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FORMS, METHODS AND TOOLS USED IN THE FORMATION OF PERSONAL QUALITIES IN CHILDREN

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Abstract. This article analyzes forms, methods, and tools that educators and caregivers use to support the formation of personal qualities in children, including responsibility, empathy, self control, perseverance, honesty, respect, and civic mindedness. The central idea is that personal qualities are not taught as isolated slogans but are developed through repeated experiences in relationships, routines, and meaningful tasks. The paper clarifies how moral development, social and emotional learning, and character education intersect in everyday schooling and family life. It describes practical forms of work, such as classroom meetings, project based learning, cooperative tasks, service learning, clubs, mentoring, and family partnership events. It then explains core methods, including adult modeling, guided practice, discussion, storytelling, role play, reflection, positive reinforcement, restorative dialogue, and structured feedback. The article also reviews tools that make these approaches concrete, such as journals, portfolios, behavior agreements, rubrics for collaboration and self management, literature and film fragments for ethical discussion, games, art activities, peer mediation scripts, and digital resources used with clear boundaries. Special attention is given to age appropriateness, inclusion, cultural sensitivity, and safety, because poorly designed character work can become moralizing, unfair, or even harmful. The conclusion proposes a coherent framework: create a supportive environment, teach specific skills, provide practice in real tasks, and assess growth through observable behavior and reflection, not through labels.

Keywords: personal qualities, character education, social and emotional learning, moral development, responsibility, empathy, self regulation, resilience, classroom climate, family partnership, formative assessment, child development.

INTRODUCTION

Educators and parents often agree that children should grow into kind, responsible, and resilient people, but they disagree on one practical question: how exactly do these qualities form. Some adults assume that good qualities appear naturally if a child is simply told what is right. Others assume that strict discipline will produce strong character. In reality, personal qualities develop through a more complex process that combines relationships, experience, and repeated practice in real situations. Children learn what to value by watching how adults behave, by feeling how adults treat them, and by testing ideas in everyday interactions with peers. They also learn through structured environments that teach them how to manage emotions, communicate, persist, and make responsible decisions. Personal qualities are therefore both social and skill based. They reflect internal values, but they also depend on learned habits and strategies.

A useful starting point is to define what is meant by personal qualities. In education, this phrase usually refers to relatively stable patterns of behavior and attitude that help a child function well with others and manage personal goals. Examples include honesty and fairness, empathy and compassion, responsibility and reliability, patience and self control, perseverance, initiative, respect for rules and

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people, and the ability to cooperate and resolve conflict. These qualities matter because they influence how children learn, how they form friendships, and how they handle challenges. They are also connected to long term outcomes such as school engagement, mental well being, and constructive citizenship. The relationship is not mechanical and should not be presented as fate, yet there is strong evidence that social and emotional skills support academic success and healthy development when combined with good teaching and supportive environments.

The topic is often discussed using different vocabularies. Some traditions speak about moral education and virtues. Others speak about social and emotional learning, focusing on skills like self management and relationship building. Others speak about character education, emphasizing values and community norms. In practice these approaches overlap. A child cannot live honestly without learning to regulate impulses and tolerate discomfort. A child cannot cooperate without learning to listen, take turns, and manage frustration. At the same time skills without values can become manipulation. The educational task is to integrate values and skills in a way that respects the child's dignity and supports independent moral reasoning.

This article is written for teachers, school leaders, and parents who want a realistic map of what works in everyday conditions. It describes forms, methods, and tools that can be used in schools and informal settings. The paper does not claim that there is one universal program that fits all communities. Instead it argues for principles that travel well across contexts: consistency, clarity, warmth paired with firm boundaries, opportunities for responsibility, constructive feedback, and a culture of respectful dialogue. The article also warns against common mistakes: moralizing speeches without practice, public shaming, unfair punishment, and vague slogans that cannot guide action. A child forms personal qualities when adults design environments where good choices are possible, expected, practiced, and recognized, and where mistakes become learning moments rather than lifelong labels.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Personal qualities develop inside a system. The child brings temperament and previous experience. The family brings routines, expectations, and emotional climate. The school brings social norms, peer culture, academic demands, and adult models beyond the family. When these systems send consistent messages, development is smoother. When they send contradictory messages, children learn confusion or double standards. That is why the formation of personal qualities should not be treated as a separate subject taught once a week. It should be woven into the daily life of the class and the home [1].

A practical framework can be described as four layers. The first layer is environment, meaning safety, predictability, fairness, and belonging. Without these conditions, children spend energy on defense rather than growth. The second layer is explicit teaching of skills and values, where adults explain what a quality looks like in action and why it matters. The third layer is guided practice, where children repeatedly apply the quality in tasks that matter, not only in artificial exercises. The fourth layer is reflection and feedback, where children learn to evaluate their behavior, repair harm, and set goals for improvement. Forms, methods, and tools can be organized around these layers.

Forms are the organizational formats in which education happens. They shape how often children practice, with whom, and under what social rules [2].

One powerful form is the daily routine of classroom life. Simple routines, such as greeting rituals, taking attendance roles, cleaning and organizing materials, and closing the day with a short reflection, teach responsibility and self management through repetition. These routines work when

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responsibilities rotate fairly and when expectations are explained clearly. Children should know what success looks like, what to do when a problem occurs, and how to ask for help. Routines also offer a quiet way to develop perseverance because children learn that some tasks are not exciting but still must be done well.

Classroom meetings are another key form. A meeting is a structured conversation where students discuss community issues, plan projects, solve small conflicts, and set shared rules. This form supports respect, listening, and civic responsibility. For younger children, meetings can focus on simple norms such as sharing materials, using kind words, and taking turns. For older children, meetings can handle more complex issues such as fairness in group work, online behavior, and inclusion. The effectiveness of meetings depends on clear facilitation, equal participation, and a rule that criticism targets behavior and solutions, not personal worth [3].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Project based learning is a form that naturally develops perseverance, teamwork, initiative, and planning. When students must create a product, such as a model, presentation, poster campaign, or community service plan, they face real constraints: time, resources, division of labor, and quality standards. These constraints create a natural need for self control and collaboration. Projects should be sized appropriately for age so that children experience success through effort, not only fatigue. Projects also allow teachers to observe personal qualities in action, which is more reliable than asking children to describe themselves as responsible or kind.

Cooperative learning structures, when designed well, provide repeated practice in collaboration and mutual help. Cooperative work becomes character education only when tasks create true interdependence. If one student can do the entire task alone, the group becomes a decoration and others become passengers. Interdependence can be created by assigning roles, splitting information so that each student holds a piece, or requiring a joint product that depends on contributions from all. Cooperative learning also trains fairness when teachers teach children how to manage unequal effort through discussion and accountability rather than through blame [4].

Service learning is a form where children connect learning with helping others. It can be as simple as a class project that supports a local community need, such as collecting books, creating safety posters, helping younger students, or cleaning a shared space. Service learning develops empathy and civic responsibility, but it must be guided carefully. The goal is not to turn children into saviors or to shame those who need help. The goal is to teach solidarity and respectful support. Reflection is essential so that children understand why the service matters and what they learned about themselves and society.

Extracurricular clubs and sports are powerful forms because they place children in real communities with clear rules, shared goals, and visible consequences. Team sports can teach discipline and cooperation, but only if the coach emphasizes fairness, respect, and learning from mistakes. Art clubs can teach persistence and constructive critique. Debate clubs can teach respectful disagreement and evidence based argument. What matters is not the activity itself but the culture: whether adults reward only winning or also reward effort, honesty, and helping others.

Mentoring and tutoring formats can build responsibility and empathy by giving older students structured roles in supporting younger ones. When a child becomes a helper, the child experiences a new identity: I can contribute, I am needed, I must be patient. Mentoring must be supervised and trained so that older students do not misuse power. The aim is to build a culture of mutual support [5].

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Family partnership events are also a form that matters. Personal qualities develop most strongly when school and home speak the same language about behavior and values. Workshops, open lessons, parent teacher meetings focused on skills rather than blame, and shared projects can align expectations. Families should be invited as partners, not judged as problems. Many families face economic and time pressures, so communication must be realistic and respectful.

Methods are the strategies adults use to influence learning and behavior. A method is effective when it is repeated, consistent, and supported by relationships.

Adult modeling is one of the most powerful methods, sometimes stronger than any lesson. Children learn honesty when adults admit mistakes and correct them. They learn respect when adults listen without humiliation. They learn fairness when rules apply equally. They learn self control when adults manage anger and explain boundaries calmly. Modeling is not about being perfect. It is about showing how to repair harm and return to the right path. A teacher who apologizes for speaking harshly demonstrates moral courage and teaches the child that dignity matters in both directions.

Guided practice is a method where adults do not only tell children what to do, they also scaffold the behavior [6]. For example, to teach conflict resolution, an adult can provide sentence starters such as I feel upset when, I need, I suggest, and can we agree. Children then practice these phrases in role play and later apply them in real conflicts. To teach perseverance, an adult can teach how to break a task into steps, how to set short goals, how to ask for feedback, and how to handle setbacks. In this way a personal quality becomes a set of learnable skills.

Dialogue and discussion methods develop moral reasoning. When children discuss dilemmas, stories, and real classroom situations, they learn to justify decisions, consider consequences, and recognize other perspectives. For young children, the discussion can focus on simple questions: what happened, how did it make others feel, what could we do differently. For older children, discussion can include fairness, rights, responsibilities, and long term consequences. The teacher's role is to create a respectful space and to guide children from personal preference toward reasons that can be shared.

Storytelling and literature based methods are effective because narratives help children imagine other lives and emotions. Stories allow children to explore courage, loyalty, temptation, and regret without real danger. The method works best when the teacher asks children to connect the story to choices: why did the character act this way, what else could have happened, what would you do, what values are shown. Stories also help children build language for emotions and intentions, which supports empathy and self control.

Role play and simulation methods provide rehearsal. A child who practices how to refuse peer pressure, how to apologize, how to ask for help, or how to speak up for a bullied peer is more likely to act in real life. Role play must be psychologically safe. It should not force children to reveal personal trauma. It should use fictional or neutral scenarios and allow children to step out if uncomfortable. After role play, a debrief is crucial: what worked, what felt hard, what could be improved [7].

Positive reinforcement and feedback methods shape habits. Reinforcement does not mean bribing children with prizes for basic decency. It means noticing and naming specific behaviors that reflect values. Instead of saying good boy, the adult says you waited your turn even though you were excited, that shows respect. Specific feedback helps children connect action to quality. It is also important to reinforce effort and strategies, not only outcomes. This supports a growth mindset and perseverance.

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Clear boundaries and consistent consequences also matter. Children develop self control when adults provide predictable rules and calm enforcement. The key is proportionality and fairness. Consequences should teach, not humiliate. Removing a privilege may be reasonable when it is linked to the behavior, but public shaming, sarcasm, or labeling a child as bad damages trust and often increases misbehavior. Restorative approaches offer an alternative: the child recognizes harm, repairs it, and reintegrates into the community. This method teaches responsibility more directly than punishment alone.

Restorative dialogue is a method for conflict and wrongdoing. It focuses on questions: who was harmed, what were the needs, what responsibility exists, how can the harm be repaired. Even young children can learn simple repair actions: apologizing, returning materials, helping rebuild what was broken. Older children can participate in circles where they hear how their actions affected others. Restorative methods require adult skill. Without skilled facilitation they can become empty rituals. When done well, they teach accountability with dignity.

Collaborative learning methods can be aimed directly at personal qualities if the teacher teaches teamwork skills explicitly. Children should learn how to take turns, how to invite quiet members, how to disagree respectfully, and how to manage roles. Many group problems happen because adults assume children already know how to collaborate. Teaching collaboration as a skill prevents the common pattern where the strongest student does everything and others become invisible.

Self reflection methods strengthen internal regulation. Reflection can be short and age appropriate. A young child can draw a picture of a good choice made today. An older child can write a short journal entry about a conflict and what they learned. Reflection becomes more powerful when it includes planning: next time I will do. Reflection should not become confession or surveillance. The purpose is to help children understand themselves and grow [8].

CONCLUSION

The formation of personal qualities in children is best understood as a long process of learning within relationships and communities. Personal qualities such as responsibility, empathy, honesty, perseverance, and self control develop when children repeatedly practice these behaviors in meaningful tasks, receive clear feedback, and observe adults who model dignity and fairness. Forms such as classroom routines, meetings, cooperative learning, projects, service activities, clubs, mentoring, and family partnerships provide the social setting where qualities become visible and trainable. Methods such as adult modeling, guided practice, dialogue, storytelling, role play, positive reinforcement, restorative repair, and reflection turn daily events into learning opportunities. Tools such as agreements, journals, portfolios, rubrics based on observable behavior, games, creative activities, and structured conflict scripts help teachers and parents implement these methods consistently.

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