

Bringing in a New Era in Character Education (Hoover Institution Press Publication)

By William Damon

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The authors provide a unique perspective on what is needed to make character education an effective, lasting part of our educational agenda. Each chapter points out the directions that character education must take today and offers strategies essential for making progress in the field.

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Editorial Review

From the Publisher
Education in the United States has at last ended its failed experiment with separating the intellectual from the moral—and schools from K–12 to college campuses are increasingly paying attention to students' values and accepting responsibility for students' character. But how can we bring in this new era in character education in a way that makes the right kind of difference to young people? What are the approaches that will provide character education the solid foundation necessary to sustain it now and into the future? What obstacles in our current educational system must we overcome, and what new opportunities can we create? This book provides a unique perspective on what is needed to overcome the remaining impediments and make character education an effective, lasting part of our educational agenda.

Each chapter points out the directions that character education must take today and offers strategies essential for making progress in the field. The expert contributors explain, for instance, how we can pass core values down to the younger generation in ways that will elevate their conduct and their life goals. They reveal why relativism has threatened the moral development of young people in our time—and what we can do to turn this around. And they show the critical importance of reestablishing student morality and character as targets of higher education's central mission.

The authors make a strong case for "moral exemplarity"—actual human examples of moral excellence—as an effective tool of educational practice and describe how stoic "warrior" principles can offer a moral manner of managing one's emotions in times of pressure. Perhaps most important, they clarify the necessity of authority in any moral education endeavor—and show how it is actually a powerful force for both personal freedom and character building.

William Damon is a Hoover Institution senior fellow. He is a professor of education and director of the Center on Adolescence at Stanford University.

Contributors: Marvin W. Berkowitz, Anne Colby, Irving Kristol, F. Clark Power, Arthur J. Schwartz, Nancy Sherman, Christina Hoff Sommers, Lawrence Walker

About the Author
William Damon is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, the director of the Stanford Center on Adolescence, and a professor of education at Stanford University. Damon's current research explores how young people develop character and a sense of moral purpose in work, family, and community relationships. He also examines how young people can approach careers with an emphasis on creative innovation, excellence, and social responsibility.

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Mark Vandyke:

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