

Stigma of labeling adolescent students



Jordin Stewart

Imagine a fourth grader sitting next to her best friend in her favorite class. Math class is going as usual, playing with the fun tens blocks, joking around with her best friend, and not having a worry in the world. Some boys next to her notice the cuts on her wrist. They are all too young to even begin to understand what self-harm is and how it could really hurt someone. The boys start making fun of her wrist and how they look different and how she is bigger than everyone else is. She is deeply insecure about her weight and gets very upset. All the rest of the day, she cannot get the voices of those little boys' comments out of her head. She just wants to get out of the situation and so she come up with a plan. She goes to school the next day and tells her best friend about how she has a plan to kill herself. Her best friend becomes very alarmed by this and tells the teacher. The teacher calls the school counselor and has the poor little girl go talk to the counselor. She is walking to the office debating what she did and how it was wrong. She did not think she did anything wrong. She gets to the counselor room and sits down. The counselor asks her what has been going on and asks her about the plans to kill herself. The little girl responds with some boys have been making fun of her in class about her weight and she is fed up with it. The counselor does not believe that a fourth grader can have depression; also, the counselor believes she is acting out all for attention. The counselor sends the girl back to class and calls her parents telling them nothing about her suicidal thoughts but about the bullying issues. After school, she goes home and thinks about what she has to do. She goes into the bathroom and locks the door behind her. She goes into the medicine cabinet and gets her moms

perspiration bottle. She takes a deep breath, goes and lies in the bathtub then takes them all. Children around the world suffer from depression and cannot seek medical attention. The stigma against the emotionally disabled and the labels put on them prevent them from their full potential. Placing labels on adolescent students with emotional disorders affects them negatively in their education and social standings.

Labels impact emotionally disabled adolescent's lives because their education and community has a stigma against them. Children around the world have mental disorders and are not acknowledged nor do teachers or administrators care how the labels they put on them affect the life of those individuals. They put these children in separate programs and separate rooms away from the other students not thinking how they just want to be treated the same as the other none emotionally disturbed children. There is an experiment done to show the impact the labels have on the emotionally disabled students. Children were taught to read at a normal reading level. Two years later labels affected them negatively and they went back to their reading level prior to the experiment (Stenberg 202). This experiment is showing the impact labels and the stigma against emotional disorders really have on a child's education. These children did not have the confidence to keep the reading level they were taught because of the labels that were on them. Labels stay on you in school for as long as you are there. Labels have a strong negative impact on student's education and self-esteem in their decision is altered due to the stigma that their community and peers have against them.

Emotionally disabled children that are labeled have a strong stigma against them those impacts their education. When adolescents do not feel comfortable in their environment, they will do anything that they can do to get out of that situation. Labels especially make students feel unwelcomed but when their peers and teachers have a stigma against their condition, it makes things even worse. They cannot control their emotional disorders and they cannot control how people accept their disorders as actual disabilities or not. If an organization does not recognize the adolescents emotional disorder as a disability they cannot get the therapy or medication that child needs. States do not currently recognize all or most mental illnesses as a disability and organizations are finding out the affects it has on the children's education (Bor 50). The Western Australian Child Health Survey did some research and found out that children that have mental illnesses did not attend school as much as the other children. This shows how labels impacts children's education and how the states stigma does not give the students a chance to get better with the medical attention they need.

Stigma towards labeled emotionally disabled kids affects them to be able to be able to get the therapy and medicine the children need. If your school counselor has does not believe in certain mental illness and you have one, trying to seek medical attention through the school, you are going to most likely be very unsuccessful. If people do not believe the child or the mental illness, they will not be able to get the medical attention they need to help them get better in any situation. Stigma against mental illness in society can delay someone from getting the medical attention they need. It might also leave them unable to do things in their community (Tanaka 595). Community

activities bring people together but if they have negative ideas against the child, they most likely have a stigma for the whole family and will not include them in anything. Labeling emotionally disabled children impacts their health and how they play their roll in their community negatively.

The educational and community standpoints of adolescents are greatly impaired by the stigma of labeling and emotional disorders. Labeling adolescent students and putting a stigma on them has to end. The way society and their elders are treating these emotionally disabled kids are impacting their lives drastically. These children are not getting the medical attention they need; they are being separated into different programs and treated negatively as a whole. Change the stigma, labels of emotional disabilities, and save a child in needs life.

Works Cited

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