverty and inequality creates difficult life conditions for caregivers and puts children at risk for malnourishment, infectious diseases, and a host of other debilitating problems that adversely affect human development (Leon and Walt 2001). While the global poverty landscape has been changing rapidly, due largely to the dynamic emerging economies in Asia, there are hundreds of millions of people that are still trying to eke out survival near or below international poverty lines (Chandy and Gertz 2011). As Harper et al. (2012:48) notes:

Whichever way one frames the problem of chronic poverty—as human suffering, as vulnerability, as a basic needs failure, as the abrogation of human rights, as degraded citizenship—widespread chronic poverty occurs in a world that has the knowledge and resources to eradicate it. Tackling chronic poverty is therefore the global priority for our generation and is vital if our world is to achieve an acceptable level of justice and fairness.

The issue of social justice also looms large even in high-income countries. In their examination of 23 high-income countries, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) found a strong positive correlation between income inequality and a wide range of health and well-being variables, including life expectancy, infant mortality, mental illness, educational achievement, teen birth rates, homicides, rates of imprisonment, levels of social trust, and social mobility.

Healthy Human Development: Barriers and Catalysts

In this section, we examine well-documented barriers to the reduction of structural violence in children's social ecologies and their untoward impact on the child's development. Thereafter, we identify some catalysts of healthy human

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development. Our view is that healthy human development is promoted when the social ecologies in which children are embedded are relatively peaceful (i.e., when structural and direct violence are low). Accordingly, we examine the barriers and catalysts that can reduce structural violence and promote healthy human development.

Barriers to Healthy Human Development

Physical and social settings that are relevant to human development encompass household composition, physical infrastructures and spaces used for play or recreation, essential services or resources such as water or electricity, as well as geographical location. In addition, political and socioeconomic forces shape social and economic equity in terms of rights and opportunities to enhance well-being. The force of these arrangements may impact directly on the young child in several ways: (a) when potable water is not available, risk of infection is heightened; (b) when financial resources are limited, the range of stimulation opportunities may be limited; (c) when nutrition is limited by food insecurity, growth status may be compromised.

Physical and social settings also influence parenting and child outcomes (Gehlert et al. 2008). Crucial factors are the quality of the child's nutrition, health care, caregiving relationships, and stimulation for early learning (Steele et al., this volume). Caregiver mental health is a key concern throughout the parenting experience. Most research on the impact of caregiver health has been conducted on mothers, rather than fathers or other primary caregivers (Panter-Brick et al. 2014a). For mothers, rates of depression during the perinatal period are particularly high in low- and middle-income countries, where rates range from 18–33% (Fisher et al. 2012). Numerous studies have shown the negative effects of maternal depression on early interaction, child care, and parenting practices (Wachs et al. 2009). Maternal depression has been associated with infant growth and stunting (Stewart et al. 2008; Wachs and Rahman 2013). The relationship between maternal depression and compromised child development is, however, complex, in that the risk factors of poverty, stress, poor support, and low levels of education are implicated in both (Tomlinson et al. 2014a).

Threats to sound cognitive, language, and socioemotional development in the years prior to school include poor self-regulation abilities, which may be the result of neglect and harsh parenting in the first years, and limited stimulation of developmental capacities required for children to be ready to learn. Children from low-income settings, who have not benefitted from some form of early stimulation programs, are commonly exposed to forms of early stimulation that are not aligned with the skill requirements of the schooling system. Early language development provides an example. The richness of the language environment in the home varies along a socioeconomic gradient. As a result, as the classic U.S. study by Hart and Risley (1995) showed, differences in language ability between children of wealthy and poor backgrounds become

apparent prior to age three. The gap widens through the school years, resulting in very different educational outcomes and life chances that are a function of class background.

Reduction of poverty and inequality are central priorities if we are to promote the development of healthy and peaceful children. Foundational skills important for prosocial behavior depend on brain development, and many other aspects of healthy development, which can be compromised, for example, by inadequate nutrition, poor caregiving, exposure to toxic substances, and lack of learning opportunities. Prenatally, exposure to neurotoxins, maternal malnutrition, and maternal stress or trauma have been linked to alterations in a child's developing neurological systems important for later self-regulation and other neurobiological functions related to prosocial and antisocial behavior (Mendes et al. 2009; Masten and Narayan 2012; Shonkoff et al. 2012; Gunnar and Herrera 2013).

The first thousand days (pregnancy through the first two years) are particularly sensitive: the outcomes of early prolonged malnutrition may be difficult to reverse (Victora et al. 2008; Yousafzai et al. 2013), although recent studies indicate that substantial growth faltering and growth recovery, associated with child cognitive development, occurs after early childhood (Crookston et al. 2013; Schott et al. 2013). Postnatally, malnutrition remains one of the most common preventable threats to normal neurological development and intellectual functioning. Impact depends on the period of life during which it is experienced and the duration of exposure (Fox et al., this volume). Links between stunting and externalizing behavior in childhood have been established in recent cohort studies (Liu et al. 2004; Liu 2011; Galler et al. 2012). These studies posit an indirect relationship between malnutrition and violent conduct in which stunting affects executive functioning, which in turn impacts school performance: children are more likely to drop out of school and, in the teenage years, are more likely to become involved in antisocial activity, including interpersonal violence.

The majority of the world's young children live in environments in which the necessary affordances for a sound foundation in health, nutrition, and cognitive and language development are inadequate. Under these circumstances, a chain of developmental consequences (known as "development cascades") ensues (Masten and Cicchetti 2010): individual potential is compromised, and children are less likely to develop the capabilities required to benefit from schooling and ultimately to become productive adult members of society. Developmental outcomes such as violent conduct become more probable (Walker et al. 2007).

Referring to children in challenging environments, Richter (2013:7) explains that "as time goes by, difficulties grow because they build on each other. A small, sickly child may make fewer friends and learn less, they may get shouted at because they're slow, and their self-esteem may suffer. All these conditions worsen if the child goes to school later, is held back in class, is

teased by others and has few supportive adults to turn to. Such accumulating problems get harder to overcome, more needs to be done to address them, at greater cost, and with diminishing possibilities for success.”

In regard to interventions, Shah and Beinecke (2009) describe three barriers to the implementation of comprehensive family-based strategies that have particular relevance in low-income countries, but which also pertain to resource-rich countries: scarcity, inequity, and inefficiency. There is a lack of funding; available resources are concentrated in urban areas rather than in rural areas. There is a lack of adequately trained and supervised workers as well as leadership and public health skills across sectors (Saraceno et al. 2007). Models of intervention are urgently needed that focus on early parenting, familial cohesion, illness detection, appropriate health-seeking behavior, cognitive-behavioral strategies of behavior change, the linking of people to poverty alleviation programs, and comprehensive strategies that begin early in life and continue over time (Tomlinson et al. 2011).

Catalysts for Healthy Human Development

It is important to remember that competence and adaptive success also cascade: “competence begets competence” in human development (Heckman 2006; Masten 2011; Masten, this volume). Strategic interventions can be designed to initiate positive cascades, and when such interventions are well-timed and targeted, there can be lasting and spreading effects across multiple domains, associated with a high return on investment. This is the basis for the argument of resilience-focused interventions in child development to promote well-being (Panter-Brick and Leckman 2013).

Figure 15.1 illustrates an integrated and aspirational framework for understanding key developmental opportunities for intervention. The X axis describes what we know about child development; caregiver roles are depicted on the Y axis, with dispositional and context factors on the Z axis. The dotted line along the X axis depicts the fluidity of caregiving roles across childhood; while parental sensitivity and mutual regulation, for instance, are separated in the diagram for heuristic purposes, they are necessarily part of the same caregiving function. No one intervention can cover all these bases. However, all areas should optimally be addressed in interventions that seek to prevent violence and enhance the probability of child outcomes oriented toward prosocial behavior.

There is clear evidence that interventions to promote maternal health and nutrition and reduce intake of substances (e.g., alcohol) during pregnancy reduces the risk of neurological insult to the developing fetus. Promotion of maternal health is therefore a priority. We also know that perinatal depression is highly prevalent in poor communities, in both high- and low-income countries. While not directly associated with the development of externalizing behavior and adult violence, perinatal depression compromises the capacity to provide

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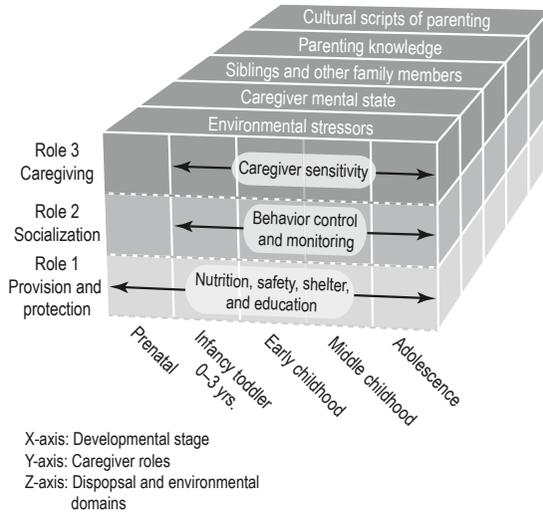


Figure 15.1 A matrix approach to interventions through childhood and adolescence (provided by Tomlinson et al. 2012, after Rosenberg and Knox 2005).

responsive affectionate care and is predictive of a broad range of risks to young children (Wachs and Rahman 2013). Thus, the provisions of primary mental health interventions for vulnerable mothers and other primary caregivers have the potential to reduce risks substantially to a large number of young children while promoting caregiver well-being. For example, evidence indicates that home visits by professionals or paraprofessionals, who provide support for vulnerable pregnant mothers from low-income households, can have a positive impact on maternal and child health. The first case study (presented below) describes one such program in Khayelitsha, South Africa (Rotheram-Borus et al. 2011; LeRoux et al. 2013; Tomlinson et al. 2014b).

There is limited evidence of a direct link between exposure to early stimulation programs in the preschool years and externalizing behavior. However, an evaluation of Early Head Start¹ in the United States (which provides intensive support to low-income vulnerable caregivers from birth), reports reduced aggressive behavior in beneficiaries five years of age. There is also evidence that children from economically disadvantaged homes, who do not have formal early learning opportunities, are at greater risk for a cascade of increasingly negative outcomes (e.g., school failure, early drop out, and involvement in crime). A range of studies from both low- and high-income countries show the benefits of either formal preschool education or home- and community-based initiatives for at-risk children, in promoting long-term positive outcomes

¹ See http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/prekindergarten_followup.pdf (accessed June 14, 2014).

through to adulthood and on to the next generation (Engle et al. 2007, 2011; Heckman 2008; Heckman et al. 2009; Hoddinott et al. 2008; Behrman et al. 2009; Kagiticbasi et al. 2009; Maluccio et al. 2009; Nores and Barnett 2010; Walker et al. 2007).

Program intervention may be designed to support internalized cultural scripts for child rearing and serve as a catalyst for healthy human development. Cultural scripts² can provide the caregiver with direction in terms of what forms of care are appropriate, at a particular point in development, and what intellectual, moral, and behavioral orientations are to be valued in the child (LeVine 1990; Rogoff 2003; Harkness and Super 2012). These may include orientations toward respect for social hierarchy, empathic concern for the less fortunate, cooperative rather than competitive behavior with peers, and inclusion or exclusion of those defined as “other,” such as cultural minorities or people with disabilities (Hoffman 2000).

Taken together, we suggest that the effectiveness of a program designed to promote healthy human development depends on the alignment of actions vertically and simultaneously through multiple levels of social systems (individual to policy level), building on deep values, goals, assets, and institutions already present in a community (Britto, Gordon et al., this volume). Measurable costs and outcomes are also essential for evidence-based approaches. To assess the feasibility of programs and to justify continued streams of funding, benefit-cost analyses are useful. As Panter-Brick and Leckman (2013) have shown, emphasis is placed on being strategic in the targeting of interventions for developmental timing and program effectiveness. The scale-up and sustainability of programs seems most likely when interventions are deeply relevant to cultural practices and existing institutions. Successful programs are often those that employ a participatory approach, in which program design and implementation is carried out in partnership with local stakeholders and is built on local wisdom. Broadly speaking, context sensitivity and local input seem important for “buy-in” (i.e., the commitment of interested or affected parties to a decision) and sustainability, along with the aligning of strategies, agendas, and institutions. An example of a program in which buy-in was particularly noteworthy is described in the second case study (Skoufias 2001; Levy 2006; Behrman 2010).

Case Study 1: The Philani Project in Khayelitsha, South Africa

Context: The Philani project is being conducted in Khayelitsha, South Africa, to address a matrix of extremely serious social problems, including widespread

² The term “cultural scripts” refers to the articulation of cultural norms, values, and practices in terms that are clear, precise, and accessible to cultural insiders as well as to cultural outsiders. They are not intended to provide an account of real life social interactions but rather descriptions of commonly held assumptions about how “people think” about social interaction.

poverty, poor nutrition, HIV and TB infection, substance abuse, sexual abuse, and violence in the home.

Program features: The Philani paraprofessional “mentor mothers” project aims to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable pregnant mothers, infants, and children from low-income households, through a strategy of home visits by specially trained “mentor mothers.” Mentor mothers deliver a home-based intervention that assists mothers to ensure that they (a) gain access to the most appropriate health services for themselves and their babies, (b) reduce or eliminate alcohol consumption during pregnancy, (c) improve nutrition for both themselves and their babies, and (d) prepare more effectively for the baby’s arrival. The mothers also learn about breast-feeding options and a range of effective parenting techniques. Related topics include caring for their own physical and mental health. The Philani approach builds on the cultural values of the beneficiaries. Mentor mothers are drawn from the neighborhoods where the program is implemented and go through a comprehensive training program. They engage in conversation with these women and other household members in an informal, interactive, and nonthreatening way, providing the necessary advice and support in the process.

Outcomes: The outcomes of the study have been very positive. Mothers who have received the intervention are less likely to engage in hazardous drinking during pregnancy and less likely to have a low birth weight infant. They are more likely to breast-feed longer and to breast-feed exclusively for six months. In the case of HIV infection, they are more likely to adhere to the complete protocol for prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV, including adherence to antiretroviral medication. Their infants are likely to experience fewer episodes of diarrhea and require fewer clinic visits. At 18 months, children whose mothers received the intervention were less likely to be malnourished than those whose mothers were not involved in the program. The children of antenatally depressed mothers receiving the intervention were also more likely to have better growth and cognitive development at 6 and 18 months of age, respectively.

Lessons from the field: In contexts of high adversity with severe resource constraints, local women can be recruited from the community, trained and supervised to deliver successfully a cost-effective homebased intervention that improves maternal and child health across a range of domains.

Case Study 2: The PROGRESA/Oportunidades Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Program in Mexico

Context: Mexico has a long history of considerable inequality and poverty (Gasparini and Lustig 2011). As in most countries, poverty is particularly concentrated in small poor rural communities. Before PROGRESA was introduced, substantial resources were utilized to subsidize urban tortilla consumption, providing subsidies across the board because everyone eats tortillas.

Program features: Established in 1997, PROGRESA provides cash transfers to mothers in households that are designated as eligible on the basis of a proxy poverty index, conditional on fulfillment of “co-responsibilities,” such as attending regular information and check-up sessions at health clinics and an 85% school attendance rate for their children. PROGRESA initially focused on small communities with populations less than 2,500 in which many of the poorest Mexicans live (but was implemented with primary schools, which excluded the smallest and most remote communities). The program was “top-down,” as part of an effort to reorder governmental expenses after the 1996 “peso crisis,” and had two important features:

1. Monitoring and evaluation was a central component: The first sample consisted of 508 poor eligible communities with ~125,000 individuals, using random assignment for those receiving program benefits and others phased in two years later (note: the latter were not informed of that initially so as to avoid program anticipation effects). Baseline and periodic follow-up longitudinal data were collected (initially every six months), and an initial evaluation was conducted by an international institution (selected to increase credibility of quality and “arms-length” evaluation). A number of evaluation reports are in the public domain, data are available for public use by other researchers, and over 100 academic articles have been published in international peer-reviewed journals.
2. “Buy-in” was critical at various levels:
 - Co-responsibilities rather than “handouts” were used for both poor and nonpoor households.
 - Poor communities met to determine who would be eligible and assigned to the program.
 - The Mexican Congress played a critical role in maintaining and expanding the program, due to evidence of program effectiveness.
 - Despite a historical change in leadership in 2000, Mexican presidents accepted and extended the program with minor modifications rather than abandon the program for new ones of their own making. For example, they changed its name to Oportunidades and increased coverage to urban areas. This was because of the credible evidence of program effectiveness.
 - PROGRESA began under the Zedillo government in 1997 and was entirely financed through Mexican funds; this made it possible for the people of Mexico to view the program as “home grown,” as it operated independently of international agencies. Later, however, the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank became strong advocates of the program and provided support at critical junctures, as a result of positive evaluations.

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Outcomes: Evaluation results suggest significant positive effects that are well-targeted on children's schooling and health, as well as positive effects on adults, with benefit-cost ratios significantly greater than one for real resource costs (not including transfers per se but including public and private costs). The program was rapidly expanded to cover over 30 million poor Mexicans and has been emulated broadly, with adaptations at various levels, in over 30 countries.

Lessons from the field: Important aspects of success, including scaling-up, were Mexican ownership, alignment of "buy-in" at many levels, and serious efforts to monitor and evaluate.

From Healthy to *Peaceful* Human Development

In the previous sections we identified barriers and catalysts in relation to healthy human development. Here, we offer evidence for the proposition that healthy human development during childhood lays the foundation for the child's acquisition of the complex and specific capabilities required to engage in peace-promoting behavior. We begin by situating the child within a level of analysis framework and then discuss social ecologies that foster the development of *peaceful* children.

Levels of Analysis

A requisite question for scholarly inquiry into any behavioral or social phenomena, including "peaceful children," is the question of what unit or level of analysis will be chosen for systematic inquiry. As Lewin (1951:157) stated, "the first prerequisite of a successful observation in any science is a definite understanding about what size of unit one is going to observe at a given time."

Our unit of analysis is the individual child, though we recognize that the child is continuously interacting with other systems (Overton 2013). The individual child is embedded in multiple ecologies (Bronfenbrenner 1979) and networks of influence, some of which are proximal and others more distal. At the most distal level, "peace" engenders international- and societal-level structures along with associated norms and collective narratives that reduce direct and structural violence, while promoting relational harmony and equitable well-being. More proximal to the child, prevention and promotion processes take place in the child's community and, most importantly, family. At the individual level, "peace" involves subjective states and actions aimed at the prevention of direct and structural violence and the promotion of nonviolence and social justice. These levels are interdependent and interactive; that is, individuals and groups are influenced by distal processes and, conversely, the functioning of the macro system depends on the behavior of individuals and groups (Suedfeld et al. 2012). In relation to violence and peace, prevention and

promotion processes operate within levels but also across levels. As Cacioppo and Berntson (1992) have noted, a target event at one level of analysis may have multiple determinants both within and across levels of analysis.

Research on cascades, positive or negative, across levels of analysis over time, are extremely rare. One recent example of these multilevel dynamics is provided by Boxer et al. (2013), who studied the effects of societal level violence on the more proximal systems of youth life and the cascading effects on youth aggression. Data from their longitudinal study of Palestinian and Israeli youth indicate that ethnopolitical violence at the macro levels spills over to violence in proximal systems in the community, family, and school, and is associated with increases in the aggression of individual youth. The same arguments have been made in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka for linking collective violence with interpersonal violence in humanitarian settings (Panter-Brick et al. 2011). Research demonstrating the impact of macro-level systems of violence on micro systems, such as the family, underscore the importance of reducing violence and promoting peace at multiple levels of analysis: from structural levels to the level of the individual child.

Social Ecologies and the Peaceful Child

While structural violence within and between societies is a problem in and of itself, structural violence also undergirds direct forms of violence. This is not necessarily because those at the bottom of society are likely to get agitated and violent, although this does happen (see Smith et al. 2012), but because those on the top are invested in the status quo and will take action to maintain their status, using a variety of narratives to justify system-based inequalities (Jost et al. 2002).

Conversely, direct violence contributes to structural violence. For example, pervasive armed conflict has a direct impact on economic development and the equitable satisfaction of human needs. The percentage of global poverty concentrated in fragile states has grown considerably in recent years and is expected to exceed 50% by 2014 according to some recent estimates (Chandy and Gertz 2011). Clearly, because direct and structural violence form interlocking systems of violence, sustainable peace requires a systems approach that reduces both direct and structural violence and promotes peaceful means and socially just ends (Christie and Montiel 2013).

Notwithstanding the systemic quality of violence, it may seem unwieldy to frame the concept of peace broadly, to include both the amelioration of direct and structural violence. However, an exclusive focus on the reduction of direct violence between individuals and collectivities leaves open the possibility of maintaining “peace” through coercive means. Examples include authoritarian parenting at the family level and a doctrine of deterrence at the international level. Similarly, an exclusive focus on the reduction of structural violence,

without attending to direct violence, leaves open the possibility of pursuing socially just ends through violent means.

Because sustainable peace requires the reduction of structural as well as direct violence, we adopt a broad view of peace—one that includes the prevention and mitigation of both direct and structural violence. From our perspective, the development of *peaceful* children is most likely under conditions in which (a) healthy human development is fostered and (b) social ecologies are relatively free of both structural and direct forms of violence.

So How Do We Conceptualize *Peaceful* Children?

While the reduction and elimination of direct and structural violence in the child's social ecologies make an important contribution to the development of *peaceful* children, the child, in turn, brings certain peace-promoting competencies to bear on social ecologies. Accordingly, when conceptualizing *peaceful* children, we adopted an approach that emphasizes children's promotion of peace and arrived at a consensus on the capacities of peaceful children:

Peaceful children are healthy, self-regulated children who have a sense of identity, agency, social skills, the capacity to reason and communicate, as well as the capacity to form trusting relationships with other individuals and groups.

To be clear, we do not mean to imply that *peaceful* children are passive. To the contrary, we view children from an agentic perspective, in which children are both the product and the producer of the social ecologies in which they are embedded (Bandura 2000).

Our assumption is that the child's peacebuilding capacities allow the child to engage in harmonious relations and internalize the pursuit of equitable well-being within and across social systems. The peace-promoting constructs of harmonious relations and equitable well-being may be orthogonal. However, they are indivisible for sustainable peace, as we have suggested, and compatible when social justice is pursued through nonviolent means; that is, when (structural) peace is pursued through peaceful means (Galtung 1996). Although "speaking truth to power" creates tension in relationships (Montiel 2001), the importance of reconciling differences and restoring harmony in relationships remains a hallmark of peaceful approaches to social transformation. The prototypical manifestation of such an approach is Gandhi's experiments with truth (Gandhi 1948), which underscore "peace" as both a process and an outcome.

Our discussion now turns to the child's capacities in relation to the development of competence and skills in the resolution of conflict, which is essential for the creation, maintenance, and restoration of harmonious relationships. Thereafter we examine some of the psychosocial mechanisms involved in the child's internalization of a social justice orientation and pursuit of equitable relations with others.

Harmonious Relations and the Role of Conflict Resolution

Even under ideal conditions, children experience conflict in their lives. Peace scholars have defined conflict in various ways: as opposing preferences (Carnevale and Pruitt 1992), antagonistic feelings (Fisher 1990), perceptions of divergent interests whether real or imagined (Rubin and Levinger 1995), or differences in views, interests, or goals (Deutsch 1977). Taken together, these definitions of conflict contrast sharply with the meaning of direct violence. Conflict is primarily a cognitive and affective experience, whereas direct violence has behavioral referents that are manifest, for example, in interpersonal aggression at the micro level or organized efforts to inflict casualties on other groups at the macro level of analysis. In addition, in contrast to direct violence, conflict is ubiquitous and inevitable in human relations.

The distinction between conflict and direct violence opens the possibility of managing the former to prevent the latter. As Deutsch (1977) pointed out, conflicts are inevitable—the key question is whether conflicts will be managed in constructive ways that strengthen relationships or destructive ways that harm relationships. Among the most widely used constructive methods to manage conflict is a principled approach that encourages opposite parties to understand their interests and work toward a mutually beneficial outcome (Fisher and Ury 1983). Not surprisingly, empathy is a key mechanism involved in this principled approach, as well as in many other approaches that seek to resolve conflicts, promote interpersonal and intergroup understanding, and improve relationships (Wagner 2012).

In the developmental psychology literature, there is a distinction between cognitive and affective empathy (Decety and Jackson 2004; Preston and de Waal 2002). Cognitive empathy occurs when children can effectively comprehend a distressing situation experienced by someone else, recognize another's emotional state, and assume another person's perspective. Affective empathy occurs when children actually experience a vicarious emotional response to someone else's expressed emotion. Both types of empathy are typically encouraged in programs designed to enhance social and emotional learning in children, though arguably greater emphasis is placed on cognitive empathy (i.e., perspective taking) in programs that are specifically designed to induce cooperation and learning (Johnson and Johnson 1990).

A growing number of studies demonstrate that when groups in conflict are brought together, cognitive and affective empathy can play a role in the improvement of intergroup relations and reduction of prejudice. This research indicates that intergroup contact is positively associated with empathy and, in turn, empathy is negatively associated with prejudice (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Pagotto et al. 2010).

In addition to intergroup empathy, children's perceptions of social norms also influence whether increased contact is associated with more positive attitudes. A longitudinal study of German and Turkish children in Germany offers

hints regarding the causal direction between increases in direct intergroup contact and positive attitudinal changes (Feddes et al. 2009). The relationship between contact and attitudinal change was partially mediated by social norms: How do you think other German children or other Turkish children would feel about your playing with members of the other group? This suggests that increased contact led to changes in perceived norms, which in turn led to more positive attitudes. These findings were obtained with majority status Germans but not minority status Turkish children, a generalization problem that is common in studies which employ the contact hypothesis. Interestingly, Killen and Rutland (2011) speculate that the lack of contact effects among minority group members may be due to their awareness of their group's lower status.

Just as conflicts in relationships are inevitable, the sense of being treated unfairly, aggrieved, or hurt is, at times, also part of the human condition. Under these conditions, the restoration of harmony in relationships may require forgiveness, defined as the process of releasing negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward a transgressor and transforming these negative reactions into more positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Thompson et al. 2005). At the societal level, collective forgiveness can serve as a mechanism to restore harmony and peace. For example, in countries such as Jordan and Egypt, the collective rituals of reconciliation (known as *Sulha*) draw on local cultural constructs as a basis for individual forgiveness and to diminish negative feelings toward one's self and others (Nasser et al. 2014).

Not only is there a strong correlation between the degree to which forgiveness occurs and the victim's experience of empathy for the transgressor, the likelihood of victims accepting an apology and forgiving a transgressor is almost totally mediated by the victim's empathy for the transgressor (McCullough et al. 1998). Similar findings have been obtained in field-based programs. In Northern Ireland, for example, Tam et al. (2008) found that empathy mediated forgiveness and reduced discriminatory behavior toward out-group members.

At present, there is no consensus on the relative effectiveness of cognitive and affective forms of empathy in the forgiveness process. Hodgson and Wertheim (2007) provide evidence that perspective taking is most consistently associated with the tendency to forgive, although other investigators place affective empathy and compassion at the center of the forgiveness process (Enright 2001). In a review of research on intergroup contact and forgiveness, Swart and Hewstone (2012) invoke both forms of empathy and complicate the picture by noting that forgiveness is mediated by a number of emotional and cognitive factors, including increases in perspective taking, affective empathy, intergroup empathy, and the reduction of anger-related emotions.

Emotion regulation also plays a role in forgiveness. Research indicates that those who are able to manage their emotions (i.e., attend to and repair their emotions) and refrain from being overwhelmed by their emotions, are more likely to forgive others; the relationship between emotion regulation and forgiveness is mediated by the tendency to view situations from the perspectives

of others (Hodgson and Wertheim 2007). Similarly, in a content analysis of 14 forgiveness-promoting programs, Wade and Worthington (2005) found that all programs had an empathy component and that most programs explicitly encouraged participants to view the transgressor within the context of the situation in which the transgression took place, thereby inducing perspective taking and situational rather than dispositional attributions.

We offer, however, a cautionary note. While a great deal of research has underscored the importance of empathy for maintaining and restoring harmony in interpersonal and intergroup relationships, nearly all of this research has originated in the West. In East Asian and other collectivistic cultures, for example, harmony in relationships is highly valued, and a robust finding is that conflicts are avoided between individuals and groups (Leung et al. 2002). In the Middle East and other contexts where religious teachings are central cultural assets, religious beliefs and family-based narratives are used to teach forgiveness (Abu-Nimer and Nasser 2013). Taken together, these cultural variations demonstrate that what matters most for the child is the acquisition of culture-specific competence to guide actions that create, maintain, and restore relationships. The importance of taking cultural considerations into account is illustrated in the third case study, based in Afghanistan (Eggerman and Panter-Brick 2010; Panter-Brick et al. 2011; Omidian and Lawrence 2007).

Case Study 3: Focusing Interventions and Promoting Family “Unity and Harmony” in Afghanistan

Context: For the past thirty years, Afghans have endured pervasive violence, rising inequality, and noxious poverty. Layers of war-related, structural, and interpersonal violence intersect: in the wake of war and displacement, the everyday reality of social and economic stressors, which permeate life slowly but steadily, unhinge men and women to commit acts of violence within and outside the home.

Critical ingredients for intervention: Focusing is a technique used to teach a culturally grounded technique of “mindfulness.” It has been taught to over 400,000 women in small workshops throughout Afghanistan. As a technique it is aligned with Sufism and allows perpetrators and victims of violence to reach an inner state of safety and calm. Using specific focusing techniques, individuals distance themselves from threats and anxiety to rebuild their emotional and social lives. A sense of safety, calmness, and peace are precursors for interrupting the practices of domestic violence.

In the absence of job security and effective governance, strong families and strong cultural values remain the main anchor of hope and resilience. “Family unity and harmony” is a salient value in the Afghan culture, the bedrock of resilience in the face of life adversity. Seeking to address the culture of violence in domestic settings, one intervention sought to give voice to Afghan children on the radio: the children clearly distinguished between acceptable

and unacceptable forms of violence. The former pertained to containment and punishment, whereas the latter took the form of abusive beatings which threatened family harmony. Here, notions of “family harmony” were crucial in shifting the critical point at which violence was viewed as “acceptable and normal” versus “unacceptable and harmful.”

Lessons from the field: Effective interventions build upon cultural assets (e.g., a disposition to value mindfulness and inner peace or to value family unity and harmony). Culturally grounded techniques for promoting safety and calm, or for reducing unacceptable forms of domestic violence, have been implemented in Afghanistan, where all interventions must circumvent a platform of delivery that threatens “family honor.” Even in the most difficult contexts of interlocking structural, war-related, and domestic violence, change can be effected when cultural goals are aligned with cultural practices to promote peace at personal, family, and community levels.

The Child’s Internalization of a Social Justice Orientation toward “Others”

From our perspective, peaceful children engage not only in harmonious relations, they internalize the values, competence, skills, and sense of agency required to create, maintain, and restore equity in relationships. In short, *peaceful* children have internalized a sense of social justice toward others, where “others” refers to members of groups who are outside their referent identity group. The social justice dimension of “peaceful children” implies that children acquire a commitment to socially just arrangements and take action to promote equitably the well-being of others. While personal agency undergirds action, in relation to the pursuit of social justice, collective agency is most relevant. Bandura (2000) demonstrated the usefulness of distinguishing between personal and collective agency, of which the former is the belief that one’s actions can produce desired effects; it is the core belief that underlies human agency. Without the belief in personal efficacy there would be no incentive to act. Collective agency is the belief in collective action as a means of achieving a range of outcomes including, but not limited to, more socially just arrangements. Accordingly, we would expect children who adopt an orientation toward peace and social justice to have internalized a sense of personal as well as collective agency.

While the Dalai Lama’s contention that children are born compassionate and good cannot be tested directly, newborns do seem biologically prepared at birth to respond to the distress cues of others, as evidenced in observations of newborns who often become upset in response to the cries of other infants (Hoffman 1975). Newborns’ distress may well be a rudimentary form of empathy, or the ability to feel sorrow and distress for others in need (Eisenberg 2002). Proximal environmental influences, such as nurturant and responsive

caregivers, have been found to play a role in a child's development of empathy and conscience.

Hoffman (2001) has championed the view that an inductive style of relating to children can enhance the development of a conscience in children. Inductive approaches direct children's attention to the consequences of their actions on others and emphasize when their actions cause distress in others. The inductive style takes advantage of the child's developing cognitive abilities by explaining and providing reasons why certain actions are moral or immoral. From Hoffman's perspective, children who are the recipients of responsive and affectionate caregiving are likely to focus on the needs of others rather than being emotionally needy themselves and self-absorbed. The ways in which empathy plays a role in the child's developing sense of fairness and social justice remains a key question that has not been fully explored.

A consistent finding in the developmental psychology literature is that children's judgments about morality change during the first few years after birth. Early on, children judge the morality of actions based on the consequences of those actions (i.e., the action was wrong if the violator was punished). Later, children take into consideration a set of intentions. Dunn (2006) has documented how presence during family interactions (e.g., discussions, teasing, and debates during the first four years of life) contribute to children's understanding of fairness and the acquisition of a "theory of mind," in which they begin to understand that others have beliefs, intentions, and desires different from one's own.

Peers also influence the child's construction of morality and fairness (Piaget 1932). Through peers the child begins to appreciate why it is wrong to withhold resources or inflict harm on others. The twin processes of identification and perspective taking allow the child to reason as follows: "I don't like someone to hit me and they must not like it when I hit them." Indeed, theorists from vastly different frameworks (e.g., Batson in social psychology, Eisenberg in developmental psychology, and de Waal in evolutionary psychology) agree that empathy is an ideal candidate for a mechanism underlying caring behavior in response to another's need, distress, or pain.

The robustness of empathy as a force for social justice can be seen in the relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior (cf. Eisenberg and Miller 1987). Prosocial behaviors are voluntary actions that benefit others and include helping, cooperation, sharing, caring, donating, comforting, and volunteering (Batson 1998; Eisenberg et al. 1998). Prosocial actions are often mediated by empathy and concern about the welfare and rights of others, though at times egoistic and practical concerns may also be involved (Hoffman 2000; Eisenberg 2002).

Extending the Scope of Social Justice to Out-Group Members

Difficulties arise when the relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior is examined beyond the confines of the child's in-group. Findings from

both laboratory- and field-based research indicate that appeals to empathy are more likely to be associated with helping in-group than out-group members (Stürmer et al. 2005). A related phenomenon has been observed in resource allocation games: children between 4.5 and 6 years of age prefer equitable division of resources with friends, but treat nonfriends less well (Moore 2009).

The power of social categorization to undermine more positive peace-promoting behaviors is most apparent at the intergroup level of analysis, where social categorization processes are foundational in identity-based conflicts between groups. Kelman (1999) notes, for instance, that some of the most intractable conflicts in the world are characterized by social identities that are negatively interdependent, such that the assertion of one group's identity negates the other group's identity. Social categorization can also be seen in intergroup conflicts that occur when groups have overlapping territorial self-images, with each side claiming a sovereign right to the territory in dispute (Liu and Paez 2012).

Viewed within a developmental framework, the categorization of "us and them" is a fundamental and universal process in humans. In his classic work on prejudice, Allport (1954:20) notes:

The human mind must think with the aid of categories....Once formed, categories are the basis for normal prejudgment. We cannot possibly avoid this process. Orderly living depends on it.

Infants become aware of social categories and exhibit visual preferences for members who belong to their own social category (own-race) by three months of age (Kelly et al. 2005). Importantly, these preferences are not observable at birth. Moreover, infants who have considerable cross-race exposure during the first few months after birth do not show same-race bias (Bar-Haim et al. 2006). These findings indicate that own-race preference is learned and likely due to differential exposure to one's own race versus others.

As children begin to engage in self-categorization, the potential for excluding others on the basis of social category membership becomes an important consideration for interpersonal peace and a sense of social justice. Self-categorization produces an in-group bias in which there is a preference favoring one's own group over out-group members (Brewer 1999). In-group bias has been demonstrated in numerous "minimal cue experiments" designed so that individuals are classified and groups are formed on the basis of some minor, artificial, distinguishing feature, such as the color of one's hat (e.g., randomly chosen red hats versus blue hats). Under certain conditions, the in-group bias can lay the foundation for prejudice toward others.

The early development of an in-group bias combined with the development of prejudice underscores the importance of the early childhood period. Research findings indicate that racial out-group attitudes either remain stable through middle childhood and adulthood or become even more negative (Nesdale 2008). Clearly, children's sense of morality is shaped in large part by social category awareness, combined with attachment and identification with

peer group norms of inclusion or exclusion—all of which takes place by the time children are eight years old. When considering equity in human relations, children must somehow navigate between the force of moral principles and group identity.

Children sometimes exclude others when their skill set does not match the task at hand, not because of antipathy. However, when social exclusion is accompanied by prejudice, the situation is ripe for conflict and violence. Prejudice is typically defined as negative evaluations of others, because of the social groups to which they belong (Brown 2011); this contrasts with in-group bias, which refers to bias in favor of one's own group over out-groups (Brewer 1999).

Importantly, while in-group bias is consistently activated whenever social identities are constructed, in-group favoritism does not have to be accompanied by out-group derogation (Brewer 1999). A rather dramatic example of the independence of in-group favoritism and out-group derogation was demonstrated in factor analytic research with college students, where "patriotism" and "nationalism" were shown to be independent constructs (Kosterman and Feshbach 1989): love of country (patriotism) does not require enmity toward others (nationalism). For children, negative attitudes toward out-group members can be activated by a host of variables, including the strength of their ethnic identification, the degree to which the in-group norms denigrate or exclude out-group members, and whether or not the out-group is perceived as a threat to social identity (Killen and Rutland 2011).

The malleability of social exclusion and out-group prejudice has been demonstrated in numerous studies designed to encourage children to develop a common in-group identity (e.g., shared school, community, or national identity) that effectively reduces bias against members of other ethnic groups (Cameron et al. 2006). In addition to reducing bias and increasing positive evaluations of out-group members, a common in-group identity has been shown to increase trust, forgiveness, and helpfulness (Dovidio et al. 2009). In a demonstration of the common in-group identity model, Jewish students were more willing to forgive Germans for the Holocaust and decreased their expectation that Germans should feel collective guilt when category membership was increased from intergroup (us and them) to the level of common humanity (Wohl and Branscombe 2005).

In a carefully designed meta-analytic study, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that higher levels of intergroup contact are associated with lower levels of intergroup prejudice. This effect can be enhanced when Allport's (1954) four primary conditions are met; that is, when contact is cooperative, between equal status groups, supported by institutional authorities, and based on common goals. In addition, because intergroup friendships have been found to have a powerful influence on the reduction of prejudice, Pettigrew (1998:76) added a fifth condition to the contact hypothesis, noting that the "contact situation must provide the participants with the opportunity to become friends."

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Cross-group friendships are characterized by close personal relationships in which individuals are free to share intimate information (e.g., points of view, feelings, and desires). Research evidence indicates that both implicit and explicit forms of prejudice can be reduced through cross-group friendships, and some mechanisms involved include empathy, trust, self-disclosure, and the reduction of intergroup anxiety (Turner et al. 2007). Knowing that other in-group members have experienced positive contacts with out-group members can motivate in-group members to have more positive attitudes toward out-group members (Wright et al. 1997). In light of the “extended contact” effects of knowing someone who has a friend in the out-group, it is perhaps not surprising that children who experience extended contact vicariously, through stories, report an increase in positive attitudes toward out-group members (Cameron et al. 2006).

Taken together, research findings on the development of inclusion and a social justice orientation indicate that children’s understanding of morality changes from concrete moral principles that emphasize sharing, turn-taking, and not inflicting physical harm, to more abstract moral principles that emerge in adolescence and take into account contextual considerations such as the individual’s intention, the group’s power and status, as well as the traditions, customs, and rituals of a society (Killen and Rutland 2011). As children develop, their foundation for a life in pursuit of social justice would seem most likely if they are raised with an inductive approach, develop an accurate theory of mind, are exposed to conversations within the family that discourage exclusion and encourage inclusion as a principle of morality, have peers who similarly value inclusion, live in a society with norms of inclusion, develop an inclusive group identity, have direct contact with out-group members under conditions that enhance the intergroup contact effect, know of friends who have befriended out-group members, and are exposed to media that encourage an inclusive social justice orientation.

A Developmental Path to a Peace and Social Justice Orientation

Although we agree that there are multiple pathways to peace, in Figure 15.2 we propose a model developmental pathway that could lead to children capable of adopting a peace and social justice orientation toward out-group members. The model is based on our group’s consensus and relevant research findings. In Figure 15.2, a cumulative process is proposed in which each foundation builds on the next over time. Beginning on the left, foundation 1 (maternal health, adequate nutrition, and other factors) results in healthy human development during the prenatal period. When foundation 1 is combined with responsive care, stimulation, and other factors depicted in foundation 2 during the infant and toddler period, the second developmental task is met: healthy primary relationships are constructed. Given healthy primary relationships, the next task

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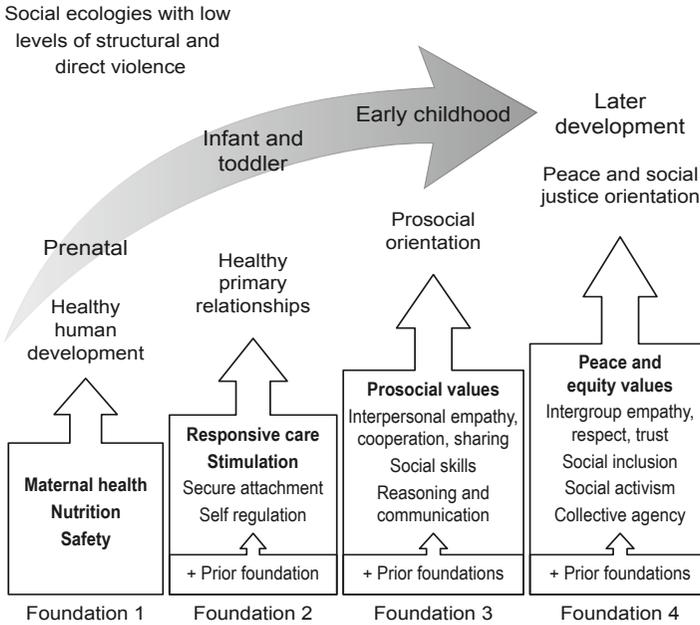


Figure 15.2 Model pathway for a child to develop an orientation toward peace and social justice as a function of targeted foundations and social ecologies. Boldfaced text denotes contributions of caregivers; normal typeface depicts contributions of the child.

to emerge during early childhood is a prosocial orientation toward others who comprise the children’s in-group. Foundation 3 provides the requisite experience and skills for the child to engage in prosocial actions. Having realized a prosocial orientation toward in-group members in early childhood, the child is prepared to develop a peace and social justice orientation toward out-group members and will engage in the pursuit of relational harmony and equitable well-being if the requisite foundation is put in place (foundation 4).

In short, given a healthy start, children proceed to establish harmonious relations in primary relationships followed by prosocial interpersonal relationships in early childhood. A peace and social justice orientation lies beyond early childhood and requires the extension of harmonious relations and equity to out-group members. The model underscores the central importance of developmental timing in which interventions target the foundations that support specific developmental tasks. Each foundation is a window of opportunity for certain kinds of interventions. For example, prenatal interventions focus on nutrition as well as the mother’s safety and well-being; interventions during infancy and toddlerhood promote secure attachments, self-regulation, and responsive and affectionate care; during early childhood, interventions are tailored to the child’s development of interpersonal competencies and skills; thereafter, emphasis is on competencies, skills, and values that support the

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creation, maintenance, and restoration of harmonious intergroup relations combined with an orientation toward equitable well-being.

Any path toward a peace and social justice orientation is necessarily embedded within a larger geohistorical context, depicted as social ecologies above the arrow. For optimal development, social ecologies should have a low level of structural and direct forms of violence. Moreover, interventions to promote peace can be tailored to the particular set of challenges posed by varying geohistorical contexts. For instance, children and youth growing up in socially unjust geohistorical contexts may associate peace with emancipatory agendas and not so much inner peace (Christie et al. 2008). Below we describe in more detail the social ecologies and foundations that support a path to peace.

Foundation 1: Healthy Human Development

Whether or not children are on a peaceful developmental trajectory is largely a function of foundations and social ecologies. In socioecological contexts marked by resource scarcity, inequity, and inefficiencies, the primary task is to cobble together a foundation that supports healthy human development (foundation 1). Under these conditions, interventions for healthy human development typically target prenatal care, nutrition programs, and the development of caregiver skills that can result in physical, cognitive and socioemotional gains (Kagitcibasi et al. 2009), though admittedly these programs are small steps in the face of structurally driven inequalities.

The task of building foundation 1 is not limited to low-income countries. In recent years, income inequality has surged in high-income countries, and efforts to level the playing field are ongoing (e.g., through early childhood programs such as Head Start in the United States). From a global perspective, the rapid growth in many developing countries over recent decades has resulted in a substantial reduction in poverty and inequality, despite increased inequalities within many countries (Rodrik 2014; Behrman and Kohler 2014).

Foundation 2: Interventions for Emotion Regulation and Healthy Primary Relationships

In some geohistorical contexts, the focal task is to restore children's primary relationships within the family and community. For instance, for child soldiers a process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) into their families and society is required (Betancourt et al. 2013a). This process and its cultural construction is most evident in a number of African countries, where purification rituals are used to exonerate child soldiers. These rituals serve to protect former child soldiers from the revenge of their victims' spirits and help reintegrate former soldiers into society (Honwana 1997).

For children in war zones or post-war contexts, interventions often target the child's emotional well-being. For example, following highly disruptive

events, practices such as expressive arts and play activities are commonly used to ameliorate stress, distress, and trauma in young children. Researchers and practitioners agree that the key is to adapt interventions to the child's capabilities and to acknowledge the child's interpretation of reality without superimposing an adult-centered resolution of issues (Lacroix et al. 2007).

Another example of an intervention aimed at promoting emotional well-being was implemented during the Israel-Lebanon war (Sadeh et al. 2008). For a group of children, aged two to seven years, who displayed severe stress reactions, an experimental cohort was given toy puppies. The children were asked to protect and care for the puppies whenever they themselves felt anxiety and distress. In comparison to control groups, the children who received the toys showed significant reductions in stress reactions, up to three weeks after the end of the war. Sadeh et al. (2008) conclude that *Huggy Puppy* is a cost effective intervention for young children experiencing highly stressful circumstances.

Similar approaches have been applied in the wake of natural disasters. Dugan et al. (2010) reported that children aged four years and above, who presented with severe symptoms of distress following Hurricane Katrina, were able to regain a sense of control and safety through the use of toys and role-playing. Similarly, following the Pakistan earthquake of 2005, children engaged in art-based activities and communicated their feelings, an activity that reportedly facilitated the healing of emotional trauma (Ahmed and Siddiqi 2006). In a related study following the earthquake in Taiwan, 8- to 12-year-old children who were exposed to art and play activities scored significantly lower on anxiety level and suicide risk than did children in a control group (Shen 2002).

Foundation 3: Social Skills and Prosocial Orientation

In relatively peaceful contexts, interventions are often designed to enhance children's skills in managing interpersonal conflicts constructively. Not surprisingly, conflict resolution skills are often emphasized in programs. For example, Vestal and Jones (2004) provided evidence for the effectiveness of a 40-hour teacher-training course in conflict management and problem solving with preschool children. Following the program, children exhibited increases in prosocial behavior and used fewer forceful solutions to solve interpersonal problems than children whose teachers were in a control group that did not receive training. In another intervention, teachers were offered a series of seven one-hour training sessions that targeted socioemotional problem solving and positive communication strategies for students in kindergarten and first grade. Posttest results yielded significant decreases in verbal and physical aggression in children who participated in the program (Heydenberk and Heydenberk 2007).

In high-income countries that are status-quo powers and occupy the top of the global economic hierarchy, peace in children is often associated with efforts to promote harmonious relations through school-based programs that

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foster socioemotional development. Most of these programs emphasize some combinations of self and social awareness, self-regulation, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Greenberg et al. 2003). To a large extent, foundation 3 and its implications for programming to enhance a prosocial orientation are based on findings from research in high-income countries.

Foundation 4: Fostering an Orientation toward Intergroup Peace and Social Justice

When children are embedded in social ecologies characterized by intergroup conflicts and episodes of violence, the intervention of choice is to bring together groups in conflict and work toward improved relations. One example is the program Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference, a preschool program developed to address the problem of segregation and hostility that marks the daily experiences of children (aged 3 and 4 years) in Northern Ireland. The initiative incorporates nationwide televised cartoons with messages of inclusion along with numerous activities focusing on tolerance and respect for diversity. Parents and community agents take part in the workshops, and toys and materials are sent into the homes to ensure continuity. A large-scale random control trial showed that the intervention resulted in increased empathy, prosocial behavior, and social problem solving in children. The intervention has been extended down to two-year-olds and up to the age of seven (Connolly 2011).

In other contexts characterized by deep fault lines between identity groups, interventions typically focus on encouraging children to develop empathy for the other. Stephan and Finlay (1999) reviewed a number of school-based programs that have been designed to encourage empathy and improve intergroup relations in children. Examples include:

1. The “jigsaw classroom” in which children from various identity-based groups are brought together to work in an interdependent fashion to achieve a common goal.
2. Dialog sessions in which members of various social groups seek to understand each other’s viewpoint on a range of issues.
3. Applications of the “contact hypothesis” (Allport 1954; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006) in which equal status groups are brought together and engage in cooperative actions aimed at common goals in a context supported by institutional authorities.
4. Multicultural education programs that typically include instructional materials describing various ethnic groups and encourage perspective taking.

Although Stephan and Finlay (1999) emphasize the mediating role of empathy at the individual level of analysis, there also is evidence that the establishment of antibias norms in the classroom contributes to the improvement of intergroup relations (Verkuyten and Thijs 2013).

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Many of the interventions discussed thus far focus on the harmonious feature of peace which emphasizes the development of competence or skills in inner, interpersonal, or intergroup peace. The notion of the child as an active agent of social change in pursuit of more egalitarian societal arrangements is largely missing from these constructions. Yet children's development of a "critical consciousness," by which is meant their awareness of inequalities, takes place in early childhood. Moreover, there is evidence that children are able to engage in praxis (i.e., they can take action on perceived inequities as early as four to five years old). For example, in one study that took place in Canada, kindergarten children learned that their principal thought they were too young to be included in a school-wide event. Their exclusion prompted them to survey other kindergarten classes and petition the principal to allow their participation (Vasquez 2004).

Simon (2010) cites a number of instances of social activism among children (typically between 8 and 11 years old), which range from protest over the lack of activities from which to choose during recess to desegregating the male and female seating arrangements in the lunchroom. In most of the instances cited, the children involved in activism were learning about social justice in the classroom.

The importance of nurturing the child's sense of social injustice combined with a nonviolent orientation is most apparent in geohistorical contexts that regard the notion of "peace" as suspect. For instance, in South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and parts of Africa, the term "peace" is associated with pacifism and oppression under colonial rule (Montiel and Noor 2009). Imperial powers used "divide and rule" policies that left in their wake interethnic fault lines and authoritarian regimes that persist to this day (Noor 2009). Under such conditions, the pursuit of a sustainable form of peace is associated with democratization movements, economic prosperity, and rule of law (Montero and Sonn 2009). Intergroup power differences in other parts of the world, such as the Middle East, are also ripe for the development of emancipatory agendas. The zero-sum, existential, and seemingly intractable nature of Middle East conflicts (Bar-Tal 2007; Coleman 2003) underscores the importance of generational change in which children and youth develop a sense of agency and exploit the power of nonviolent approaches to social justice.

As a general principle, children growing up in deeply divided societies are likely to develop oppositional social identities. Hence, the path to peace means somehow negotiating social identities in ways that are more inclusive and tolerant.

Similarly, identity-based conflicts remain prominent in contexts marked by genocides, such as in the former Yugoslavia (Simic et al. 2012) and Rwanda (Staub et al. 2005), where the path to peace involves identity issues combined with reconciliation processes to restore intergroup harmony. Intergroup reconciliation is also a crucial concern in South Africa—a country that has undergone a democratic transition with the dismantling of apartheid but which

continues to grapple with transitional justice (Hamber 2009), especially in the economic sphere (Marais 2001).

To date, little attention has been given to children's social activism, perhaps due to the faulty assumption that children do not engage in praxis or perhaps because activism by children is often misinterpreted as negative behavior (Simon 2010). For instance, Norton et al. (2005) described the refusal of a seven-year-old child to sit on a dirty rug with classmates. While school authorities interpreted the child's refusal as a behavior problem, closer examination revealed that the refusal was because the child's family had limited access to laundry facilities. As Norton et al. (2005:121) put it: the child's resistance to the policy "makes visible the realities of poor children who have different life experiences than children and/or teachers with money."

Directions for Future Research

In this chapter, we suggest that there is a sequence of foundations that build upon one another and culminate in a *peaceful* child who has internalized the values of nonviolence and social justice: healthy human development (foundation 1) undergirds healthy primary relationships (foundation 2), which in turn provide the scaffolding for the child to engage in prosocial behavior toward others (foundation 3), followed by a peace and social justice orientation toward out-group members (foundation 4). Although research efforts have identified many of the variables that contribute to each of these foundations, the links between foundations are tenuous. Of particular importance for the development of peaceful children are linkages between the prosocial child and the peaceful child: How is the development of a prosocial orientation related to the child's competence and skills in extending the scope of prosocial actions to those who fall outside the child's identity group?

In reference to interventions that specifically target foundation 4 (peace and social justice orientation), research evidence underscores the importance of designing programs that increase the child's positive attitudes toward others and reduce intergroup bias and aggression as well as socially exclusive practices such as gang membership.

Another issue is the question of multiple pathways to peace. We have proposed one path, based on our consensus and extant research, much of which originates in the West. A potentially fruitful program of research would be to identify other pathways that are more nuanced and varied, as a function of the geohistorical contexts in which children are embedded.

We also have suggested that sustainable peace requires the pursuit of both relational harmony and equitable well-being. There is a fair amount of scholarly inquiry into the antecedents of relational harmony, especially in research on conflict resolution skills in children. However, there has not been a commensurate amount of research on children's awakening sense of social injustice

and internalization of the value of equitable well-being for all. Emphasis on relational harmony runs the risk of implementing interventions that pacify children who are embedded in socially unjust circumstances. Thus an important research question arises: What kinds of social ecologies foster the development of a critical consciousness and tendency toward nonviolent social justice activism in children?

In addition to exploring the development of critical consciousness in children, it remains unclear whether the child's developing sense of social justice is related to peace. To what extent are the constructs of equitable well-being and relational harmony orthogonally related? Do they have similar antecedents and consequences? Does emphasis placed on one affect the other and if so in what direction and to what extent? What are the moderating and mediating variables for each of these constructs?

There also are gaps in the research literature in terms of the relational harmony dimension of peace. While there has been some research on children's acquisition of conflict resolution skills to maintain relational harmony, there is a paucity of research on the development of forgiveness in children and the skills involved in restoring harmony in relationships. Finally, what are the neurobiological mechanisms associated with empathy, a capacity which underlies the pursuit of relational harmony and equitable well-being for all? Related research questions include distinctions between the neural signatures associated with cognitive versus affective empathy, intragroup versus intergroup empathy, and relational harmony versus equitable well-being.

A practical question also arises: Why should a society value and invest in children's acquisition of a peaceful and socially just disposition?

Conclusions

It seems unlikely that societies will support research and intervention programs designed to encourage children to be peaceful unless there are strong indications of societal benefits. At present, we do not know the societal benefits of interventions that increase the likelihood of children developing competencies and skills to create, maintain, and restore harmony and equity in relationships. For any discussion of societal benefits, a requisite question arises: How can the measurement of *peaceful* child development be improved so that programs intentionally designed to encourage the development of peaceful children can be meaningfully evaluated?

Some examples of measurable and beneficial societal outcomes that could be examined include violent behavior within the family as well as cooperative and helping behaviors. In the school context, indices of peace could include the degree to which there are reductions in aggressive behavior, both verbal and physical, decreases in bullying behavior, and an overall change in the cascade of negative outcomes including school failure, dropping out, and engaging in

crime. A positive cascade might include an increase in empathic responses during early childhood followed by higher levels of sharing, cooperation, and helping behavior in school settings along with increases in achievement, school attachment, attendance, leadership activities, and school completion. Effective interventions aimed at enhancing a peace and social justice orientation should increase positive attitudes toward others, reduce intergroup bias and aggression as well as socially exclusive practices such as gang membership.

A carefully designed benefit to cost assessment of research and intervention programs is needed. Costs include the private and public resource costs, including the time costs for service providers, family members, and others. Costs will increase as trained personnel and targeted components are added to intervention programs, but so, too, could the benefits. With explicit cost-benefit ratios, the case for incorporating justice and peace interventions might well be strengthened.

Finally, our proposed model (Figure 15.2) reflects an agentic perspective that places the child at the center of efforts to create harmonious relations and long-term changes in the access and distribution of resources necessary for equitable human well-being. By so doing, we are advocating research and intervention programs that target healthy human development and fully engage children to be part of a long-term solution. Our approach also encourages children to listen to their awakening sense of social justice and take action to promote harmonious relations within the family and beyond. This kind of approach supports and encourages children to become an integral part of the process of transforming societies in ways that create a sustainable peace, at home, in the community, and on the global stage.