

Effects of bigotry on children



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Throughout history, conflicts and fights have been observed in population because of difference between people. People experience discrimination all over the world. This intolerance towards others can be seen as prejudice or bigotry. Bigotry is known as any prejudice someone may have towards others. They are different types of bigotry such as racism, homophobia, or sexism. Bigotry cannot be ignored because it is observed everywhere, and it can influence other people opinion. It touches everybody, from adults to children in different ways. Children are subject to bigotry at very young at school, home, or while watching television. It negatively affects them mentally, physically, and socially by transforming one into a bigot or into a victim.

Bigotry mentally affect children. When children are exposed to bigotry, it produces a change of character. One can become a bigot, the one that has prejudices about other, and another can become a victim, the one that suffer the judgment. Some children may start feeling superior and think they have to attack others and point out their differences. That is the case for sexism, where men thinks they are superior to women. They will also start copying what they heard and saw without knowing the impact it has on them and on others. In that case, boys will start classified and treat girls as weak and inferior. It leads to anxiety and fear, and can give depression, sadness, and low self-esteem to the victims. Besides, the victims can have trouble accepting their identity because they will think that being different is bad. In

her essay, Rebecca Walker, a feminist writer, explains how a little girl in the train loses her joy because of the conversation between two men about women (2). Even if she is not a woman yet and does not understand everything, she still recognizes that her and her mother are in the same gender, and the way they talk about women touches and hurts her. In addition, it can impact their way of treating their teachers, In the case where their teachers are different, they can develop a rebellious character and a refusal to obey their orders. It also leads to psychological trouble such as trouble to sleep or eat, and a loss of interest for life and activities. Bigotry also affect children's behavior. It can lead to suicide or murder. Many cases of children death in the United States are consequences of racism or homophobia. some children may feel like they do not deserve to live and kill themselves, because of what other says . Or some other, may loose confidence of themselves and start taking drugs, and drinking alcohol, and become delinquent. Bigotry change children's behavior in a bad way, but it also acts on them physically.

Secondly, bigotry physically affects children. It creates a vague of violence in the playground. Since children have the ability to copy everything they see outside, they become aggressive and violent towards other children. They start fighting with each other, insulting each other and hurting each other. The playground become a war site where the strongest reign and the weak suffer. Walker, in her essay, talks about how women are ignored because they are considered to be weaker than men (1). Which is one of the reason for aggressive behavior toward women. In addition, it conducts to bullying. Bullying it is really common in school. A group of children will choose one

student and humiliated him because of his skin color or, his ethnicity.

However, with the influences of bigotry they see outside, they will humiliated him by stating his differences, but also by physical attack such as fights or harassment. In her text, Walker talks about “ the male paradigm of harassment” which states that women are not allowed to talk and that even if they do nobody will listen (1). That kind of harassment, characterized as sexism, also happen in school where girls are insulted and physically attacked by boys and cannot talk to the teachers about it. Bigotry creates violence among children, but it also establishes social distinction.

Finally, bigotry also socially affects children. In fact, it creates separation among children, white from black, girls from boys, or Catholic from Muslim. When children are subject to bigotry at home or on television, their way of acting toward other , adults or children, changes. Some may start to stop talking to others. Some children will be isolated and outcaste by the other children because they are different. It creates racist and sexist groups in the playground, and separates friends. Some children may be excluded from games and feel rejected because of their differences. In addition it can create a hatred of school for the victims. They will not enjoy going to a place where they are criticized and may even not work anymore at school, or drop out of school. Also, it destroy their childhood because the only memories they will keep are the negatives one. Besides, it creates future racist but also future activist. For example, when Walker said “ I am ready to decide, as my mother decided before me”, it shows that she is following the path of her mother (2). She suffered sexism and saw her mother fought against it, so

she decided to do it too. Bigotry in children impact what they will do and how they will act when they will grow up.

In conclusion, bigotry conducts children to negatively judge and act towards others. It affects them mentally, ruins their childhood, and affects their future. It also has an impact on children's abilities to socialize and learn. Children should have the choice to make their own opinion about their classmates. They should not be subject to bigotry because it can definitively change their lives and destroy their future.

Work Cited

Walker, Rebecca. " Becoming the Third Wave." Ms. Magazine, vol. 11, no. 1, 1992, pp. 1-2.