

Child called it essay



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How is child abuse explained? This paper will help explain characteristics associated with child abuse and that applied to the books *A Child Called "It"* and *The Lost Boy*. The main points that will be discussed are conflict theory, symbolic interaction theory, normalizing abuse, and the Power and Control diagram. The history of abuse is broken up into three period, indifference, discovery, and preoccupation. In the indifference period animals had more protection than children. Society today is in the preoccupation period and reporting child abuse laws have been in place since the 1960's.

The book *A Child Called "It"* starts out tell the end of the horrific journey that David Pelzer had to endure during his mother's abuse. One morning at school David was examined by the school nurse for signs of abuse, as she did many times before. This particular morning the school nurse decides that the abuse has to stop and must be reported to the authorities. From that day on David was free from his Mother's abuse. The earliest memories of his family are very happy, even referring to them as the "Brady Bunch." But, this home would soon turn into a "madhouse. When Pelzer's mother began to have alcohol problem, the abuse started.

She radically changed from disciplining him, to taking pleasure in playing perverse "games" with him, that were specifically designed to torment him. David's mother would starve him for days and occasionally get scraps of food. Her most outrageous punishments included: pulling his arm out of its socket, trying to burn him on a stove, and stabbing him. After David's parents separated he knew that his mother "was going to kill [him]." In the book *The Lost Boy* pick up where *A Child Called "It"* left off where he is in the custody of the county.

After a trip to the hospital David goes to his first foster home where he meets Aunt Mary's and his social worker, Ms. Gold (his angel). He finds that he is still not free of his mother's control even though they no longer live together. David has to go to court to face his Mother which is hard on David, but he decides that he wants freedom. He now moves into another foster home with the Catanzes. This is the beginning of a new life for David. But he starts to have problems with his rage. Then David goes through a troubled period of time where he becomes a defiant and delinquent.

During this time he also had problems with the social pressures of being accepted by his peers. David reaches a low point when he was sent to Juvenile Hall for setting fire to his classroom. In there he makes the decision to be a good kid. David is then faced with the alienation from the search for a new home. In his search his probation officer recommended the home of Alice and Harold Turnbough. It is with this family he starts to make important adult decisions and starts to become a man. David also realizes that he found a place he could call home and true love in the Turnboughs.

The conflict theory states that society functions so that each individual participant through conflict maximizes their benefits from the conflict resolution. Conflict resolution means change occurs in society as a result of conflict. When the conflict theory is applied to the family there is the power structure between parents and children. Within this theory there are the sources of power which are legitimacy, money, love, and physical coercion. The source of power mainly used in *A Child Called "It"* is physical coercion or child abuse.

An example of this is when David's mother or his brothers beat him to gain power over him. But, in *The Lost Boy* love is the main source of power. In this book, the love for Mrs. Gold helped influence him in the court case against his mother. The symbolic interaction theory states that people learn the meaning of things through social interaction. Within this theory there are two main components the self-fulfilling prophecy and the looking-glass self concept. The self-fulfilling prophecy occurs when people act in a manner consistent with the expectations of others.

When David sits down in the basement and waits for his mother to order him upstairs, he knows to do his morning chores, and meet her expectations. His mother told lies to other people to make them believe he was a bad boy. "Mother is clever enough to convince the principle that David is just a problem child." When she changed other people's perception of David to negative, he started to believe he was a bad boy. Looking-glass self concept is when a person views himself or herself through others perceptions in society.

He was also influence by his mother. Mother would simply grab me and smashed my face against the mirror... then she would order me to say over and over again, I'm a bad boy! " David's mother forced him to believe that he was a problem child. These are all forms of child abuse If anyone is in a situation where someone is being abuse for a long period of time, like any other behavior, this action is perceived as " normal. " David's two older brothers normalized the abuse. " In the summer of 1972 they took turns hitting me and appeared to enjoy throwing their weight around. " The two bothers thought that it was acceptable to hit their younger brother.

When a child normalized abuse, they being hit other children and punish them for doing something wrong. When a child thinks that child abuse is okay, they are at a higher risk of becoming a child abuser as adults, than when a child knows it is not okay. The Power and Control diagram is one of the main tools used to better understand the patterns of abusive behaviors. David's mother switched isolation, blaming, and emotional abuse. His mother isolated from the family and others in many different ways, such as not letting him play outside and making him wear old foul smelling clothes, so the other children would not talk to him.

Even though Russell was only four or five years old at the time he had become my mother's ' Little Nazi'... it wasn't his fault. I knew Mother had brainwashed him". David was so alienated from his " family" his mother would make him sit in the basement or outside while " the family" ate dinner. " I wanted to turn my head and look up to see them eating, but I don't care. I lived in a different world. I didn't even deserve a glance at the good life" His mother's emotional abuse scared him for a long time. David received a phone call from Mother when was about to be shipped off to the Air Force.

She told him that she wanted nothing but the best for him. " But in my heart I knew that Mother was just toying with my emotions. For over 18 years, I wanted something I knew I would never receive- Mom's love". He realized that she would never change. After sticking up for David a few times his father finally gave up fighting for him, David knew his " Mother now had complete control over everybody in the household. There are many ways to explain characteristics associated with child abuse. One is how the books A <https://assignbuster.com/child-called-it-essay/>

Child Called " It" and The Lost Boy are applied to help explain the characteristics of child abuse.

When the conflict theory is applied to the family there is the power structure between parents and children. Within symbolic interaction theory there are two main components the self-fulfilling prophecy and the looking-glass self concept. Also shows the effect of the normalization of abuse. The Power and Control diagram is one of the main tools used to better explain patterns of abusive behaviors. Child abuse has been around for many years and society now knows more about child abuse then ever before.