

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING RESEARCH WITH HUMAN AND ANIMAL SUBJECTS**

Psychologists who do research with either human or animal subjects must comply with a variety of regulations and ethical guidelines. Some of the highlights of these Federal regulations and ethical guidelines published by the American Psychological Association (APA) are summarized below. Realize that these are continually changing. Much of the research that you will read about in your book was conducted under older, less stringent guidelines, and would not be approved today.

### **Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects:**

1. Psychologists must consider both the risks and benefits of research involving human subjects before undertaking such research. In order to justify the research, the benefits to human welfare and psychological science must outweigh the risks to the subjects involved. The psychologist must consider alternative ways to conduct the research which might minimize risks to the subjects.
2. Psychologists must show respect and concern for the welfare and dignity of human subjects participating in research.
3. Psychologists must be aware of and adhere to federal and state regulations and professional standards which apply to research with human participants.
4. If research assistants are used to help with the research, the psychologist in charge still has responsibility for ensuring that they comply with ethical guidelines and state and federal regulations.
5. Psychologists inform subjects of the purpose of the experiment and the risks involved in their participation prior to beginning the research. That is, psychologists obtain informed consent from human subjects.
6. If it is necessary to deceive subjects as to the purpose of an experiment, psychologists must ensure that the benefits of the deception outweigh the risks, that they have carefully considered alternative strategies, and that subjects will be informed of the true purpose of the experiment as soon as possible after completion of the study.
7. Psychologists respect the rights of human subjects to withdraw from participating in an experiment at any time.
8. Psychologists protect humans participating in research from mental and physical harm which may arise from their participation in the experiment.

9. When research inadvertently results in some form of harm to human subjects, the psychologist has a responsibility to try to repair the damage.

10. Information about human participants which is obtained in the course of psychological research is considered confidential unless otherwise agreed in advance.

11. When the research is completed, the psychologist provides participants with information about the purpose of the study and the findings obtained.

**Ethical Guidelines for Research with Animal Subjects:**

1. Psychologists conduct research with animals with concern for their welfare. Psychologists make every effort to treat research animals humanely.

2. Psychologists comply with federal, state, and local regulations concerning acquisition, care, and disposal of animals used in research.

3. A psychologist trained in research methods and experienced in care of laboratory animals must supervise all research involving animals.

4. Psychologists ensure that all people participating in animal research are adequately trained in the care, handling, and maintenance of the type of animal being used.

5. Psychologists make every effort to minimize pain and discomfort of animals used in research. Surgery must be done under appropriate anesthesia. Sterile techniques must be used to minimize danger of infection.

6. When it is necessary to kill an animal, it is done rapidly and painlessly, according to approved methods.