

COMPARISON OF THE MAIN APPROACHES TO ETHICAL EDUCATION

Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education Project

	CHARACTER EDUCATION (TRADITIONAL)	VALUES CLARIFICATION	COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT (DILEMMA DISCUSSION)	ETHICAL EXPERTISE DEVELOPMENT
Leader	Ethical role model	Supporter of individual development	Facilitator, Expert	Designer, Liaison to community
Role	Expose students to traditions		Role model of rational thinker	Facilitator, Nurturer
Leader	Explicit instruction on	Presents/invites statements/questions	Poser of questions	Incorporates ethics into regular instruction
does:	how/why to behave	to which students respond	Discussion facilitator	Draws attention to skill development
			Models ethical reasoning	Links with community
Pluses:	Clear behavioral ideals Value building Habit development May develop motivation Increased sense of community	Increased self-understanding Fosters critical thinking Positive support	Fosters critical thinking Develops perspective taking Empirical support for its effectiveness	Concrete, broad view of ethical behavior Research-based framework Novice-to-expert skill building Community partnership Student empowerment Infusion into regular curriculum
Minuses:	Disagreement on specific enactments of values Ethical & critical reasoning deemphasized Outmoded, inappropriate pedagogy Outmoded understanding of character (traits) Authoritarian emphasis Little assessment	No separation of personal and ethical Western romantic notion of development Ignores too much of ethical domain May foster self-centeredness Narrow focus Weak pedagogy Little assessment	Can be too narrowly focused May not deal with sensitivity, motivation or implementation	Requires ethics across the curriculum Requires teacher lesson development
Empirical evidence:	Fewer negative behaviors	None	Development in ethical reasoning Just Community: Increased sensitivity, increased prosocial behavior	Makes suggestions based on evidence Under assessment (preliminary evidence suggests increase in ethical identity)

