

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

A narrative report
on violence and abuse
in the life of a 13 year old girl
– from the perspective of an empowered
educator.

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SECTION 1: ROSEMARY'S BACKGROUND

1.1 Psychological development

1.2 Effects of child abuse

1.2.1 Physical abuse

1.2.2 Child sexual abuse

1.2.3 Emotional abuse

1.2.4 Emotional neglect

1.2.5 Physical neglect

1.3 Application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs on Rosemary's behaviour

2. SECTION 2: GUIDANCE FOR ROSEMARY

2.1 Conceptual differences

2.2 Child trauma and the effects of trauma on Rosemary's life

2.3 Difference between parental involvement and parental counselling

2.4 Personal and learning intervention program for Rosemary


3. REFERENCE LIST

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883


44

1. SECTION 1: ROSEMARY'S BACKGROUND**1.1 Psychological development**

At the age of 13, Rosemary is now just entering her adolescence, which Erickson identify as the stage of identity versus role confusion.


According to Ericson, it is important for her to have role models to steer her through this difficult stage of identity formation. (Schoeman, et al. 2011:8) Rosemary's role models in her life at this stage will be her father, who is an aggressive, angry man who apparently takes his frustrations out on his youngest child, whom he claim to love. She does not even mention her mother, except that she is working and keeping the household afloat as her husband does not contribute. Her elder sister who needs to mind her, probably have her own issues and does not care for Rosemary as she should - even though she does try to protect her from her father's disciplinary manners. She does not mention peer relationships, most probably because of feelings of guilt and inferiority being formed in her earlier years and will have an impact on her identity formation during this adolescence stage. Peer relationships plays an important role in the psychological development of the adolescent. It forms the background for the forming of new ideas, identity in occupations, sex roles, politics and religion. Rosemary's seem to be a lonely child without many friends. 

Adolescence is directly linked to physical changes in the child's body, which adds to the complexity of this stage. Rosemary will have brought her feelings of guilt and inferiority with her from previous development stages, and it will have an influence on her acceptance and embracing of these physical changes during adolescence. .

Rosemary reacted to my kindness towards her as her subject teacher, and seemed desperate for help as other significant people in her life does not believe her. As a pastoral educator, I have a responsibility towards this child in need and give this report so that we all as responsible adults can decide on a plan of action to help her 


EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

1.2 Effects of child abuse

The Child Care Act 74 of 1983 (cited in Schoeman, et al. 2011: 57) defines child abuse as follows: “A parent or legal guardian of a child, or any person in whose care a child is, who abuses the child or allows the child to be abused; or deserts the child, is guilty of an offence. Any person who is legally liable to maintain a child and who fails to provide adequate food, clothing, lodging and medical treatment, while able to do so, is guilty of an offence.” 

The definition of “child abuse” encompass different forms of abuse. I will discuss different forms of abuse Rosemary has been subjected to and the possible effects thereof.

1.2.1 Physical abuse


Rosemary has been physically beaten by her unpredictable and aggressive father from a very young age. Her “absent” mother, who has also been subjected to violence from her husband, left her in the care of her sisters – who only tried to help her by trying to soften the beatings with more knickers. They will most probably have their own issues to deal with being raised in such a household. The confusion of a “caring and loving”, but “unpredictable and aggressive” father and a most probable absent mother, trying to keep bread on the table, will have a dire effect on all in the household. 

1.2.2 Child sexual abuse


The National Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) describe the concepts of child abuse as “contacts or interactions between child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult.” (Kempe & Kempe 1984:10 cited in Schoeman et al. 2011; 63)

No matter in which way you define child sexual abuse, the consequence on a child in adolescence (or any stage) is dire. Rosemary’s was sexually assaulted the first time when she was only 6 years old – being tempted with puppies yelping. Her feelings of guilt, on her sister’s bicycle, out of boundaries of where she was allowed to go and letting the misguided feeling of being loved by an adult, let her “allow” the sexual attention from an adult. These feelings would lead to more feelings of guilt, a sense of


EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

inferiority, failure and incompetence. Her sense of identity formation will be affected which will have an effect on her development on all levels. 


1.2.3 Emotional abuse

The effects of emotional abuse on a child is most probably the most complex to understand and manage. Rosemary has been emotionally abused and rejected in that her worth and needs has in only a few ways been acknowledged and seen to. She has been isolated from normal social experiences by not being able to trust those who care for her, or to form relationships with peers. She was let to form destructive, antisocial relationships to counter her need to belong and to give love 


1.2.4 Emotional neglect

Emotional neglect refers to important adults in the child's life with an inability to nurture, stimulate, encourage and protect the child at various stages of his/her development. Although this is a form of indifference or inability, and not deliberate, the consequences might be as far reaching. 

Rosemary's emotional needs has not been met from a very early age. Her mother had to work to put bread on the table, and her father took his frustrations and anger out on his youngest child, whom he claims to love. Her siblings most probably had their own issues to deal with, and could not see to Rosemary's emotional needs.

Mistrust would have led to shame and doubt in herself, feelings of guilt, and a sense of inferiority, failure and incompetence. 

1.2.5 Physical neglect

This concept refers to the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure by educators to carry out important aspects of care. Although Rosemary has been cared for in some ways like food and shelter, she has been exposed to dangerous situations by not having proper, responsible supervision. This led her to wander off and be tempted by yelping puppies – into the hands of a sexual predator. Rosemary felt guilty for going where she should not have, and knew she would be punished for it, but her need to see / feel the puppies was too much, and most probably her need for attention. 

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

1.3 Application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs on Rosemary's behaviour

Maslow explained by means of his triangle of a hierarchy of needs that an educator's responsibility towards a child cannot be met without the fulfilment of basic needs of a child. Cognitive development is not possible if the basic needs of the child is met.

There is no indication that Rosemary has a lack of food or shelter. Her father spend his money on alcohol, and could most probably not contribute much to the household, but the basics may be covered by her mother working.

The next level of needs according to Maslow, is the need to feel safe. Rosemary cannot feel safe in her own home, as her primary caregiver is the one she is scared of. She has therefore little sense of security.

Her apparent need for love is evident from her recollection of the first time she has been sexually abused. The unconditional love the idea of the puppies portrayed was too much to resist. To belong or for something to belong to her.

These conditions in Rosemary's life led to a lack of self-esteem with far reaching consequences. She has not the self-confidence to face the different challenges in her life, and desperately needs help to have a change of become a self-actualised adult one day.




2. SECTION 2: GUIDANCE FOR ROSEMARY


2.1 Conceptual differences

It is important for the pastoral educator to realise the distinction between the concepts of guidance, counselling and support for learning problems.

According to <http://dictionary.reference.com/> guidance can be defined as "supervised care or assistance, especially therapeutic help in the treatment of emotional disturbances." It is advice from someone in authority aimed at resolving a problem or difficulty.

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

Schoeman (Schoeman, et al. 2011: 98) defines counselling as a “facilitative process during which the counsellor, working within the framework of a special relationship, uses specific scientific skills to help young people to help themselves more effectively.” Support for learners with learning problems will be part of the educator’s task even though the ideal would be to refer them and help them with the reference of a professional therapist. 

As an empathic educator and a pastoral carer, and evident from the above definitions, I will always try to fulfil a child’s needs, but not being a professional educational psychologist, I need to realise my responsibility towards guidance only, and the need to refer to professionals. 

2.2 Child trauma

Trauma is on a continuum the extreme of stress and a crisis. It overwhelms and neutralise the child’s ability to cope. Trauma can be because of a single, unexpected event, or many incidents over time. It implies extreme emotional feelings and is not normal feelings a child should have and restrain the child’s ability to cope. Although there are different interpretations as to what would be considered traumatic in a child’s life, it can and will have an effect on the rest of the victim’s life. Feelings of intense fear, helplessness and horror characterize a traumatic event.

In any way one define trauma, Rosemary has been exposed to severe trauma from an early age. Except for the fear of the one person that should provide her with a sense of security, she is exposed to dangerous situations in as far as being a victim of sexual assault at the age of 6. She believed to have done wrong by wandering off on her sister’s bike, and being tempted by yelping puppies into the hands of a sexual predator. He implied that he knows her father and will bring her in trouble should she reveal what happened. Her fear of her father and his unpredictable, aggressive behaviour made her vulnerable for the sexual intentions of the stranger. She did not understand what was happening to her as she most probably have not had any sexual education at home. Rosemary did not reveal much detail of this specific event – a


EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

normal tendency to forget detail of a traumatic event. This single incident was only the start of her sexual abuse, and most probably continued in various other situations.

Where a child experience trauma, some basic beliefs of personal worth and belief in others are shattered. Trauma de-humanize the victim, and can leave permanent scars on the victim's psyche.

Rosemary will be severely affected by the trauma of the sexual assault and go through different stages in her response. Firstly she would have become silent and withdrawn, or the other way talkative and active. But definitely irrational behaviour. Initial shock and denial, or the impact phase. She would have experienced fear and anxiety more extremely than she already had in fear of her father's wrath.

The following stage would be to go on "as normal." But bewildered and discouraged. She might experience feelings of depression, or the need to retaliate. As Rosemary's trauma has been going on over years, and continue, the suppressed trauma may have responses at times not expected or even remotely related to the event.

Rosemary's revealing of these incidents in her life is positive, as it is showing signs of a stage of resolution. A cry for help to resolve the extreme emotional disarray her life is in. The important role of the responsible adult she shares this information with, cannot be overly emphasized. Rosemary need to be dealt with in a sensitive, emphatic and practical way, and we as pastoral teachers need the skills to  so.

2.3 Difference between parental involvement and parental counselling.

Parental involvement entails that parents should actively and constructively take part in activities at the school. They can get involved in various ways – wherever their expertise or skills lay. This form of involvement has more advantages than just economically for the school. It hold benefits for the school, the learners, the parents and their mutual relationships, but most definitely for the community. It breeds a positive community where individuals can grow up and excel in.

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

Parental counselling refer to the assisting of parents of learners with learning disabilities. All parents wants their children to cope, and we as educators should make time and space in assisting these parents in helping their child. We should walk the extra mile with the parents because that is what an educator's heart does.

2.4 Personal and learning intervention program for Rosemary

An intervention programme for Rosemary will involve reporting the abuse, involving other support services, and involving her parents. It should include social as well as legal entities. All in a safe environment with explanation to her and consent from for the process. The fact that Rosemary already shown trust in me by sharing her experiences put a lot of responsibility on my shoulder to help her. T

Rosemary's need has already been identified, but the extent to which she has been affected can only be assessed by a professional psychologist.

I will also suggest informing social services immediately – but after explaining to Rosemary the need for this, as well as the fact that she and her family will be kept safe, and that her father, who also obviously need help, will be helped.


The facts of the sexual abuse should be considered by all, and a criminal charge lay. Rosemary should be accompanied the whole time, as not all professional services have the knowledge or capacity to handle such a child well.

I will also schedule short, individual sessions with her on a regular basis. It should be structured sessions in which she feel safe and know what to expect. She should be repeatedly explained why the abuse is not her fault, and that nothing she did could trigger it. That her mother and father needed help themselves, and that it is okay to love them no matter their disastrous parenthood. These sessions should motivate Rosemary to work through her trauma and to use whatever help there is available for people like her.

I will also include in my Life Orientation class subjects like the development of the self in society. Inviting professionals out of the community to discuss their roles in

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

this regard can be a good idea, but it should be done without any emphasize on Rosemary and her problems herself. All children should know that help is out there, and nothing that they did or can or will do, can make them in any way responsible for physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Our communities and society has a responsibility to be there for each other's wellbeing, and there is help out there. Our children need to know that.

Rosemary will only recover from her extremely traumatic childhood with the continuous help from professionals. I, as an empowered educator can only guide her through the process in firm but loving and caring w 

EDPHOD8 Assignment 01 811883

3. REFERENCE LIST

3.1 Schoeman, S. (ed.), Jansen, C.A., Dreyer, J.M., Swanepoel, J.I., Van As, K.H., Vogel, H.M., Steyn, H.C., and Kruger, J.S. 2011. THE EDUCATOR IN A PASTORAL ROLE. ONLY STUDY GUIDE FOR EDPHOD8. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

3.2 <http://dictionary.reference.com>



