

**PHILOSOPHY WITH CHILDREN: LEARNING TO LIVE WELL****Abstract:**

Philosophy with Children, in all its guises, aims to engender philosophical thinking and reasoning in children. Much is written about what participation in philosophy might do for children academically and emotionally. What is proposed here is that by allowing children to participate in philosophical dialogue they will learn an approach that might support their participation in society which might involve them in the consideration and airing of their views, making decisions and their interactions and relationships with others. It is inevitable that by living with others one encounters others' values. It is essential, therefore, that children learn how to deal with others' values but also that they learn how to develop their own through questioning and reflection. Rather than teach children about values or teach them the values they should hold, this article suggests that children should be afforded opportunities to explore a range of perspectives but that they need to learn how to do this. In addition, though, in order to live harmoniously with others, there are considerations beyond ethics to be encountered. Children need to learn how to engage with politics, art, science, literature, and the wider range of issues that comprise life in a society. Indeed, children need to learn what is required of being a citizen. Here the learning of the child is contextualised in the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, where children are expected to be able "to make informed choices and decisions" and to "develop informed, ethical views of complex issues" (Scottish Executive, 2004, p.12) as part of their education for citizenship. If being a citizen involves these elements, then there is a challenge to teachers as to how children will achieve the desired outcomes. The aim of such a curriculum is that children 'learn for life' by acquiring life skills in order that society will benefit. It is posited, in this article, that by participating in philosophical dialogue one is likely to foster appreciation for others and their perspectives, that one's own values and opinions evolve, and that this philosophical outlook may, in fact, work for the betterment of society. Indeed, what is suggested is that in doing philosophy one learns how to live well.

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