Values and Political Preferences in Childhood*

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Studies of youth political development focus primarily on political socialization and salient events, while paying relatively less attention to important individual differences among children themselves, such as values. We administer an original survey to a sample of 10-to-12-year-olds and show that the distribution of their values is similar to that of their parents and a diverse sample of adults; that children's value priorities strongly predict their political preferences; and that one dimension of value priorities continues to predict political preferences even after adjusting for parental values and political preferences. Taken together, our findings suggest that pre-teens already use their own value priorities to organize their political attitudes, which emphasizes the importance of children's independent attributes in their political development, and lends support to the idea that personal values provide a foundation for political ideology.

Introduction

The study of political development during childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood typically focuses on factors external to the individual, including "the relative and differentiated contributions of various socializing agents" (Jennings and Niemi 1968, 169) and the influence of major societal events and cultural changes during one's "impressionable years" (Sears and Brown 2023).

Socialization research highlights a critical role for the family. In an early review of the topic, Hyman (1959) argues that "a man is born into his political party just as he is born into probable future mem-

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bership in the church of his parents" (74). Subsequent work offers a more nuanced perspective. In line with key claims of social learning theory (Bandura 1969), Jennings et al. (2009) illustrate the importance of consistency and repetition in parental signals. Other work considers the role of socializing agents outside the household, including schools, peers, and media (e.g., Campbell 1980; Campbell 2008; Lee et al. 2013). But emphasis on the role of family during childhood endures in this literature. Tyler and Iyengar (2023, 352–53), for example, conclude that their "findings confirm the earlier literature documenting the primacy of the family as an agent of socialization" (for research on parental socialization practices, see Anoll et al. 2022, 2025; Huft et al. 2024; Rico and Jennings 2016).

A second strand of research is aimed at understanding how people come to *differ* from their parents, and focuses on cohort-level differences in political orientations. This work considers the persistent effects of significant events and cultural changes during impressionable years of development, prior to about age twenty-five (e.g., Dinas 2014). Conceptualizing political events as "catalysts for preadult socialization" (Sears and Valentino 1997), this work argues that shared historical experiences and salient exogenous shocks during adolescence and early adulthood leave durable traces in political orientations that persist into adulthood (Ghitza et al. 2023; Bartels and Jackman 2014; Sears and Valentino 1997). As these experiences differ from one cohort to another, the argument goes, we observe corresponding cohort differences in political outcomes.

Much less research explores the child as an *agent* of their own political development. As Ojeda and Hatemi (2015, 1151) note:

> The majority of research on political value transmission continues to rely almost exclusively on models that present an asymmetric relationship between parents and children. These models propose that children observe and imitate the behaviors of authority figures, most commonly parents, with little control over what is learned.

In contrast, Ojeda and Hatemi (2015) argue that children actively consider whether or not to adopt their parents' political orientations, and that a substantial share ultimately choose not to (see also similar points raised in Dinas 2014; Gash and Tichenor 2022; Reifen-Tagar and Cimpian 2022; Westholm 1999).

Lack of attention to child agency is interesting given the importance of personality—individual differences in psychological needs, traits, and values—in political psychology (Bakker 2023; Federico and Malka 2023; Feldman and Weber 2023; Jost 2021). While the social world clearly matters for political attitude formation, contemporary theories of *adult* political behavior emphasize the importance of stable individual differences, both in shaping people's choices about the content to which they are exposed, and in their evaluation, and ultimate acceptance or rejection, of the information they receive (e.g., Federico and Malka 2018; Jost et al. 2009; Zaller 1992).

Importantly, research suggests that children hold differentiated personality structures, such as core values, at an early age (Bubeck and Bilsky 2004; Collins et al. 2017; Döring 2010; Döring et al. 2010; Measelle et al. 2005) and some measures of personality in early childhood predict political attitudes in adulthood (Block and Block 2006; Fraley et al. 2012; Wegemer and Vandell 2020). Hence, stable individual differences that inform adult political behavior may very well explain behavior among children, complicating the exclusive focus on external influence in political development.

Furthermore, recent methodological critiques question whether psychological dispositions *causally* shape political attitudes, or whether political attitudes themselves influence how individuals self-report their dispositions (Hatemi et al. 2019), with growing evidence for "bidirectional effects" among adults (see Arceneaux et al. 2025; Bakker et al. 2021). Studying how dispositions relate to political attitudes at younger ages can provide insight into this debate. For example, finding that values predict political attitudes even among pre-adolescents with limited political exposure and knowledge would be more likely if values operate as foundational orientations shaping—rather than merely reflecting—political orientation. Yet we still know little about the extent to which personal values shape the political beliefs and attitudes of children.

Having said that, there are good reasons to expect that dispositions like values may not structure political attitudes at these early ages. Work in behavioral genetics, for example, finds an increase in the heritable component of political ideology, and a relative decrease in the shared environment component, around age twenty to twenty-five—a time when most young adults begin to distance themselves from their parental household (Eaves et al. 2011). It is plausible, then, that core individual differences, like values and traits, become influential only in young adulthood, and political orientations among children are less strongly shaped by these basic stable dispositions.

This uncertainty about developmental timing reflects a broader gap in the literature on pre-adult political attitudes. We know relatively little about the politics of pre-adults, and of early adolescents and young children in particular. In a recent review of the literature, Reifen-Tagar and Cimpian (2022, 78) note that:

> a database search of the articles published in the journal *Political Psychology* in the last 5 years revealed only nine articles (2.0%) with the term "child" and variations such as "children" or "childhood" in their abstract. Of these articles, only five (1.1%) were about children in any meaningful sense (e.g., investigating adults' childhood experiences or children's own political attitudes), and none involved participants younger than 13 years of age. Against this backdrop, we argue that political psychology would benefit from the integration of evidence on young children's proto-political cognition and that an understanding of adults' engagement in the political domain cannot be complete without this integration.

In this article, we examine the extent to which children aged ten to twelve map their core values to political attitudes. Using a paired survey of children and their parents, we find that the distribution of children's value priorities looks similar to that of their parents' (and to a national sample of U.S. adults). Moreover, children's value priorities strongly predict their own political preferences, even after adjusting for parental values and attitudes. Specifically, we find robust evidence that children who prioritize conservation values such as conformity with rules, respect for tradition, and security hold more conservative issue positions across a wide range of policy issues and express stronger support for Donald Trump and the Republican party. We thus provide evidence that pre-teens already use their own personal values to organize their political preferences.

These results come with important caveats. As we discuss below, our sample is not representative of the population of U.S. households. Most importantly, the parents in our sampled households are more educated than a typical U.S. resident and a typical U.S. parent. This limits the scope of inferences that can be drawn from our data. Nonetheless, we believe we can establish an important relationship of values to political attitudes for at least this subset of U.S. children. Our findings are thus consistent with models in which children's own sense of self is an important factor that shapes

the development of political attitudes across the life-course. Along with other recent research (Dinas 2014; Gash and Tichenor 2022; Ojeda and Hatemi 2015), we suggest that greater attention to the agency of the individual child in studies of political development is warranted.

Values and Political Attitudes

Scholars have long argued that values are central to political judgment and decision making (e.g., Feldman 1988; Goren 2012; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Sniderman et al. 1991; for overviews, see Feldman 2013; Goren 2022). Conceptually, values are abstract and desirable goals, organized in terms of their relative importance, that serve as guides for individual behavior (Sagiv and Roccas 2017). Common examples include security, humility, equality, and achievement. Theoretically, values (and other abstract dimensions, such as ideology) allow people to make political decisions with less information (Goren 2022; Hinich and Munger 1994). For example, rather than identifying a candidate's stand on every issue—a difficult, often impossible, task—people can use value similarity as a heuristic for shared interests.

Values might also serve an expressive function (Katz 1960). In contrast to traits, values have a normative component: a person's values represent their ideal self (Roccas et al. 2014). Value-consistent choices reinforce, and signal to others, this core part of their self-concept (Goren 2022). Politics may be an especially appealing domain for the purpose of value expression. Much political debate involves value conflict, and since no single individual is decisive in determining the outcome, there is little to no cost in expressing one's values at the expense of potentially conflicting material interests (Brennan and Lomasky 1997).

Schwartz Value Theory

While scholars have explored a range of values in the context of political behavior (Feldman and Steenbergen 2001; Goren 2012; Jacoby 2014), contemporary research is often organized in terms of Schwartz value theory (SVT, Schwartz 1992; Schwartz et al. 2012). The most recent version of SVT proposes 19 universal value domains, listed in Table 1 along with their conceptual definitions.

Table 1: Schwartz Values (Adapted from Schwartz et al. 2012)

Value	Conceptual Definition	Label
Self-Direction–thought	Freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities	selfd_t
Self-Direction–action	Freedom to determine one's own actions	selfd_a
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and change	stim
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification	hedon
Achievement	Success according to social standards	achiev
Power–dominance	Power through exercising control over people	power_d
Power–resources	Power through control of material and social resources	power_r
Face	Security and power through maintaining one's public image and avoiding humiliation	face
Security–personal	Safety in one's immediate environment	secur_p
Security–societal	Safety and stability in the wider society	secur_s
Tradition	Maintaining and preserving cultural, family, or religious traditions	trad
Conformity–rules	Compliance with rules, laws, and formal obligations	conform_r
Conformity–interpersonal	Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people	conform_i
Humility	Recognizing one's insignificance in the larger scheme of things	humil
Benevolence–dependability	Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the ingroup	benev_d
Benevolence–caring	Devotion to the welfare of ingroup members	benev_c
Universalism–concern	Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all people	univ_c
Universalism–nature	Preservation of the natural environment	univ_n
Universalism–tolerance	Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from oneself	univ_t

SVT posits patterns of compatibility and conflict among values: while some values can be pursued concurrently (e.g., "tradition" and "conformity"), others are largely in conflict (e.g., "conformity" and "self-direction"). These dynamics give rise to a two-dimensional structure for values, which is represented by a circumplex (Schwartz 1992; Schwartz et al. 2012), with each value occupying a particular "slice" of the overall circle. Figure 1 shows our operationalization of this circumplex. We divide the unit circle into 19 equal slices, and locate each value at the center of one arc, with the ordering of values determined by the theoretical ordering proposed in Schwartz et al. (2012).[1]

[1]The theoretical ordering in Schwartz et al. (2012) is actually somewhat ambiguous with respect to the positioning of

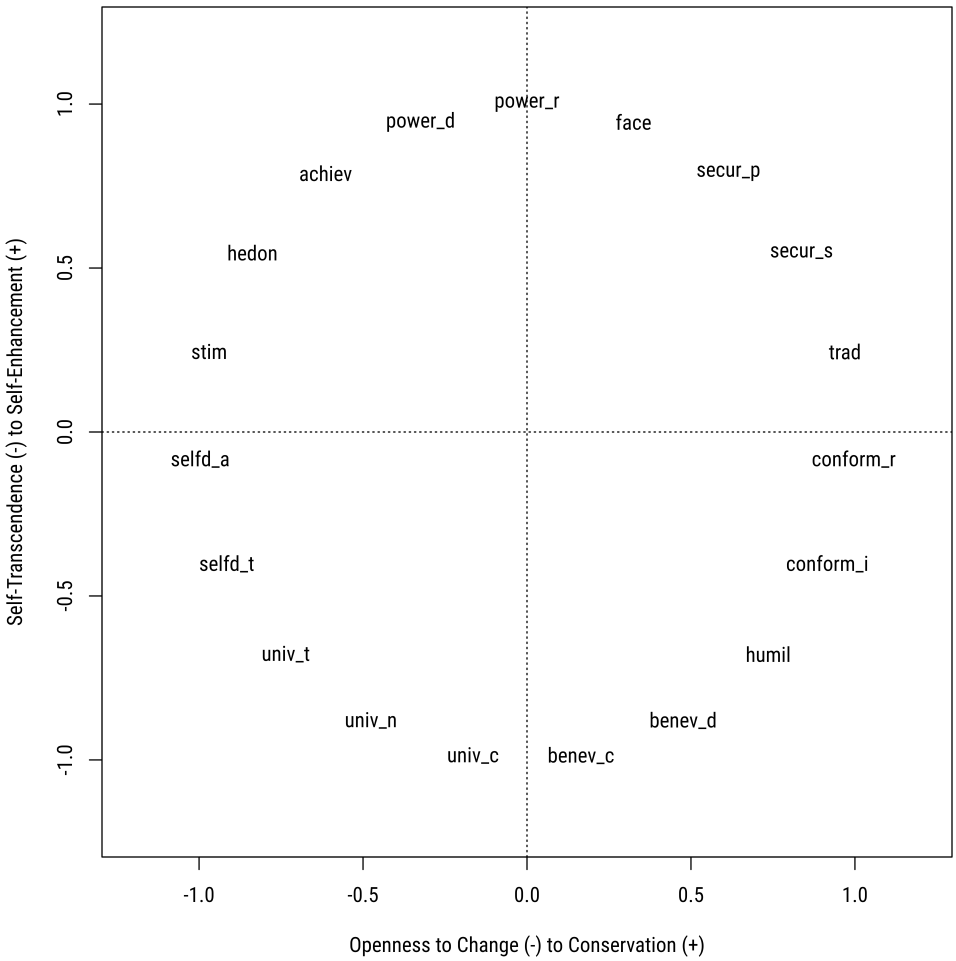

Figure 1: Schwartz Circumplex

Notes: The figure presents the circular continuum of 19 values in Schwartz value space and canonical orthogonal bases. Value abbreviations correspond to the labels in Table 1.

While specific value terms (e.g., dominance, benevolence-caring, or universalism-nature) are used as conceptual anchors for making sense of directions within this space, it is theoretically a continuum, in the sense that every possible angle in the space represents a unique value or motivational orientation. Vectors in this space with small angular distances are theoretically compatible and positively correlated, those with large angular distances are incompatible and negatively correlated,

benevolence–dependability. Their Table 2 (reproduced in our Table 1), shows benevolence–dependability located between benevolence–caring and humility, and thus closer to conformity and other conservation-related values. Later in the paper, however, they offer the conflicting interpretation that it should be located next to universalism-concern. We think there are clear theoretical reasons to expect dependability to be located closer to conformity than universalism, and for benevolence-caring to be located next to universalism-concern. Most clearly, the latter two values both represent concerns for the welfare of others, differing primarily in how far that concern extends. Dependability, by contrast, is about being a reliable and trustworthy member of the in-group, and is thus closely related to conformity to in-group norms and fulfillment of formal obligations.

and those at ninety-degree angles are theoretically orthogonal with minimal correlations. Hence, despite a theoretically infinite number of value concepts, SVT suggests we can simplify our characterization of value differences using only two continuous dimensions. While any two orthogonal axes could be chosen for this purpose, the canonical choice is to define the following two:

(1) *openness to change versus conservation*, which captures self-direction and stimulation on one side and security, tradition, and conformity on the other side; and
(2) *self-transcendence versus self-enhancement*, which captures benevolence and universalism on one side and power and achievement on the other side.

SVT has been applied successfully to model political judgment and decision making. In one stream of research, Schwartz and colleagues find that self-reported value priorities predict vote choice in the United States and Europe (Caprara et al. 2006; Piurko et al. 2011; Schwartz et al. 2010). In another research literature, Goren and colleagues have worked to integrate SVT with existing research on *political* values, such as support for limited government (Goren 2012; Goren et al. 2016, 2020, 2022). In their model, basic values (as defined by SVT) shape preferences through the more domain-specific political values. SVT, then, provides a source of structure for ideologies and ideological conflict.

Values and Politics Among Pre-Adults

While the importance of values in structuring political preferences is well-documented, there is little research on the role of values in politics among pre-adults. In part, this is due to the dearth of research on politics among pre-adults in general (Reifen-Tagar and Cimpian 2022). But it is also a result of the influence of parental transmission—and of socializing agents more generally—as a paradigm for thinking about political development. This is reflected in the lack of data measuring both personal values and political preferences among children and adolescents.

Importantly, it is *not* the case that children lack meaningful values and political preferences. A long line of research has explored the development of values among children, such as equality, conformity, respect for authority, or reciprocity (e.g., Fehr et al. 2008; Piaget 1997; see Reifen-Tagar and Cimpian 2022 for a recent review). A growing body of research suggests that kids as young

as five display individual differences in value priorities that are structured similarly to what is expected from SVT (Bubeck and Bilsky 2004; Collins et al. 2017; Döring 2010; Döring et al. 2010). With respect to politics, research finds that pre-teens show substantial interest in political issues such as war and poverty (Haug 2017), preschoolers show behavioral responses (e.g., punishment of fairness violations) indicative of their parents' ideological orientations (e.g., social dominance, right-wing authoritarianism) (Reifen Tagar et al. 2014, 2017), and children ages eleven to seventeen in the U.S. display adult levels of affective polarization (Tyler and Iyengar 2023).

In sum, values are central to psychological accounts of political behavior in adults, but we know little about the relationship of values to political attitudes in pre-adults, especially in pre-adolescents. This represents a significant gap in our understanding of political development. At the same time, a growing body of research suggests that children have differentiated value structures, even in early childhood, and possess substantial levels of political interest and meaningful political views.

We extend this research to explore the connection between values and political attitudes in a sample of children in the U.S. In doing so, we answer three basic questions. First, how similar are children's value priorities to those of their parents and to adults? Second, do these values organize children's own political evaluations and issue positions? Third, do these value effects persist once we adjust for parental values, parental political orientations, and basic sociodemographic differences?

Analytic Strategy

Data Sources

We use three original surveys for our analyses. Data for children and their parents were collected by the authors and their colleagues as part of larger project on political development, which also featured in-depth qualitative interviews. Data for the U.S. adult sample was collected through Cint (formerly Lucid). We believe that this effort provides a novel contribution to scarce survey studies on children. All our survey instruments as well as the data collection procedures received approval from Duke University's Institutional Review Board (protocols #*2024-0534* and #*2026-0075*).

Our primary dataset contains original surveys of children and one of their parents, collected from

the Research Triangle region of North Carolina, United States, between October 3, 2024, and August 5, 2025. We recruited 228 children and 173 parents using a combination of probability-based and non-probability sampling. Most children (74%) were recruited through probability-based mailers sent to 12,500 unique addresses sampled from a Wake County voter file, which was obtained from the commercial company L2.[2] We supplemented this mailer-based sample with an additional 60 children recruited through non-probability methods, including advertisements in parent Facebook groups and recruitment emails to local community groups in both Wake and Durham counties.

We implemented several procedures to ensure data quality. Parents first completed an intake survey, provided informed consent, and scheduled an interview date and time for their child or children. On the scheduled date, children provided active assent, and then completed their surveys in a synchronous video conference session with a trained team member who provided instructions, monitored attention, and ensured independent responding. Most sessions (75%) were one-on-one, and the remaining sessions included small groups with breakout rooms to maintain independence of observations. During these sessions, our team members regularly monitored the participants.

Prior to beginning the survey, team members provided all respondents with instructions for using the survey software, as well as example questions across several different formats (e.g., pairwise choice, multiple choice, grid-style items). During the survey, team members turned off their audio and video, but were available to help with technical issues. Kids had the option of either reading each survey question themselves, or having the item read aloud from pre-recorded audio files. The latter option was available via a visible button on each question page. The parent survey was administered online and subsequent to the child's session, and was given to the parent participating in the intake survey (77% of whom were women). We achieved an 86% response rate for parents, which also includes several parents who had two children participating in our survey.

Relative to Wake County, and the U.S. more generally, our parent sample has higher average income, higher education, and a higher percent of white and Democratic respondents (see Supplementary Material A for comparisons). Nonetheless, there is substantial variation in partisanship, with 59% of parents identifying as Democrats and 34% as Republicans. These limitations notwithstanding,

[2]Our response rate is just under 2%. That said, our mailer list could only differentiate households likely to have children ages 6 to 15, rather than our target of 10 to 12. In turn, we contacted a substantial number of households that were ineligible for the study.

we believe this study represents a rare window into political development, given the difficulties of reaching pre-teens and the near absence of existing data on children of this age range.

To provide a national adult benchmark, we also fielded the same questionnaire to a non-probability sample of U.S. adults through Cint (formerly Lucid), a platform that connects researchers with online participants from different panel providers. Research shows that Cint samples closely match the U.S. population both demographically and politically, and replicate experimental findings from other providers (Coppock and McClellan 2019; Stagnaro et al. 2024; Hohenberg et al. 2024). The survey ran from September 30 to October 2, 2025, and produced 938 complete responses. We used quota sampling on age, gender, race, and region to align the sample with Census benchmarks. All respondents passed a two-image CAPTCHA, two attention checks, and a post-hoc quality screen which flagged inattentive or fraudulent responses using completion-time thresholds, non-sequitur open-ended answers, an obscure Supreme Court knowledge item, and the Qualtrics bot-detection score. Although not a probability sample, this dataset provides a large and diverse adult comparison group, with several quality filters, using the same survey items as kids and parents. Details on recruitment, sampling, and additional elements are provided in the Supplementary Material A.

Measurement of Personal Values

Measurement of Schwartz values typically uses the *portrait values questionnaire* (PVQ), the most recent version of which is implemented in Schwartz et al. (2012). Each questionnaire item describes a person—matched to the gender of the survey respondent—in terms of a pattern of behavior (for example, "being creative is important to [him/her]"). Responses are provided on a six-point scale ranging from "not like me at all" to "very much like me." Each item is assumed to measure one particular named value on the Schwartz circumplex. For example, this "creative" item is intended to measure the value "self-direction–thought" (described in Table 1). Schwartz et al. (2012) recommend at least three items per value, and the full questionnaire is forty-seven items.

The PVQ has been generative for research on values, but there are concerns with this strategy. SVT proposes that values are, by definition, desirable ends, and therefore it is the *relative importance* of values that matters for behavior. The PVQ, however, measures judgments about individual values

in isolation. It is thus possible for respondents to rate every value as of equally high importance. The instrument is also long with forty-seven items, and many of these are complex.[3] The response format is also complicated, asking for judgments of importance on a six-point scale.[4]

These issues with the PVQ have motivated alternative measurement strategies that elicit relative value priorities directly. One promising strategy is presented in Bilsky et al. (2015), who develop a pairwise comparisons task, in which respondents choose which of two values is more important to them, and all possible pairs of the 10 classic Schwartz values are considered, one pair at a time (see Lee et al. 2008; Oishi et al. 2005). This results in forty-five pairwise choices, even without using the full set of nineteen values from the most recent version of SVT.

In this article, we thus use a recent adaptation of this pairwise comparisons strategy (Johnston and Opertti 2025), which uses the full set of nineteen values in a less demanding way. Specifically, we leverage the fact that we do not *need* respondents to rank all possible values, as the low-dimensional structure of values in SVT defines the relations between them, as shown in Figure 1. In other words, we use the *structure* of values as additional information relevant to estimating respondents' positions in the value space, which allows us to decrease the number of pairwise choices.

To give each value a numeric position in this space, we must choose basis vectors. While the choice of basis is arbitrary, we adopt the most commonly used conceptualization of the two-dimensional Schwartz space in terms of "conservation versus openness to change" and "self-enhancement versus self-transcendence." We operationalize these dimensions with the assumption that the angle $-\frac{\pi}{2}$ precisely splits the values "universalism-concern" and "benevolence-caring" on the unit circle, which then defines the self-transcendence pole of that basis dimension. It follows that conservation is defined by the angle zero. Individual values are then defined by unit vectors, with components measured relative to these axes. Figure 1 presents this structure of the Schwartz space.

We use several indicators for each of the nineteen values. Each of these indicators is a short phrase inspired by the PVQ. For example, we use "trying new things" and "having an exciting life" to rep-

[3] For example, "learning things for [himself/herself] and improving [his/her] abilities is important to [him/her]," or "following [his/her] family's customs or the customs of a religion is important to [him/her]."

[4] Such issues are often unavoidable. If, for example, our primary goal is to measure variation on a single policy issue, the use of a response scale with several categories is necessary. And it may often require a large number of items to reliably measure a latent variable. Given we are working with children, however, we would like to minimize the length and complexity of the task wherever possible, *if* we can also maintain measurement comparability to adults.

resent the value of stimulation, while "being obedient, following the rules" and "showing respect for parents and elders" are used to capture conformity to rules (see Supplementary Materials B for the complete list). In all three surveys, respondents are presented with 15 randomly selected pairs of indicators to choose between. Our goal is to use these 15 choices to estimate each respondent's value position in the two-dimensional value space (a two-vector), as described above.

We make two assumptions. First, each value indicator is located at the same angle as its corresponding parent value (e.g., "trying new things" is located at the position for stimulation). Second, an individual's choice between two indicators is determined by their relative similarity to the respondent's own vector in the value space. Specifically, each choice is modeled as a Bernoulli trial, with the probability of choosing value A over value B a function of the difference in dot products of the respondent's vector with each value's vector:

$$p_{ij} = \Pr(\text{choose A})_{ij} = F\left(x_i \cdot a_{ij} - x_i \cdot b_{ij}\right) \tag{1}$$

In this equation, p_{ij} is the probability that respondent i chooses value option A on choice task j; F is a cumulative distribution function; x_i is a two-vector for respondent i, and a_{ij} and b_{ij} are two-vectors for the randomly drawn pair of values the respondent sees on trial j. Intuitively, the model assumes that respondents tend to choose values that point in the same direction as their own vector, and that this tendency increases as the magnitude of their own vector increases.[5] Put another way, the respondent's vector points toward their most highly prioritized values, and the vector magnitude is the strength of that directional preference.

We can expand this equation as

$$p_{ij} = F\left(x_{1i}(a_{1ij} - b_{1ij}) + x_{2i}(a_{2ij} - b_{2ij})\right) \tag{2}$$

Now subscripts "1" and "2" reference the entries of the vectors in Equation 1, and are simply the locations on the two dimensions defined by the basis vectors (conservation and self-enhancement, respectively), with a_{ij} and b_{ij} known by assumption. Equation 2 thus takes the form of a generalized

[5]This is equivalent to the directional model of voting outlined in Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989).

linear model, with x_{1i} and x_{2i} as the coefficients to be estimated. The *effect* of the difference between value A and value B on each dimension gives us the position of the respondent on each dimension (conservation and self-enhancement). Using a cumulative normal distribution function, we obtain a hierarchical probit regression (i.e., respondent-choices nested within respondents).

The model estimates a separate set of coefficients for each respondent by treating their positions x_i as independent and identically distributed random variables. The respondent positions are modeled with a multivariate normal distribution, which allows the correlations between the positions on the two dimensions to be freely estimated (see Supplementary Material B for descriptive statistics on estimated positions in the value space for each sample). We implement a Bayesian approach for estimation, and use the mean of each respondent's posterior distribution on each basis as their estimated position on that basis, and the standard deviation of that distribution as the uncertainty around their value positions.[6]

Measurement of Preferences and Evaluations

We use the same questions to assess people's political issue preferences and evaluations of figures and parties across all surveys. We adapted the questions from well-established adult surveys, such as the ANES and the GSS. We intentionally avoided simplifying the language or structure of the items, as one of our primary goals was to understand whether children at this age can adequately comprehend political questions and articulate their own political opinions. Hence, this approach ensures direct comparability across children, their parents, and the larger population.

We captured political preferences on a wide range of policy issues. First, we assessed opinions on cultural issues, including the legality of abortion, immigration, gun regulation, the social impact of new lifestyles, racial advantages for whites, and the government's role in promoting racial equality. Second, we assessed opinions on economic issues, including the government's role in employment, health care, and reducing inequality, as well as the trade-off between environmental protection and economic growth and attitudes toward military intervention abroad. We coded the responses such that higher values indicate conservative political positions across all our samples.

[6]We use the package `brms` in `R` to estimate the model for each sample. We use the default priors associated with the function `brm` (Bürkner 2017).

Second, we collected people's evaluations of candidates and political parties. In doing so, we asked participants to evaluate 2024 national election candidates (Donald Trump and Kamala Harris) and parties (Democratic Party and Republican Party) on a Likert scale ranging from strongly dislike to strongly like. We coded these responses such that higher values indicate warmer attitudes toward Trump and Republicans and colder attitudes toward Harris and Democrats (the latter two are thus "reverse-coded"). Descriptive statistics for outcomes are reported in Supplementary Material C.

Modeling Strategy

We model political preferences with a two-equation multilevel selection framework. In the survey, children selected the "don't know" option for 27% of policy issue items and 16% of evaluation items. This is, in itself, an important finding: many pre-teens may not yet hold or may not be willing to report political opinions. Following Heckman (1979), we use a two-equation model to capture this response process: while the *selection* equation models the existence or non-existence of a response, the *outcome* equation estimates how children's value priorities predict their responses conditional on answering. This strategy corrects for non-response because the selection and outcome equations share a latent correlation parameter, ρ, that adjusts for the dependence between these processes.

Let s_{ij} be an indicator for whether child i responds to item j, which is nested in a "domain," specified either as "issues" or "evaluations," and y_{ij} denote the observed outcome when $s_{ij} = 1$. We write:

$$\begin{aligned} s^*_{ij} &= (\alpha^s_{d[j]} + u^s_i + v^s_j) + (\beta^s_{d[j]} + b^s_j)^\top \theta_i + \gamma^{s\top} \mathbf{X}^s_{ij} + e^s_{ij} \\ y^*_{ij} &= (\alpha^y_{d[j]} + u^y_i + v^y_j) + (\beta^y_{d[j]} + b^y_j)^\top \theta_i + \gamma^{y\top} \mathbf{X}^y_{ij} + e^y_{ij} \end{aligned} \tag{3}$$

where $\alpha_{d[j]}$ are domain (issue or evaluation) fixed effects, u_i are individual random effects, v_j are item random effects, θ_i contains the respondent's (latent) position in Schwartz value space, $\mathbf{X}^y_{ij}$ contains demographic covariates (age, sex, and race), and $\mathbf{X}^s_{ij}$ contains the same demographic covariates as well as a political engagement score. The equation with subscripts s is the selection equation and the one with subscripts y is the outcome equation. To correct for selection bias, the error terms e^s and e^y are jointly distributed with:

$$\begin{pmatrix} e^s \\ e^y \end{pmatrix} \sim \mathcal{N}\left(\mathbf{0}, \begin{bmatrix} 1 & \rho \\ \rho & \sigma_y^2 \end{bmatrix} \right) \tag{4}$$

To help identify the selection process separately from the outcome process, we model the likelihood of responding using a political engagement score: an index we generated using (1) correct answers to five political knowledge questions, (2) self-reported political interest, and (3) self-reported news following. We included this item in the selection equation only, which ensures that the model can separate the factors that affect whether a child responds from the factors that affect their responses. We allow the effect of political engagement to vary across issues. This item is a reasonable exclusion restriction, as we see that political engagement leads to fewer "don't know" responses.

Note that we define θ_i as *latent* values. As noted before, our value measurement strategy produces estimates with uncertainty. Hence, posterior means for conservation values and self-enhancement values are noisy proxies for latent values. To address this problem, we incorporate a measurement component into our structural model, where we explicitly model latent personal values using both the posterior means and posterior standard deviations of the Schwartz value estimates:

$$\begin{aligned} \theta_i^{\text{self}} &\sim N\left(\hat{\theta}_i^{\text{self}}, \hat{\sigma}_i^{\text{self}} \right) \\ \theta_i^{\text{cons}} &\sim N\left(\hat{\theta}_i^{\text{cons}}, \hat{\sigma}_i^{\text{cons}} \right) \end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

where the $\hat{\theta}_i$ and $\hat{\sigma}_i$ are posterior means and standard deviations from the measurement model for each dimension of Schwartz value space (i.e., self-enhancement and conservation). This propagates the uncertainty in our estimates of values to the Heckman model in Equation 1.[7]

In Supplementary Materials D, we also present results from a simplified modeling approach, which uses only non-missing observations (no selection model), average value positions (no uncertainty propagation), and estimates the multilevel model using maximum likelihood. The results are similar with this approach, and our broad conclusions would be the same.

[7] On each round of the MCMC chain, we treat each respondent's true value position as a random draw from its posterior. Therefore, each round uses a different value position, with the variation from one round to another determined by the uncertainty encoded in $\hat{\sigma}_i$, thus propagating measurement uncertainty into model estimation.

The Extended Child Model. We extend the child model to assess whether the influence of values on political outcomes remains after we account for parental values and orientations. We make three modifications to our baseline specification to achieve this goal. First, we adjust for parental values and item-specific outcomes both in the selection and outcome equations. Second, we implement a Bayesian imputation for missing data in parental outcomes, which is about 2% across all items. Third, we adjust for household income to control for socioeconomic backdoor paths. This extended child model allows us to control for the degree to which children's responses can be attributed to intergenerational transmission or shared family household characteristics, and thus estimate the independent influence of children's values on political preferences and evaluations.[8]

Issue-Level Linear Models for Adults. While our models for children properly account for selection into response, this is less of a concern when we analyze our adult sample, as missingness is 3.2% for issues and 2.4% for evaluations. Similarly, the sample includes 938 respondents, which is large enough to estimate issue-level slopes efficiently without partial pooling. That said, uncertainty in our value measures remains a concern. To address this problem, we estimate issue-specific linear regression models for the U.S. adult sample, adjusting for age, gender, and race. Instead of treating conservation and self-enhancement as fixed covariates, we use the posterior distribution of values at the individual level to estimate 4,000 separate regressions, which lead to coefficients that reflect uncertainty in value measurement. We then pool these coefficients and their standard errors using Rubin's rules. This procedure allows us to propagate the uncertainty into regression coefficients.

We estimate the baseline child model and the extended child model in a Bayesian framework using Stan. We use weakly informative priors: we assign normal priors for regression coefficients (with standard deviations of 1 for intercepts and covariates, and 0.5 for value coefficients), half-normal priors for variance parameters with scale 1, and LKJ Cholesky priors for correlation matrices. We model the latent value positions using normal priors centered at respondents' posterior means from the measurement model, with standard deviations equal to their posterior uncertainty. We base our estimation on four chains with 1,000 warm-up iterations and 3,000 post-warm-up draws.

The replication materials for all analyses are presented at [link to be updated].

[8]While doing this analysis, we lose about 14% of our child participants due to parental non-response to our survey invitation.

Results

We start with Figure 2, which presents the distribution of value estimates across three groups (children, their parents, and U.S. adults) in the Schwartz value circumplex. Substantively, value priorities cluster in the lower quadrants, suggesting a general tendency to prioritize self-transcendence values over self-enhancement values. The mean estimates of the self-enhancement dimension are -0.29, -0.38 and -0.33 for children, parents and U.S. adults, respectively. In addition, the average positions of the two adult samples are shifted toward the lower *right* quadrant (with means of 0.17 for parents and 0.18 for U.S. adults), relative to the kids (mean $= -0.02$), suggesting a greater priority placed on conservation values over openness to change values. These patterns are broadly consistent with past research using different estimation strategies (e.g., Bubeck and Bilsky 2004; Döring et al. 2010; Schwartz et al. 2012).

There is also more variation in the adult samples than in the kids sample. The standard deviation of value estimates for the conservation dimension is 0.25 and 0.23 for parents and U.S. adults, respectively, while it is 0.16 among kids. Similarly, while the standard deviation of self-enhancement values is 0.16 and 0.21 among parents and U.S. adults, this value is 0.09 among kids. This suggests that the kids' value representations are more restricted in range compared to parents and the U.S.

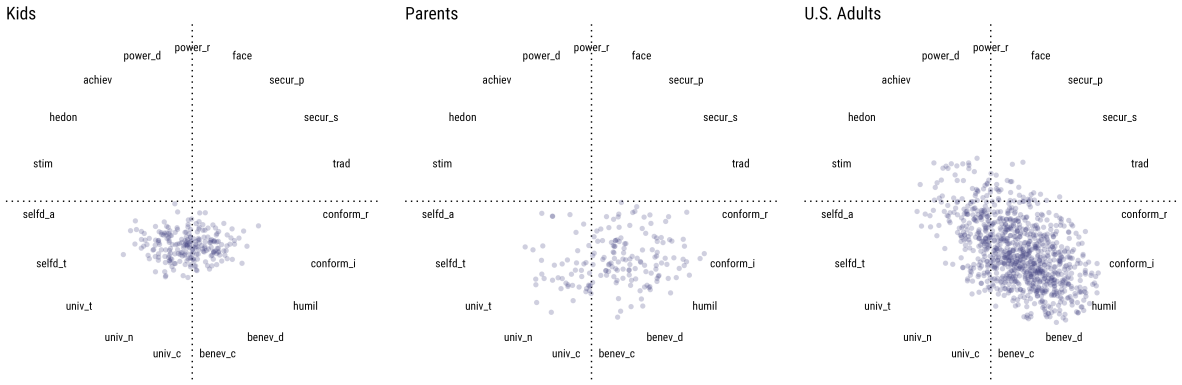

Figure 2: Estimated Value Positions Across Groups

Notes: The figure presents estimated value positions in Schwartz value space among children, parents, and U.S. adults. Value labels at the perimeters of the circles represent the fixed theoretical locations of the Schwartz values. Each point represents a particular respondent's posterior mean value position in the circumplex. Value abbreviations correspond to the labels in Table 1. Table 5 in Supplementary Materials B provide the list of corresponding survey items.

adults, though we treat these results as tentative given the small sample of kids.

Overall, however, Figure 2 suggests a striking degree of similarity in the value distributions of kids and adults. Importantly, this does *not* imply that children's values are simply reducible to those of their parents. Indeed, at the individual level, the correlations between the values of parents and their own kids are modest ($r = 0.13$ for self-enhancement and $r = 0.23$ for conservation), and even with correction for error variance in value estimates, they are consistent with only moderate alignment (about $r \approx 0.50$; though these corrected correlations are associated with substantial uncertainty). While kids are more similar to their parents than a randomly selected adult, variation in parents' values explains only a modest proportion of the variation in kids' values.

The Relationship of Values to Political Attitudes

Figure 3 presents the relationship of values to political attitudes. The left panel reports the average effects on political evaluations, with higher scores corresponding to *more* pro-Republican and *less* pro-Democratic evaluations. The right panel reports average effects on issues, with higher scores indicating more conservative responses. In each panel, we show the effect of a 0.5 change in value priorities on political preferences, which is one-fourth of the diameter of the Schwartz circumplex, and is roughly the range of variation in value positions observed in our sample of children.

We find a strong influence of conservation values. A 0.5-increase in conservation corresponds to an increase of 1.21 standard deviations in evaluations. Similarly, conservation reliably increases conservative positions on issues, with an increase of 0.5 resulting in an SD increase of 0.45. These findings replicate established patterns linking conservation values to political attitudes among adults (Goren et al. 2016), and suggest that this relationship emerges early in life for at least some subsets of the population. In contrast, the relationship is relatively smaller and somewhat more uncertain when it comes to self-enhancement values. We find that the effect of self-enhancement values on evaluations is 0.94 SD, while it is 0.26 SD for issues, with only the former being credibly different from zero. Overall, the patterns for self-enhancement are thus weaker, but there is some evidence that children still connect this value dimension to politics in a similar way to adult samples.

To give these estimates additional context, the effects of kids' age, gender, and race are, respec-

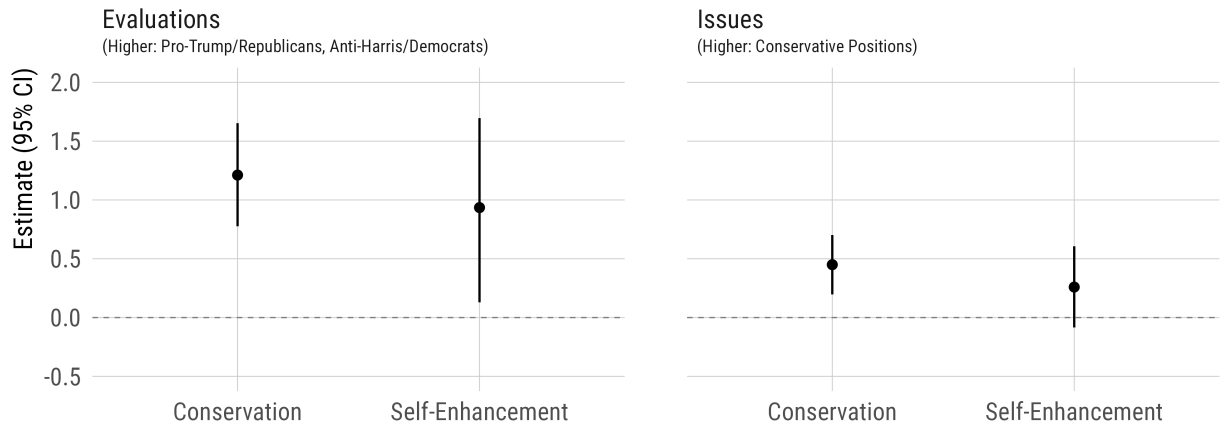

Figure 3: The Coefficient Estimates of Values on Political Orientations

Notes: The figure demonstrates posterior means and 95% credible intervals for the average effects of conservation and self-enhancement on standardized political evaluations (the left panel) and issue positions (the right panel). We present the effects of a 0.5-increase in value priorities, which corresponds to a quarter of the diameter in the Schwartz circumplex. Outcome measures are standardized within question across respondents, so coefficients can be interpreted as SD changes in each outcome. Models adjust for age, gender, and race. The complete sample for children (N = 228).

tively, 0.02, -0.07, and -0.05 for evaluations and 0.06, -0.14, and -0.09 for issues. Compared to these differences, the estimates associated with value priorities are indeed substantial.

To examine whether these aggregate patterns hold consistently across different political outcomes and provide a comparison to the U.S. adult benchmark, Figure 4 presents item-specific estimates for issue positions, separately for children and U.S. adults. Once again, these estimates are associated with an increase of 0.5 in each value dimension. Importantly, however, while this change exhausts the full empirical distribution of value positions among children, it represents less than half of the empirical distribution among U.S. adults. Put another way, the *standardized* coefficient estimates are closer in magnitude than those presented here. This is not to say that the standardized estimates are more valid, but only that the changes illustrated in the figure do not represent changes in outcomes as a result of changes in personal values across the observed range among adults.[9]

We find that the influence of conservation is directionally comparable across items, though there is much more uncertainty and variability in these estimates for children than for adults. Overall, these estimates reinforce the conclusion of Figure 3: even at a young age, many kids connect values

[9]Indeed, it is quite intriguing that children have both a smaller range of value estimates, and larger effects for the same absolute change in values. One possibility is that the estimates for children are the effects of values *conditional* on having an opinion at all. Among adults, almost everyone is willing to express an opinion, but children with opinions may be an especially politically interested subset of that population.

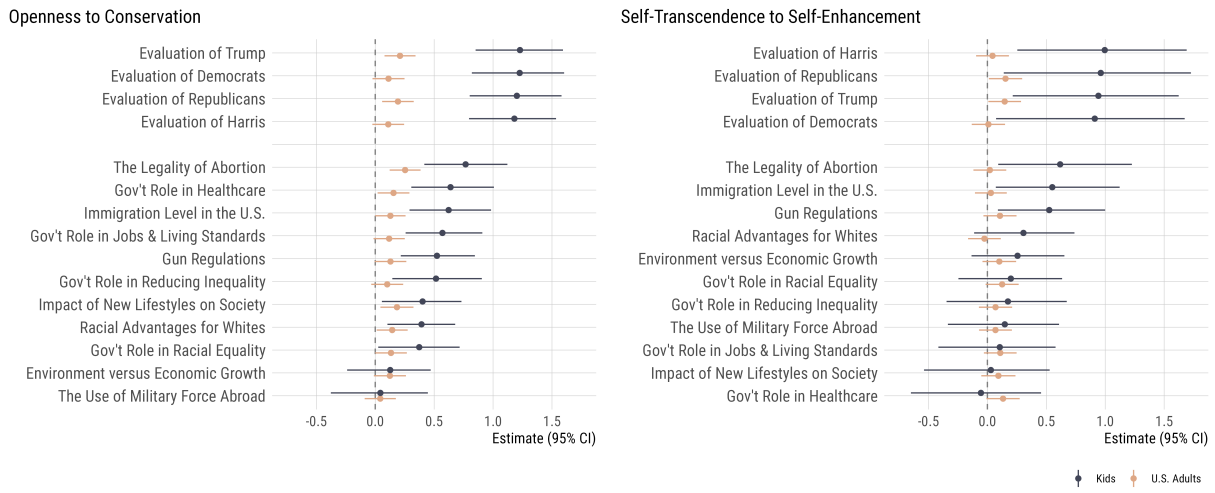

Figure 4: The Coefficient Estimates of Values on Political Outcomes

Notes: The figure demonstrates posterior means and 95% credible intervals for the item-specific effects of conservation (the left panel) and self-enhancement (the right panel) across evaluations and issue positions. We present the effects of a 0.5-increase in value priorities, which corresponds to a quarter of the diameter in the Schwartz circumplex. Outcome measures are standardized within question across respondents, so coefficients can be interpreted as SD changes in each outcome. Coefficient estimates for children are drawn from the multilevel Heckman selection model. Coefficient estimates for U.S. adults are drawn from linear regression models with uncertainty propagation. Both models adjust for age, gender, and race. The complete sample for children (N = 228) and U.S. adults (N = 938).

related to conservation versus openness to their political attitudes, with endorsement of conservation values leading to more conservative issue opinions and support for right-wing candidates and the Republican Party. Also consistent with Figure 3, the item-level estimates for self-enhancement are generally smaller, but again are quite imprecise, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the association of self-enhancement values with any particular preference.

Examining Parent-Adjusted Estimates

Does the relationship of kid's values to their politics persist after accounting for parental positions? Figure 5 examines this question by comparing estimates from the baseline children model to those from the parent-adjusted specification, which includes parental values and attitudes as controls. To achieve comparability, we re-estimated the baseline child model using respondents whose parents participated in the surveys, reducing our analysis sample size from $N = 228$ to $N = 196$.

The results show that the effects of conservation on political positions remain substantial and credi-

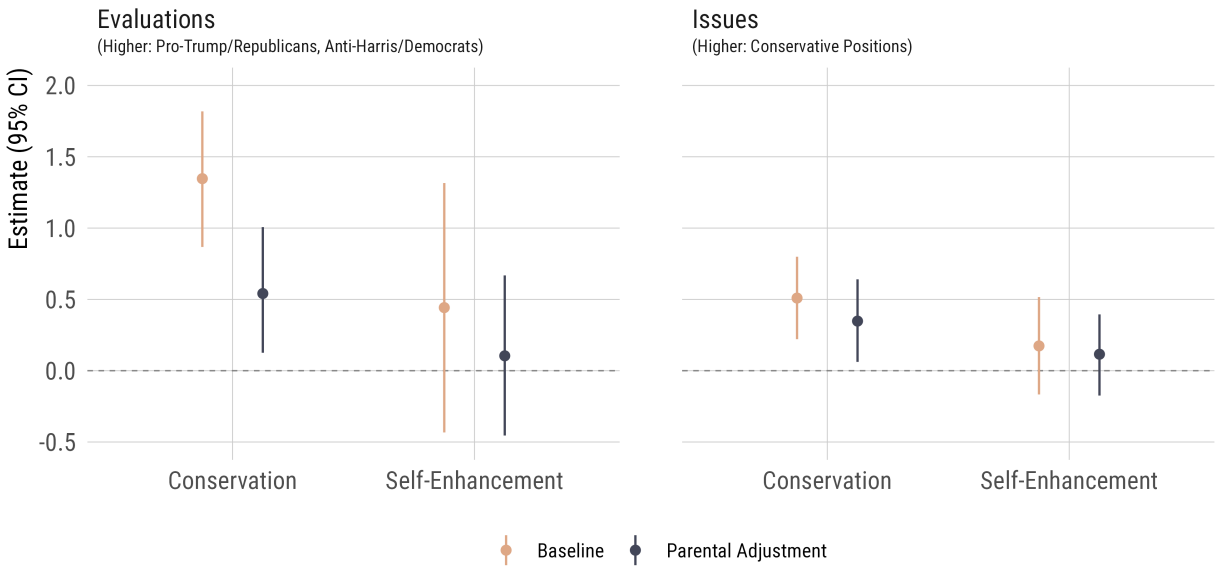

Figure 5: The Coefficient Estimates of Values on Political Orientations

Notes: The figure demonstrates posterior means and 95% credible intervals for the average effects of conservation and self-enhancement on standardized political evaluations (the left panel) and issue positions (the right panel). We present the effects of a 0.5-increase in value priorities, which corresponds to a quarter of the diameter in the Schwartz circumplex. Outcome measures are standardized within question across respondents, so coefficients can be interpreted as SD changes in each outcome. The baseline model adjusts for age, gender, and race. The parental adjustment specification additionally adjusts for parents' conservation and self-enhancement values, parents' corresponding political positions, and household income, so estimates represent the direct association between children's values and their political orientations. The sample for children with parental surveys (N = 196), a 14% reduction from the baseline sample.

bly different from zero after adjusting for parental characteristics. The conservation effect declines from 1.35 to 0.54 SD (a reduction of 60%) for evaluations and from 0.51 to 0.35 SD (a reduction of 31%) for issues; however, in both cases the effects remain sizeable and significantly different from zero. In contrast, parental characteristics largely account for the effects of self-enhancement. The effects decline from 0.44 to 0.10 SD (a reduction of 77%) for evaluations and from 0.17 to 0.12 SD (a reduction of 33%) for issues, with estimates no longer significantly different from zero.

These findings indicate that although an important part of value effects among kids reflects shared family environments or intergenerational transmission, a substantial portion of the conservation effect remains even after we adjust for both parental values and positions. This persistence suggests that value-based political differentiation from parents may emerge even among (at least some) preteens, as they begin to integrate value orientations into their political attitudes and identities.

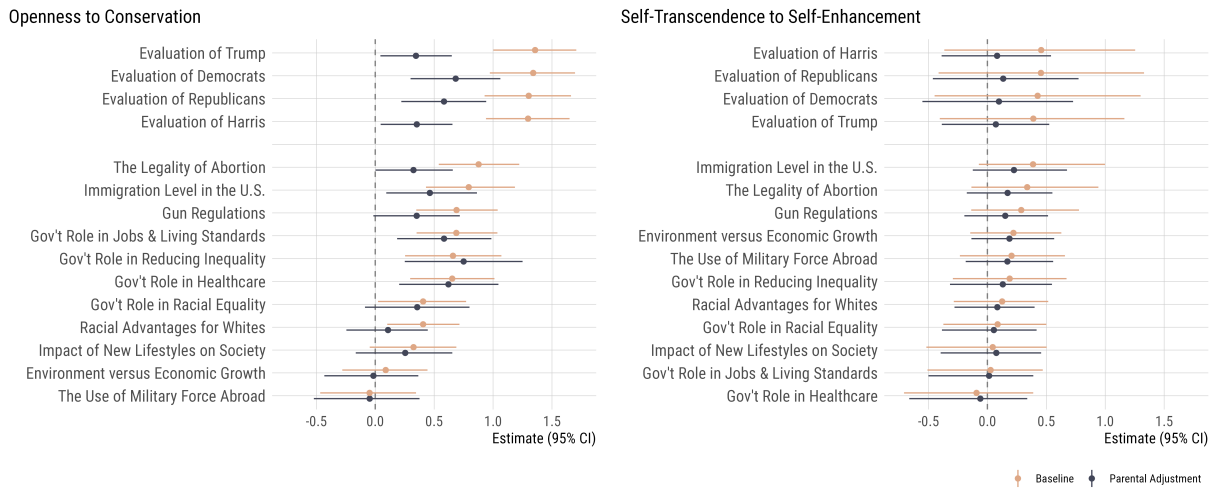

Figure 6: The Coefficient Estimates of Values on Political Outcomes

Notes: The figure demonstrates posterior means and 95% credible intervals for the item-specific effects of conservation (the left panel) and self-enhancement (the right panel) across evaluations and issue positions. We present the effects of a 0.5-increase in value priorities, which corresponds to a quarter of the diameter in the Schwartz circumplex. Outcome measures are standardized within question across respondents, so coefficients can be interpreted as SD changes in each outcome. The baseline model adjusts for age, gender, and race. The parental adjustment specification additionally adjusts for parents' conservation and self-enhancement values, parents' corresponding political positions, and household income, so estimates represent the direct association between children's values and their political orientations. The sample for children with parental surveys (N = 196), a 14% reduction from the baseline sample.

To examine the differences between the baseline and parental adjustment models across items, Figure 6 provides random-effects estimates, separately for conservation and self-enhancement. We observe that conservation continues to result in more conservative positions on several issues—such as abortion, immigration and gun regulations—and stronger support for conservative candidates and parties. Once again, the imprecise effects of self-enhancement, particularly for evaluations, are almost entirely eliminated after we adjust for parental values and outcomes, with nearly all item-specific estimates on issues and evaluations moving toward a value of zero after adjustment.

Discussion

In this article, we find evidence that value priorities among children ages 10 to 12 play a meaningful role in organizing political preferences, even after adjusting for the values and attitudes of their parents. Children who prioritize conservation values—such as conformity with rules, respect for

tradition, and security—over openness values—such as self-direction and stimulation—hold more conservative positions, and express stronger support for the Republican Party and its candidates, with these effects remaining substantial even after adjusting for parental values and attitudes. Our findings suggest that children are not merely passive recipients of political socialization; they use their own value priorities when forming their political preferences.

Our findings speak to broader issues in political development concerning the relative importance of parental transmission and child agency (e.g., Gash and Tichenor 2022; Ojeda and Hatemi 2015). In contrast to the classic socialization literature, which either emphasizes the family as the principal socializing agent (Jennings et al. 2009), or focuses on cultural and political events as imprinting moments for an entire cohort (Sears and Valentino 1997), our findings support a dynamic in which children's *independent* value priorities have a meaningful influence early in their political development. We do not dispute that family and political context matter; in fact, the reduction in effect sizes once we adjust for parental values and attitudes suggests the significant role of parental transmission and shared household environment. At the same time, the persistence of substantial effects, after having these adjustments, highlights the importance of children's own values above and beyond these factors.

Values are, of course, cultural constructs, and children internalize values encountered in their school, church, peer groups, or media, even when they are not explicitly articulated within the household. More broadly, our findings are consistent with multiple frameworks on *where values come from*. It may be that stable individual differences emerge early and shape later political development. It may also be that these basic orientations are always shaped through social influence. We cannot adjudicate these frameworks, but our findings suggest that value priorities are already differentiated in late childhood and consequential for politics.

Our design cannot account for two potential channels of parental transmission. First, we include one parent from the household, which limits what we can infer about family dynamics and the possibility that the non-responding parent is a more salient influence in cultivating political development. Second, it may be that parents encourage values they themselves do not prioritize. In that case, parent–child differences would still be an outcome of parental socialization dynamics. Nevertheless, even under straightforward transmission, we would not expect complete correspondence

between parents and their children because value formation is an ongoing developmental process during childhood.

This article also extends contemporary work on Schwartz value theory and political behavior. We show that the mapping between basic values and political orientations identified in past work (e.g., Schwartz et al. 2010) is already evident among pre-teens and that this pattern is similar to that observed among U.S. adults. Across diverse issues, we show a stronger role of the conservation versus openness dimension compared to the self-enhancement versus self-transcendence dimension. It is plausible that conservation, which captures preferences for order, security, and tradition, is more tightly bound to the left-right political dimension in the United States. It is also possible, however, that the tendency of people to prioritize self-transcendence over self-enhancement values limits the ability of this dimension to explain variation in political preferences. Future work should examine the mechanisms connecting particular values to politics to explain such empirical findings.

There are several other design-related limitations that qualify our findings. First, our sample is not representative of the U.S. population: the parents are more educated, white, and politically liberal than the typical U.S. resident. As a result, our findings should be interpreted as evidence that values matter for children in at least some subsets of the population. At the same time, because education is strongly linked to political participation, this subset of the population may be especially likely to engage with politics as adults, which makes them a theoretically interesting sub-population in their own right.

Second, our analyses rely on a cross-sectional design and the possibility of causal inference is thus limited. This is important, because recent evidence suggests that political attitudes may also cause personality orientations and related constructs (see Arceneaux et al. 2025). It is reasonable to think that this reverse pathway is less likely for kids, given their weaker exposure to and knowledge of U.S. politics (in fact, 53% of children in our sample reported that they have not thought about their partisanship, while 70% did not or could not report whether they were liberals or conservatives). In any case, our design cannot conclusively show the causal effects of values on attitudes.

Finally, our design also does not allow us to establish whether shared environments or direct family transmission is more responsible for the variance in political attitudes attributable to the values and

attitudes of children's parents. That is, we do not know whether kids are obtaining their political attitudes (to some degree) directly from their parents, or whether kids and their parents are subject to the same environmental conditions or forces, which foster similar political preferences.

Despite these limitations, our findings suggest that greater attention is warranted to children's agency in their own political development. Acquisition of political attitudes in childhood might occur not only through various socializing agents, but also through kids' desire to match their own core value commitments to their emerging sense of politics. Given the substantial evidence about how broad orientations and identities have downstream consequences for a wide range of political attitudes (Zaller 1992), it is important to identify what kinds of core orientations are most likely to develop early in life. These proto-orientations may have a disproportionate effect on one's political attitudes as an adult, because they drive the initial sorting process into a party or ideology, which remains relatively stable across life (e.g., Sears and Funk 1999), and shapes exposure to and processing of political information (e.g., Bolsen et al. 2014).

Exploring these questions fully requires longitudinal designs that follow children across childhood and adolescence, and into adulthood, so researchers can qualify, extend or update existing theories of political development. We need more diverse samples, drawn from different regions, racial and ethnic groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to assess the role of individual differences, such as values, and their influence on political outcomes. We believe our study is a step in this direction.

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Supplementary Materials for

Values and Political Preferences in Childhood

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Supplementary Materials A: Data Sources

We draw on three original data sources. The kids' and parents' data were collected by the authors and colleagues as part of a larger project on political socialization that also includes in-depth qualitative interviews, while the U.S. adult sample was collected through Cint (formerly Lucid). This effort provides a novel contribution to the scarce political survey data on children as young as 10 to 12 years old. All our survey instruments, as well as the data collection procedures, received approval from Duke University's Institutional Review Board (protocols #*2024-0534* and #*2026-0075*).

A1. Surveys for Children and Parents

Overview

We collected data on children aged 10 to 12, and their parents, in the state of North Carolina in the United States between October 3, 2024, and August 5, 2025. We surveyed 228 kids and 173 parents, with 13 parents having two children participating in the study. We recruited most kids (74%) using a probability sampling method, through mailers sent to addresses sampled from the Wake County voter file. Given the difficulty and high costs of reaching this specific population, we supplemented the sample with non-probability recruitment techniques, including recruiting participants through Facebook groups or community organizations, yielding an additional 60 participants.

The recruitment procedure began with either a mailed letter or an online advertisement (depending on the recruitment method) inviting adults with kids aged 10 to 12 to participate in the study. If agreed, one parent (self-selected within the household) completed an intake survey. In this initial survey, parents confirmed that they had a child in the target age range, indicated their willingness for both themselves and their child to participate, and entered the names of the participating parent, any other caregiver, and the child. These names were later used in the surveys to allow kids to answer questions about their parents by name. Parents also provided and signed informed consent which included information about the study details, as well as compensation process.

After providing consent, parents were redirected to a virtual calendar to schedule a session for their child to connect with one of the authors or research assistants via the video conferencing platform

Zoom. During the scheduled session, an author or research assistant met synchronously with the child, provided instructions for completing the survey in the online survey platform Qualtrics, and remained available on Zoom to assist as needed. After the child completed the survey, a link to the complete parent survey was sent to the parent who had completed the intake survey.

Instrument Design

All three surveys covered a wide range of topics and, in general, used the exact same questions. For measuring values, as described in the main article, we used a technique that estimates respondents' positions in the Schwartz circumplex using pair-choice tasks based on short descriptions associated with each of the 19 Schwartz values. These short descriptions were crafted to accurately represent each value while also remaining intelligible to kids aged 10 to 12, avoiding too complex or abstract words. The exact same value-measurement technique was used for all three samples.

Regarding policy issues and other political evaluations, the goal was not to adapt the language of political questions typically used in adult surveys so that 10-12-year-olds could understand them. Rather, we intentionally kept the questions as they are usually asked in adult surveys, since we are interested in whether children understand them at their particular age. Of course, we avoided including questions that would be unreasonable for young kids in terms of attention span and overall political knowledge. Using this approach, we constructed items comparable to those in the ANES and GSS. For instance, as described in more detail in Section C1, to ask about the government's role in creating jobs and improving living standards, we adapted the following GSS item:

> *We would like to talk with you about issues some people tell us are important. Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at Point 1 on the scale below. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at Point 5*, with responses *1 = I strongly agree the government should improve living standards, 2, 3, 4, 5 = I strongly agree that people should take care of themselves, Don't know*.

to the following question:

People at point 1 feel the government in Washington should do everything possible that every person has a job and a good standard of living. People at point 7 think that this is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of themselves. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?, with responses *1 = Government should see to jobs and standard of living, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Each person should take care of themselves, Haven't thought much about this*.

Cognitive Interviews

Before recruiting participants, we conducted cognitive interviews to ensure that kids could understand the survey questions and survey structure, as well as to assess whether they could maintain the necessary attention throughout the 30–45 minute questionnaire. We conducted 20 cognitive interviews, recruiting kids in the target age range (10 to 12) through snowball sampling and through Duke's Interdisciplinary Behavioral Research Center (IBRC) community participant center.

The results of the cognitive interviews suggested that our survey instrument did not have any major shortcomings. Children were able to understand most questions and indicate when they did not know an answer or did not fully understand the question. The cognitive interviews also allowed us to confirm that children's attention spans were sufficient to complete the survey. Based on these interviews, we made minor changes to question wording and the selection of policy issues.

Sampling

Mailing Sampling

We first describe the sampling of the mailers. To construct a sampling frame, we purchased Wake County (NC) voter records from commercial company L2. This list includes household addresses and personal information at the individual level, ranging from parental status to information about voter status and party registration. Our target population was households with a 10-12-year-old child. Yet the information in the file was not detailed enough to identify this exact group, so we filtered for households with children estimated to be between 6 and 14 years old, as well as households where adults' inferred ages ranged from 25 to 50. This improved the efficiency of the sample,

given that only kids aged 10 to 12 were eligible to participate in the study. Households with more than one eligible child were allowed to participate with all children in the target age range.

We conducted three waves of mailers, each using a separate list of addresses randomly sampled from our sampling frame. For the first wave, we used random sampling proportional to size from the L2 file and obtained 52 kids responses. Because the participants from this wave skewed toward Democrats, the second wave targeted households with registered Republicans. In the third wave, we oversampled Republicans (50%) while also including Democrats and households without party information. With these second and third mailers, we recruited an additional 116 children.

Additional Sampling

In order to supplement the probability-based sample, we recruited children using non-probability methods. Specifically, we invited parents with kids in the target age range to participate in the study via advertisements posted in parent/mom Facebook groups, as well as through community groups and emails sent by Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) throughout the broader Research Triangle area. Of the 60 children recruited through these methods, most (92%) came from Facebook group advertisements, with the remaining 8% recruited via the PTA emails or community groups.

Recruitment

Mailing Recruitment

As mentioned above, we conducted three waves of recruitment through mailers. In the first wave, we sent 5,000 mailers to addresses in the Wake County, 2,500 in the second wave, and an additional 5,000 in the third wave. Each household received a letter inviting them to participate in the study under the message *be a voice for the community*, along with details about how and why to participate. The letter included the signature of one of the co-authors, a QR code, and a personal access code to complete the intake survey. All letters contained a one-dollar bill visible through the envelope, which were free for participants to keep. The letter we used is as follows:

Dear Wake County household,

Be A Voice for Your Community!

Do you have a child who is 10 to 12 years old? If so, we invite you and your child to participate in a research study about what it's like to grow up in America. Your household is among a select few chosen to represent the opinions and experiences of people in your area. If you have more than one child in this age range, we invite them to participate too.

What is the research for? *We want to understand both your and your child's opinions about American society today. The research is being conducted by Duke University.*

Why participate? *Your insights are important. We want to make sure all perspectives are represented in our survey. Participating is easy and takes about* ***45 minutes****. Participating will make the study more accurate, so we all know more about the views of your community. You and your child will* ***each*** *receive a* ***$10 Amazon gift card*** *for completing the survey. When the study is complete, we can share the results with you.*

How to participate? Your child's survey will be conducted using Zoom, a video conferencing service. As the parent, you don't need a Zoom appointment. You may fill out your survey on your own, at your convenience. To schedule your child's survey appointment and access the link to your survey, please visit the website or scan the QR code printed below, and then enter your personal access code.

Who can I contact with questions? *If you have difficulty scheduling the appointment or have other questions, please email us at youngvoices@duke.edu. We are happy to help.*

Thank you for considering being part of this research study. In appreciation of your time, we included $1 with this invitation. This dollar is yours to keep. You and your child will each be emailed $10 Amazon gift cards after you complete the survey. You can schedule the survey now —claim your spot today!

For the first mailing recruitment and the Facebook recruiting, each kid and parent received a $10 Amazon Gift Card as a reward for their participation. In order to increase the response rate, with IRB approval, for the second and third waves of mailers we offered $20 Amazon Gift Cards.

Additional Recruting

We posted advertisements in parent Facebook groups for non-probability recruitment.

We first contacted group administrators to request permission to share a post, and after receiving approval, we created a post with the following text:

> *Young Voices: Growing Up in America project at Duke University is looking for participants!*
>
> *If you are interested in joining in our study and be a voice for your community, claim your spot and visit* [*LINK*]. *If you have difficulty scheduling the appointment or have other questions, please email us at youngvoices@duke.edu. We are happy to help.*

And we attached the e-flyer with more details, represented in Figure 1.

Child Survey Protocol

All kids' surveys were self-administered but completed while the child was in a live Zoom session with a member of the research team. We recruited undergraduate students from Duke University through the Bass Connections program (*Young Voices: How Kids Develop Political Identities*) to help on-board and monitor children as they completed their surveys, as detailed below.

After recruiting participants through the parent intake survey, we scheduled appointments with the kids. When a child entered the Zoom session, a team member welcomed them and gave a short tutorial on how to answer a survey in Qualtrics. Team members shared their screens to demonstrate how to respond to different types of questions. Kids also had the option to click a button on each page to hear the question and response options read aloud instead of reading them.

We reminded children to pay careful attention to the answer choices and reassured that it was completely fine to be "unsure" about a question. They were told that many questions included a "don't know" option, but that they should not ask for help from others. Team members monitored the sessions and paused any survey in which there were strong indications that parents were interacting with or assisting the child. In cases where one or more parents joined in the Zoom session at the start, we instructed parents to allow their child to answer these questions alone.

Figure 1: E-Flyer Used for Recruitment in Facebook Groups

After receiving instructions, kids provided verbal assent indicating that they understood the study and agreed to participate independently by responding to the following text:

> *Thank you very much for joining our project. We are very happy to have you here. We will now start our survey. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Just give us your most honest opinions. Even though your parent said it was OK, you get to decide whether or not you*

want to do this. If you try it and decide that you want to stop, that's OK. Just tell us that you would like to quit. Is it alright if we start the survey now?

Sessions included between 1 and 6 kids, though most sessions (75%) had only one child. In sessions with multiple children, general instructions were given to the group, after which final instructions, verbal assent, and survey completion occurred in breakout rooms to prevent kids from interacting with each other. In these cases, we instructed children on how to ask for help, and team members checked in regularly to ensure everything was working properly. The survey automatically loaded information about the parent who completed the intake survey, allowing certain questions to be tailored to each child. Surveys typically lasted between 30 and 45 minutes.

Parents Survey Administration

After the kid completed the survey, parents were sent a link to complete their own questionnaire. This was a self-administered online survey with no monitoring. We sent several reminders, resulting in a final response rate of 86%.

Descriptive Statistics

We first describe basic demographic and political characteristics among the sampled children. Table 1 shows the distribution of several characteristics among the sample. As can be seen, there are several kids aged 9 or 13; though we allowed these children to participate as their birthdays were close to our official birth cut-offs.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Child Sample

		Percentage
Gender	Female	40
	Male	56
	Something Else	4
Age	9	2
	10	37

		Percentage
	11	29
	12	30
	13	1
Race	White	74
	Black	8
	Hispanic	1
Party Identification	Democrat (including leaners)	26
	Independent	6
	Republican (including leaners)	15
	DK/DA	53

The parental sample is skewed toward higher-income, highly educated, female, and white respondents. Table 2 describes the demographic and political characteristics of the parent sample.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for the Parent Sample

		Percentage
Gender	Female	78
	Male	22
Age	18-29	1
	30-49	88
	50-64	11
	65+	
Education	No College	1
	Some College	5
	Bachelor's	51
	Post-Grad	44
Income	$49,999 or less	4
	$50,000 to $99,999	16
	$100,000 to $149,999	26
	$150,000 or more	54

		Percentage
Race	White	83
	Black	8
	Hispanic	3
Party Identification	Democrat (including leaners)	59
	Independent	7
	Republican (including leaners)	34

We compared our parent sample to estimates we obtained from the American Community Survey's 2023 data. In doing so, we filtered for households in Wake County (with PUMA codes 01203, 01204, 01205, 01206, 01207, and 01208) with kids aged 10 to 12. We then constructed some basic weighted estimates on income, race, college education and age for comparison, presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Comparisons of Parent Sample with American Community Survey

Characteristic	Parent Sample	ACS Estimates for 2023
Median HH Income	175,000	144,857
Percent with College Degree	95	64
Mean Age	44	44
Percent White	83	55

A2. General Population Survey

To obtain general population data, we conducted a non-probability convenience survey recruited through "Cint" (formerly Lucid). Cint is a platform that connects researchers with online research participants drawn from a network of panel providers. Prior research shows that samples collected through Cint closely approximate the demographic and political composition of the U.S. population. They also successfully replicate experimental findings and include respondents who are less "professionalized" and less politically sophisticated than those found in other nonprobability samples (Coppock and McClellan 2019; Stagnaro et al. 2024; Hohenberg et al. 2024).

The survey was fielded from September 30 to October 2, 2025. A total of 978 U.S. adults consented,

correctly identified two images containing a stop sign (from a set of six), successfully passed two attention checks, and completed the survey. The attention checks we used were:

1. Which color is produced by combining blue and yellow? This is an attention check question and the correct answer is green. [Orange, **Green**, Blue, Yellow, Purple].
2. People are very busy these days and many do not have time to follow what goes on in the government. This is an attention check. To show that you have read this much, answer both "extremely interested" and "very interested." [**Extremely interested**, **Very interested**, Moderately interested, Slightly interested, Not interested at all].

After data collection, we screened responses for signs of inattention or fraud. Respondents were flagged as problematic or fraudulent if they met any of the following criteria:

1. completed the survey in less than half the median completion time;
2. gave a non-sequitur or item non-response to the open-ended question "What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?";
3. correctly answered an open-ended question about an obscure Supreme Court case (Graham 2024): "In what year did the U.S. Supreme Court decide United States v. Segui? Please type a number";
4. received a low reCAPTCHA score according to Qualtrics' automated bot-detection threshold.

We removed 40 respondents (4%) who failed two or more of these checks, resulting in a sample size of 938. While recruiting participants, we employed quota sampling on age, gender, race, and region using U.S. Census benchmarks. Table 4 provides the descriptive statistics for the final sample and adult population estimates (when available) from the American Community Survey's 2023 data.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for the U.S. Adult Sample

		U.S. Adult Sample	U.S. Adult Benchmarks
Gender	Female	51	51
	Male	49	49
Age	18-29	19	21

		U.S. Adult Sample	U.S. Adult Benchmarks
	30-49	34	33
	50-64	25	28
	65+	23	18
Education	No College	50	35
	Some College	13	34
	Bachelor's	23	19
	Post-Grad	14	11
Income	$49,999 or less	46	32
	$50,000 to $99,999	30	28
	$100,000 to $149,999	13	17
	$150,000 or more	11	22
Race	White	61	63
	Black	11	12
	Hispanic	17	19
Party Identification	Democrat (including leaners)	42	
	Independent	14	
	Republican (including leaners)	43	

Supplementary Materials B: Descriptive Statistics for Schwartz Value Estimates

B1. Wording of Survey Items

Table 5 shows the items corresponding to each of the 19 Schwartz values:

Table 5: Wording of Schwartz Value Items

Value	Items
Self-direction thought	Thinking up new ideas, being creative
	Doing things in my own, original way
	Learning new things for myself
Self-direction action	Making my own decisions about what I do
	Being independent, free
Power-resources	Having money and nice things
	Being strong, powerful
Power-dominance	Being in charge, a leader
	Influencing other people
Stimulation	Trying new and different things
	Having an exciting life
	Having adventures, taking risks
Hedonism	Feeling pleasure, spoiling myself
	Having fun, good times
Achievement	Showing my skills and abilities
	Impressing others, being admired
	Getting ahead in life, being successful
Face	Being respected by others
	Having a good reputation
Security-personal	Living in a safe and secure place
	Avoiding sickness, being healthy
	Keeping things clean and organized

Value	Items
Security-societal	Protecting my country, national defense
	Living in a stable, orderly society
Tradition	Doing what my faith or religion requires
	Keeping up traditions and customs
Conformity-rules	Being obedient, following the rules
	Showing respect for parents and elders
Conformity-interpersonal	Being polite, good manners
	Making people feel comfortable, at ease
Humility	Being humble, modest
	Being satisfied, grateful for what I have
Benevolence-dependability	Being loyal to friends and family
	Being trustworthy, dependable
Benevolence-caring	Caring for others close to me
	Being forgiving, not holding grudges
Universalism-concern	Treating everyone equally
	Protecting the weak in society
Universalism-nature	Caring for nature and the environment
	Fitting in with the natural world
Universalism-tolerance	Trying to understand people who are different from me
	Promoting peace, harmony

The instructions and question wording for the choice tasks are as follows:

> *In this section of the survey, we are interested in the kinds of things that are important to you. On each question, you will see a pair of things that might be important to you. Please choose the one that is most important to you personally. While you may think all of these things are important, we are interested in which ones are most important to you. If you are unsure, that is OK. Just give your best response, if you had to choose.*
>
> *Choose the one that is most important to you.*
>
> [*Value A*] [*Value B*]

B2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 6 provides parameter estimates for the value measurement model.

Table 6: Parameter Estimates and 95% Credible Intervals by Sample

Parameter	Kids	Parents	U.S. Adults
Conservation	-0.02	0.17	0.18
	[-0.08, 0.03]	[0.09, 0.24]	[0.15, 0.21]
Self-Enhancement	-0.29	-0.38	-0.33
	[-0.34, -0.24]	[-0.45, -0.31]	[-0.36, -0.30]
SD for Conservation	0.26	0.37	0.33
	[0.19, 0.34]	[0.28, 0.46]	[0.29, 0.37]
SD for Self-Enhancement	0.18	0.27	0.32
	[0.07, 0.27]	[0.18, 0.36]	[0.28, 0.35]
Correlation	0	0.08	-0.37
	[-0.55, 0.51]	[-0.31, 0.46]	[-0.51, -0.22]

Supplementary Materials C: Descriptive Statistics for Political Preferences

C1. Wording of Survey Items

The exact question wording of outcome variables in all three studies is:

- **Introduction:** Great! For the next set of questions, we will ask you about your opinions on different issues using a 7-point scale. Some people feel strongly about one side of the issue, and place themselves at point 1. Others feel strongly about the other side of the issue, and place themselves at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. For example, some people think that kids should go to school all year round, others think that kids should get the entire summer off from school, and others fall somewhere in between, as in the scale below. Each of the following questions will be like this. If you haven't thought much about one of the issues, it is fine! Please tell us by clicking the choice *Haven't thought much about this.

  [*1 = Kids should go to school all year round, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Kids should get the entire summer off from school, Havent thought much about this*]

- **Government Role in Healthcare:** People at point 1 think that it is the responsibility of the government in Washington to help people in paying for doctors and hospital bills.People at point 7 think that these matters are not the responsibility of the federal government and that people should take care of these things themselves. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

  [*1 = Government should help people in paying for doctors and hospital bills, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = People should take care of these things themselves, Havent thought much about this*]

- **The Legality of Abortion:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if she wants it, for any reason.

  [*1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree*]

- **Immigration Level in the U.S.:** Should the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live be:

  [*1 = Increased a lot, 2 = Increased a little, 3 = Left the same as it is now, 4 = Decreased a little, 5 = Decreased a lot*]

- **Government Role in Jobs & Living Standards:** People at point 1 feel the government in Washington should do everything possible that every person has a job and a good standard of living. People at point 7 think that this is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of themselves. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

  [*1 = Government should see to jobs and standard of living, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Each person should take care of themselves, Havent thought much about this*]

- **Gun Regulations:** People at point 1 think the federal government should make it much more difficult for people to buy a gun than it is now. People at point 7 think the federal government should make it much easier for people to buy a gun than it is now. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

  [*1 = Make it much more difficult to buy guns, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Make it much easier to buy guns, Havent thought much about this*]

- **Government Role in Reducing Inequality:** Now let's turn to some other kinds of questions. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the government trying to reduce the difference in incomes between the richest and poorest households?

  [*Favor, Oppose, Neither favor nor oppose*]

  Do you [Favor/Oppose] that a great deal, a moderate amount, or a little?

  [*A great deal, A moderate amount, A little*]

- **Impact of New Lifestyles on Society:** And to what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? The newer lifestyles are contributing to the breakdown of our society.

[*1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Neither agree nor disagree, 5 = Slightly agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly agree, Don't know*]

- **Racial Advantages for Whites:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? White people in the United States have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

  [*1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Neither agree nor disagree, 5 = Slightly agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly agree, Don't know*]

- **Government Role in Racial Equality:** People at point 1 feel that the government in Washington should not make any special effort to help black people because they should help themselves. People at point 7 feel that the government should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of black people. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

  [*1 = Black people should help themselves, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Government should help black people, Havent thought much about this*]

- **Environment versus Economic Growth:** People at point 1 think that economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent. People at point 7 think that protecting the environment should be the top priority, even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs. And others fall somewhere in-between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

  [*1 = Economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 = Environment should be the top priority, Havent thought much about this*]

- **The Use of Military Force Abroad:** How willing should the United States be to use military force to solve international problems?

  [*1 = Extremely willing, Very willing, Moderately willing, A little willing, Not at all willing*]

- **Trump/Harris Evaluations:** Now let's turn to a different topic. How much do you dislike or like each of these people?

  [*Donald Trump/Kamala Harris*]

[*1 = Strongly dislike, 2 = Dislike, 3 = Slightly dislike, 4 = Neither dislike nor like, 5 = Slightly like, 6 = like, 7 = Strongly like, Don't know*]

- **Republicans/Democrats Evaluations:** And how much do you dislike or like each of these groups?

  [*The Democratic Party/The Republican Party*]

  [*1 = Strongly dislike, 2 = Dislike, 3 = Slightly dislike, 4 = Neither dislike nor like, 5 = Slightly like, 6 = like, 7 = Strongly like, Don't know*]

C2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics of the outcome variables used in the main analyses.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Outcomes by Sample

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
Feelings towards The Democratic Party	Don't know	21.1	1.7	2.5
	Item non-response	3.5	2.3	0.4
	1 - Strongly dislike	7.5	8.7	18.0
	2 - Dislike	3.5	14.5	11.3
	3 - Slightly dislike	3.5	11.6	7.2
	4 - Neither dislike nor like	25.0	13.9	19.6
	5 - Slightly like	5.7	14.5	10.6
	6 - Like	16.2	23.7	15.1
	7 - Strongly like	14.0	9.2	15.2
Environment versus Economic Growth	Don't know	14.9		3.5
	Item non-response	0.4		
	1 - Economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority	4.4	10.4	31.0
	2	2.6	4.6	9.7

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
	3	8.3	16.2	12.4
	4	22.8	25.4	16.5
	5	22.8	21.4	12.0
	6	6.6	15.0	5.4
	7 - Environment should be the top priority	17.1	6.9	9.4
Gov't Role in Healthcare	Don't know	23.2		4.4
	1 - Government should help people in paying for doctors and hospital bills	23.7	32.9	32.3
	2	12.3	12.1	10.6
	3	20.2	17.3	12.7
	4	11.8	16.2	16.1
	5	5.7	11.6	10.1
	6	1.8	4.6	6.1
	7 - People should take care of these things themselves	1.3	5.2	7.8
Gov't Role in Jobs & Living Standards	Don't know	17.5		4.1
	Item non-response	0.9		
	1 - Government should see to jobs and standard of living	20.6	18.5	24.3
	2	11.0	11.0	9.1
	3	14.5	15.6	12.0
	4	20.6	19.1	17.2
	5	9.2	16.8	13.5
	6	3.9	9.8	8.5
	7 - Each person should take care of themselves	1.8	9.2	11.3
Gov't Role in Racial Equality	Don't know	25.0	2.9	9.9
	Item non-response	0.9		

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
	1 - Black people should help themselves	2.6	9.2	17.0
	2	0.4	11.0	7.5
	3	1.3	11.0	7.5
	4	11.4	23.7	19.3
	5	12.7	16.2	12.8
	6	9.2	12.1	7.7
	7 - Government should help black people	36.4	13.9	18.4
Gov't Role in Reducing Inequality	Don't know	46.5		
	Item non-response	1.3	0.6	1.1
	1 - Favor a great deal	10.5	27.2	25.5
	2 - Favor a moderate amount	12.3	19.7	20.9
	3 - Favor a little	2.2	3.5	2.1
	4 - Neither favor nor oppose	17.1	26.0	29.7
	5 - Oppose a little	2.6	2.3	1.6
	6 - Oppose a moderate amount	5.7	9.8	9.2
	7 - Oppose a great deal	1.8	11.0	9.9
Gun Regulations	Don't know	13.6		4.9
	Item non-response	0.4		
	1 - Make it much more difficult to buy guns	41.7	59.0	39.2
	2	11.4	11.0	9.0
	3	17.1	11.0	9.9
	4	8.8	12.1	17.1
	5	0.9	5.2	8.5
	6	0.4	1.7	5.8
	7 - Make it much easier to buy guns	5.7		5.7
Feelings towards Kamala Harris	Don't know	6.6	1.7	1.7
	Item non-response	1.8	0.6	0.5

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
	1 - Strongly dislike	11.0	11.6	22.9
	2 - Dislike	6.6	12.7	8.7
	3 - Slightly dislike	3.5	9.8	6.1
	4 - Neither dislike nor like	14.0	12.1	16.8
	5 - Slightly like	10.5	11.0	12.4
	6 - Like	21.1	25.4	15.2
	7 - Strongly like	25.0	15.0	15.6
Immigration Level in the U.S.	Don't know	37.7		
	Item non-response	0.4	1.2	
	1 - Increased a lot	12.3	5.2	10.8
	2 - Increased a little	19.3	20.2	17.5
	3 - Left the same as it is now	18.0	46.2	38.2
	4 - Decreased a little	7.5	16.8	15.8
	5 - Decreased a lot	4.8	10.4	17.8
Impact of New Lifestyles on Society	Don't know	42.5	6.4	4.6
	Item non-response	0.9	0.6	0.5
	1 - Strongly disagree	2.2	22.5	6.8
	2 - Disagree	6.6	13.3	5.1
	3 - Slightly disagree	6.1	4.0	4.3
	4 - Neither agree nor disagree	14.5	16.8	22.7
	5 - Slightly agree	15.4	13.9	17.7
	6 - Agree	9.2	14.5	22.1
	7 - Strongly agree	2.6	8.1	16.2
Racial Advantages for Whites	Don't know	9.2	0.6	1.6
	Item non-response	0.4	0.6	
	1 - Strongly disagree	2.2	31.8	21.4
	2 - Disagree	5.7	26.6	20.3
	3 - Slightly disagree	23.7	18.5	15.4
	4 - Neither agree nor disagree	9.2	6.9	15.9

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
	5 - Slightly agree	2.6	2.9	4.8
	6 - Agree	9.6	6.9	7.9
	7 - Strongly agree	37.3	5.2	12.8
Feelings towards The Republican Party	Don't know	20.6	1.7	2.6
	Item non-response	3.5	0.6	0.7
	1 - Strongly dislike	14.0	30.6	23.8
	2 - Dislike	11.4	23.7	8.8
	3 - Slightly dislike	10.1	13.9	7.5
	4 - Neither dislike nor like	25.9	10.4	16.2
	5 - Slightly like	2.6	7.5	9.6
	6 - Like	5.7	8.7	15.7
	7 - Strongly like	6.1	2.9	15.1
The Legality of Abortion	Don't know	31.1		
	Item non-response	0.9		0.2
	1 - Strongly disagree	20.6	47.4	25.5
	2 - Disagree	14.0	17.3	25.2
	3 - Neither agree nor disagree	13.2	6.4	20.1
	4 - Agree	8.8	11.0	13.6
	5 - Strongly agree	11.4	17.9	15.4
The Use of Military Force Abroad	Don't know	27.6		
	Item non-response	1.3	1.7	0.9
	1 - Extremely willing	4.8	1.2	10.6
	2 - Very willing	7.9	5.8	15.6
	3 - Moderately willing	32.9	39.3	36.6
	4 - A little willing	21.1	43.9	25.7
	5 - Not at all willing	4.4	8.1	10.8
Feelings towards Donald Trump	Don't know	5.7	1.7	1.1

Question	Response Option	Children	Parents	US Adults
	Item non-response	2.2	0.6	0.2
	1 - Strongly dislike	42.5	62.4	35.6
	2 - Dislike	13.2	9.8	6.3
	3 - Slightly dislike	5.7	3.5	4.9
	4 - Neither dislike nor like	11.4	6.4	8.4
	5 - Slightly like	3.5	5.8	7.8
	6 - Like	7.9	5.2	15.0
	7 - Strongly like	7.9	4.6	20.7

Supplementary Materials D: Sensitivity Analysis Using a Multilevel Specification

In this section, we present results from a simpler multilevel specification as a robustness check for our main estimation strategy. We estimate a conventional linear mixed-effects model on the subset of non-missing outcomes, treating children's mean value scores as observed covariates. In doing so, we included covariate adjustments (age, gender, race, and political engagement), with individual and item random effects, and item-level random slopes for values. We used a parametric bootstrap with 1,000 draws and summarized the resulting bootstrap distribution. Coefficients are reported on the same substantive scale as the main results (corresponding to a 0.5-unit shift in value space). Figure D1 presents the results from this specification, showing substantively similar patterns.

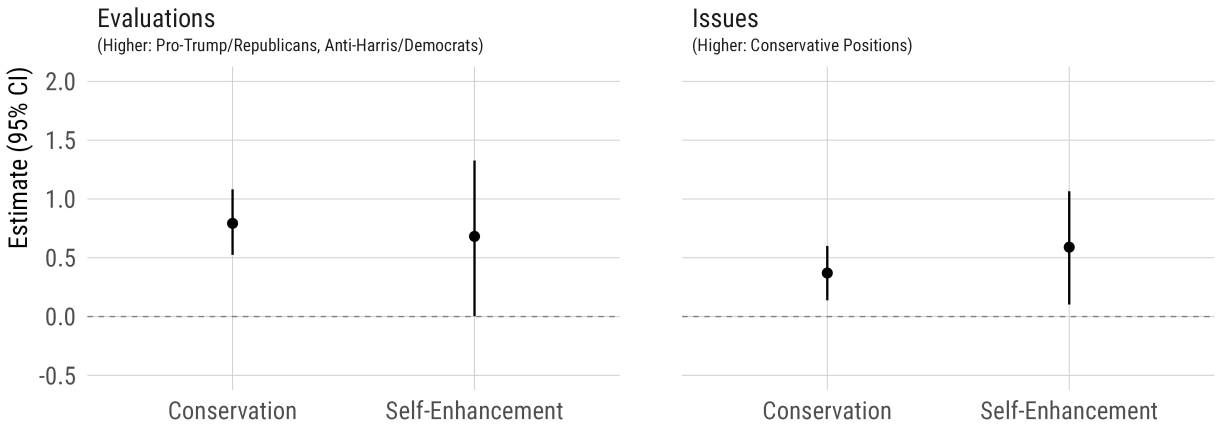

Figure D1: The Coefficient Estimates of Values on Political Orientations

Notes: The figure demonstrates the average effects of conservation and self-enhancement on standardized political evaluations (the left panel) and issue positions (the right panel). We present the effects of a 0.5-increase in value priorities, which corresponds to a quarter of the diameter in the Schwartz circumplex. Outcome measures are standardized within question across respondents, so coefficients can be interpreted as SD changes in each outcome. Models adjust for age, gender, race, and political engagement. The complete sample for children (N = 228).

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