THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF BULLYING

by:

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Bullying is a rapidly growing concern for parents, teachers and other authorities especially now where bullies are just a click away from reaching their victims with the use of internet – popularly known as cyber bullying.

However, we should keep in mind that bullying chooses no one. Our children, once they go to school, carry the tendencies to be picked on by perpetrators, the bullies.

According to Section 2 of RA 10627, also known as the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013, “Bullying shall refer to any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of the other student at school;”

On the other hand, DepEd Order No.40, s.2012, also known as the DepEd Child Protection Policy, has the following definitions for bullying and cyber-bullying respectively:

"Bullying or Peer Abuse" - refers to willful aggressive behavior that is directed, towards a particular victim who may be out-numbered, younger, weak, with disability, less confident, or otherwise vulnerable. More particularly:

1. Bullying - is committed when a student commits an act or a series of acts directed towards another student, or a series of single acts directed towards several
students in a school setting or a place of learning, which results in physical and mental abuse, harassment, intimidation, or humiliation.

2. Cyber-bullying - is any conduct defined in the preceding paragraph, as resulting in harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through electronic means or other technology, such as, but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social networking websites or other platforms or formats.

As educators, it is also crucial on our part to better understand the effects of bullying. And when I say effects, I’m pertaining to both the bully and the victim. To make it more comprehensive, I have listed down the short and long-term effects of bullying.

**Short term effects of bullying – Kids who are bullied**

**Physical effects** – Victims may acquire bruises or hematoma, headaches and stomachaches from physical abuses of the bullies.

**Psychological trauma** – kids who are being bullied may refrain from going to school or other places without their parents or other love ones for the fear of encountering the bully/bullies. This may also lead to absenteeism.

**Depression** – the victims of bullying may manifest depression. Sadness among these children can be observed as well as withdrawal from activities they usually do such as playing with other children or even simple conversations with people around them.

**Poor academic achievement** – The victim has the tendency to perform badly in school causing his grades to drop especially if the issue between him and the bullies has something to do with “grades”.

**Low self-esteem** – There are victims who may perceive themselves as useless. As a result of bullying, these children do not feel good about themselves and they may even feel that they let their parents down.
Difficulty in sleeping – Some children experience nightmares or tend to wake up screaming in cold sweat. In some cases, these victims also experience bed wetting.

Anger and bitterness – Children who are being bullied may feel bad about everything and may develop hatred towards the world.

Short term effects of bullying – The bully

Poor academic achievement – Yes, the bully may also perform deficiently at school or it can also be the reason behind his alarming behavior. If not dealt with proper interventions, bullies may also drop out of school.

Incapability to build peer relations – Bullies are often perceived as superiors thus most children especially their classmates, tend to avoid them.

Exposure to illegal activities – bullies may be involved in illegal activities or on the use of illegal substances.

Long term effects of bullying – Kids who are bullied

Chronic depression – the depression of the victim which was not cured in their childhood may persist until they grow up. Worst case scenario to happen is the tendency of the victim to commit suicide.

Addiction to illegal activities and substances – the victims of bullying, as they grow older may also be exposed to illegal activities and substances which may lead to addiction.

Behavioral changes – Victims may also turn himself into a bully when he grows older if hatred and bitterness continue to conquer his personality. The victims can be his wife or his children.
Long term effects of bullying – The bully

Conviction – the bully as he grows older may participate in crimes which may get him convicted.

Incapability to maintain relationships – Building a strong foundation for a long-term relationship would be a common problem for bullies as they grow older.

Addiction to illegal activities and substances - Like the victims, the bullies, especially those who have been exposed to these illegal activities and substances in their younger years, have greater chances of developing addiction.

Violence – even if the bully was able to have his own family, there is also a higher chance of him to become violent or abusive towards his wife and children.

References:


DepEd Order No.40, s.2012 – “DepEd Child Protection Policy”