***The Effects***

***of Bullying***

***at School***

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“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Is this really true? When it comes to bullying, the victim will be hurt, no matter what kind of damage occurs. Words are very powerful, and can hurt just as much as the physical damage of bullying. What is bullying? Bullying is the act of intimidating a weaker person, either to make them do something, or to make them feel discouraged. Large numbers of bullying often occur on school grounds, towards a child, or adolescent. Many people think that bullying is a normal part of childhood. However, studies show that bullying can cause negative social, emotional and academic effects on victims.

The first and mildest outcomes on a victim who has, or is being bullied at school, are the social effects. According to tweenparenting.about.com, victimized children tend to suffer from lower social status than non-victimized children. Social exclusion may have been what led the child to be victimized. Although most times, it gets even worse after the child is bullied, because the victim’s peers are afraid that if they are their friend, they will get bullied as well. Due to the high anxiety level, the victim has a tendency to have difficulty trusting people. This leads to the child having few friends, or none at all. Consequently, the victim moves toward being lonely, therefore he or she suffers from low self-esteem. As a result, the child fears new social situations, and tries to avoid them. Another reason that other kids do not hang around victims, is because they fear that it will bring their own social status down as well. It is sad to know that many victims of bullying have trouble finding a friend to stay by their side, just because they might put the person’s social status at stake.

In most cases, the emotional effects of being bullied are harder to overcome, than the sociological effects. Many adolescents who get bullied at school, are afraid to tell others because they believe when the bully finds out, the situation will get worse. This leads to the victim feeling lonely, unhappy and frightened. Thus, making them feel unsafe, or that there must be something wrong with them. As a result, their self-esteem begins to descend, and the victim starts to lose confidence in him or herself. These emotions may build up in the victim’s body for so long, that they may begin to think of committing suicide to escape all the problems. It is even said that bullied victims think about committing suicide much more often than others their age. Before a victim can recover from the effects of bullying, the victim’s self-concept must heal, in order to feel safe in their environment again.

Not only can the sociological and emotional effects of victims who have been bullied have a large impact on their lives, but so can the academic effects. Children tend to have problems with their academic achievement, during the time they are bullied. Due to their feelings of loneliness and unhappiness, the victims’ learning and school success begins to drop, because they become obsessed with the bullying, and how to try to avoid it. Another reason is because of the stress and worry the children go through at school. Statistics show that about 20% of children in middle school report feeling scared at school, making it difficult to learn. As a result, the victims may result in the inadequate class attendances, as a consequence of being afraid to go to school. Research found that about 8% of American eighth-graders miss school at least once a month to avoid being bullied. For these reasons, the stress a victim of bullying goes through leaves little time, or concern for academics.

It is pretty unbelievable to think that anyone would want to put a person through the effects of bullying. But, believe it or not, the statistics show just how the bullies impact an innocent victim’s life, giving them social, emotional and academic damage. Does it really matter whether the bully uses words or actions to intimidate the victim? No, because it still hurts. It is always important to treat others the way you would like to be treated right? So, if you have ever bullied someone else, just think about how they were really affected.

Research:

<http://www.nobully.org.nz/advicek.htm>

<http://tweenparenting.about.com/od/socialdevelopment/a/Effects-of-Bullying.htm>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/07aug/00117/bullyingconsequences.html>