BROKEN AND DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY AND THE EFFECTS IT IMPOSE ON THE CHILDREN

by:
Clarissa E. Advincula
Teacher III, Limay National High School

Family is the basic unit of the society. It is where all the initial development of someone’s character happens. Family is the core of human socio-emotional wellbeing, most especially for growing and developing children. This is why having a disturbed household or a misfunctioning one can have such a huge impact to the lives of the children. Being the second parents, and the school being the second home of the students, it is vital for the teachers to be able to identify and communicate with the children that undergoes the predicament of a dysfunctional family.

In some cases, the troubles at home translates to behavioral changes outside of it and given that the students spend eight hours at a minimum in the school campus and within the classrooms, those changes are more apparent to the people they interact within the school; teachers and classmates.

There are some stereo typical signs or symptoms that arise in a child having a troubled household. In earlier instances, if the discord is new, the child will somehow act differently and drastically. They can show a shift in disposition or even display signs of aggression and spite towards their classmates or even teachers. They start to have a hard time focusing and understanding the lessons which leads to a drop in academic performances. There are also some who distance themselves from their peers and choose to isolate themselves. These cases are easier to spot since there are references towards a change in character and behavior. The signs are also more distinctive and a bit showier. But not all cases of children having problems at home show the same manifestation.
Although children are less mature as compared to adults, they still have their own way of handling things and can take on domestic problems in various approaches.

There are less flashy cases where the victims are more subdued and does not show any outward signs that there is something wrong. These are the cases that are hard to identify thus also harder to intervene with. Mostly these are the older case where the domestic dysfunction is passed the violent and disturbed phase and/or already on the apart and separated stage. These are the what can already be classified as broken family, parents are separated and does not live within the same home. As a contrary to what other people or parents may believe, children or preteens are not as dense or as oblivious to the world as they would seem to be, in fact, they are more perceptive of their surroundings. They know whether their parents are hiding things from them or if they are trying to get them of the loop. Children now-a-days are smart individuals, they can comprehend that what happens within their homes are not normal and that there are possibilities of a split. The worst part is that although they know what can occur if the violence or the problem continues, they don’t have the power to do anything about it. So, either they act out or they choose to silently accept the fact. Usually by the time the parents decided to split, the child is already traumatized and sadly used to it. There are some that can actually feel relief that the violence is over and that they can move ahead of their lives. But there are some who takes it badly and who are in denial of their situations and refuse to acknowledge the severity of their predicament. Children who refuse to accept the status of their home can appear to be over zealous and can even act goofy within the school to compensate to their lonely household. But not all cases are the same, and one sign can not be applicable for all.

A broken family or a dysfunctional home can scar a child for life. Traumas that they acquire during the troubled times can be reflected to the character they develop as adults. Children from broken families can grow up to be violent individual and a misguided person. The psychological traumas children underwent can even contribute
to mental health issues in the long run. There are studies conducted that show that children that grow with a troubled home can develop many psycho-emotional disorders as they do transition to adulthood. The most common of which are OCD and ADD. OCD or the Obsessive-Compulsive disorder is a chronic mental disorder wherein an individual has a very strong urge to control the things and situations around them. Some can just regard it as being organized and systematized, but OCD patients are not just overly well-organized, they are obsessively regimented that they have an almost physically uncontrollable reaction when things do not go as planned or whenever objects are misplaced and rearranged. This disorder can be due to the severe want to be able to control what was happening with their home as a child and not being able to do anything, so as adults, they acquire an obsessive desire to stay in control.

Attention Deficit Disorder on the other hand is the lack of perseverance on staying focused and having trouble keeping a one train of thought or subject. People who suffer from ADD are easily distracted and befuddled. They lose interest on things and happenings easily. This can be the result of trying to ignore the domestic problem at home and willing to just forget the disturbance so badly that they built innate habit of not getting attached and attracted to a single idea, object, or even people.

Those are only two of the psychological disorders that can be the effect of having a broken family. But aside from those there so many others that are too deep and too troublesome to discuss. The bottom line is that having a broken family or a dysfunctional home can affect the child not only in the present but as well as in the future. This the reason why mediation and action should be taken immediately. It is true that realistically, even with the intervention of the teachers or other parties, personal problems of the family members are still, well, personal. It is still within the family that the final solution can be attained. In some cases, the separation of the parents is the best way to prevent more damage to the children. Although living with a broken family is hard towards to younger members of the family, and the longing for a normal home can be forever there,
ending the violence or the marital trouble through separation when things are already far beyond saving is better that continuously exposing the children to violence may it be verbal or physical.

But it is not all black and grey. There are still children from broken families who grow to be well-functioning people with successful careers and great family lives. With correct and proper guidance, there is still hope for these children. It is in the matter of teaching them that they are not alone on their battles and that whatever they are going through is not permanent. Things will get better if they have the courage to move forward.

References:

The Effect of a Broken Family on Development By Anna Green September 26, 2017
https://www.nimh.nih.gov/obsessive-compulsive-disorder
https://www.nimh.nih.gov/Attention-deficit-Disorder