



Specialised
Security Services



PROJECT:
THE NEUROLOGICAL
IMPACT OF
BULLYING ON
PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEARNERS

At the beginning of a new school year, many children will experience growing up for the first time as they enrol in Grade RR, Grade R, or Grade 1 at a primary school.

SSS has posted several projects in the past to forewarn parents to be informed and aware of bullying and its impact on children.

Bullying can have significant and lasting neurological impacts on primary school learners.

TYPES OF BULLYING:

- Physical Bullying:
 - This involves physical harm or the threat of physical harm.
 - It may include hitting, kicking, or damaging personal belongings.
 - Verbal Bullying:
 - This includes name-calling, teasing, and using hurtful language.
 - Social Bullying:
 - Also known as relational bullying, this involves deliberately excluding someone from social activities or spreading rumours.
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EFFECTS ON VICTIMS:

- Emotional Impact:
 - Victims often experience feelings of fear, anxiety, and depression.
 - This can lead to a decline in self-esteem and academic performance.
 - Physical Health:
 - Bullying can manifest physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach-aches, and changes in sleeping patterns.
 - Academic Consequences:
 - The stress and anxiety associated with bullying can interfere with a child's ability to concentrate and succeed academically.
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NEUROLOGICAL EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS:

- Stress Response and Neurotransmitters:
 - Activation of Stress Response:
 - Bullying triggers the body's stress response, leading to the release of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline.
 - Impact on Neurotransmitters:
 - Prolonged exposure to stress can affect neurotransmitter levels, including dopamine and serotonin, which play critical roles in mood regulation.
- Structural Changes in the Brain:
 - Impact on Brain Structure:
 - Chronic stress, a common outcome of bullying, can affect the structure of the brain, particularly the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex.
 - Reduced Volume in Brain Regions:
 - Studies suggest that individuals who experience chronic stress may have reduced volume in specific brain regions,

potentially affecting memory, learning, and emotional regulation.

- Cognitive Function:
 - Impact on Cognitive Abilities:
 - Prolonged exposure to bullying can negatively impact cognitive functions, including attention, concentration, and problem-solving skills.
 - Academic Performance:
 - Neurological changes may contribute to a decline in academic performance.
 - Emotional Regulation:
 - Disruption of Emotional Regulation:
 - The stress associated with bullying can disrupt the development of emotional regulation circuits in the brain, leading to difficulties in managing emotions.
 - Vulnerability to Mental Health Disorders:
 - Association with Mental Health Issues:
 - There is a higher risk of developing mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among individuals who have been bullied.
 - Altered Brain Function in Mental Health Disorders:
 - Mental health disorders are often associated with altered patterns of brain activity and connectivity.
 - Long-Term Effects:
 - Persistence of Effects:
 - Some neurological effects of bullying may persist into adolescence and adulthood, impacting long-term mental and emotional well-being.
 - Social Brain Development:
 - Impact on Social Brain Networks:
 - Bullying interferes with developing social brain networks involved in empathy, social cognition, and the ability to form positive relationships.
 - Resilience Factors:
 - Protective Factors:
 - While exposure to bullying has adverse neurological effects, supportive relationships and interventions can act as protective factors, promoting resilience and mitigating some of the negative consequences.
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Some adults, parents, and teachers might trivialise the impact of bullying on especially young children but when empirical evidence shows the actual harm it does, it becomes critical to take responsibility and address such behaviour.

It is important to note that individual responses to bullying can vary, and not all children who experience bullying will necessarily develop long-term neurological consequences.

Nevertheless, understanding the potential neurological impact emphasises the importance of preventing and addressing bullying in primary schools to promote students' overall well-being and healthy development. Early intervention and support systems can play a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of bullying on the developing brain.

REFERENCES:

- <https://dana.org/resource/bullying-and-the-brain/#:~:text=Children%20who%20are%20bullied%20can,and%20scientists%20take%20very%20seriously.>
 - <https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/bullying-kids-teens>
 - <https://www.verywellfamily.com/bullying-impact-4157338>
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This group is important in delivering insights into the latest crime trends, awareness, warnings and the exposure of criminals.

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- Simply follow the link to our dedicated WhatsApp group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Ew1H1dbUR988qoG8gei2sE>
- "JOIN" to ensure you never miss our daily updates.
- You will receive automatic notifications as soon as a new project is placed.
- Please share this with family, friends and colleagues.

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Regards,

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We strongly recommend that you make up your minds concerning me and our organisation only after considering all the factual information - to the exclusion of hearsay and assumptions.

Furthermore, you are welcome to address your concerns directly with me should you still be unsatisfied with your conclusions. While the internet provides a lot of valuable information, it is also a platform that distributes a lot of false information. The distribution of false information, fake news, slander and hate speech constitutes a crime that can be prosecuted by law. Your own research discretion and discernment are imperative when choosing what and what not to believe.

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