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| **PEDOPHILIA**  Επιβλέπων καθηγητής: Γεωργούλας Ευστράτιος  **ΣΕΜΙΝΑΡΙΟ:** ”Ευρωπαϊκές προσεγγίσεις για την παρέκκλιση και τον κοινωνικό έλεγχο"  Όνομα φοιτήτριας:Dafni Drakou |

**PEDOPHILIA**

Pedophilia is a perversion. Adults or older adolescents have intense fantasies about sexual activity with children, which often bring into reality. This activity occupies a large fraction of the energy and life of the individual. The child-object of this perversion thereof may be from the family environment or foreign to that person. Moreover, it may be of either sex. The relationship with the child may be limited to line of sight, only when accompanied by masturbatory activity, but can be combined with violence and rape. The adult (or at least 5 years older in age teenager) who overtly or covertly gets sexual pleasure from contact with a child suffers from pedophilia. This can be done in many different ways, such as:

* seeking to touch in a sexual way, children or underage teenagers (usually under 13 years).
* encouraging a group of children to participate in sexual activities.
* showing them pornographic material, using direct or indirect coercion or psychological manipulation to keep these activities secret.
* approaching children and adolescents through the Internet trying for example to build a trusted friendship with them and then try to mislead them sexually.

**CAUSES OF PEDOFILIA**

Factors contributing to the occurrence of pedophilia are mainly environmental and social.

* People who grew up in an environment with an authoritarian father and prohibitive, in a way that prevented the normal sexual development. As a result these people are prone to perversion.
* People who were not delineated ripe, mainly between the ages of 2-7 years. The limits were either too strict or too lax. The existence of cancellations in adult sexual life.
* Challenged to feel sovereignty and authority.
* Feeling fear or failure against adults as erotic object often leads to the choice of minor, weak and mindless sex objects as substitutes. The selection of such objects is less threatening to the psyche.
* Also, in social situations where formal prohibitions and enforcement of laws are not strict enough, then the perverse behaviour becomes permissive for the individual. Usually two or more of these causes are to affect a person who suffers from pedophilia.

Here I would like to add that in everyone there are perversions which do not construct organized disorder and ultimately serve the normal sexual life. The failure of perversion bring some mental balance, together with the serious lack of impulse control and aggression may lead these people to extreme acts that can reach up to the will of causing a murder.

**IMPACT TO VICTIMS**

Although it might sound horrible, for small children, the experience can be enjoyable. Later, when they become sexually mature, these children realize that what happened to them was wrong and this has some bad consequences to them. In all cases there are some harmful effects, although problems can appear several years after the abuse.

Abused children can be hurt in different ways, depending on whether the perpetrator was a stranger or a loved one in the life of the child such as the parent. If the abuser is a parent of the child, the child suffers from a great confusion. Children who have been sexually harassed by their loved ones, often feel tremendous guilt if they complain to the authorities. When abuse occurs within the family, the child is trapped. As the abuse continues for some time, the child accepts it as the norm, and it becomes a matter of balance within the family. Once your child realizes that sexual relationship is bad and suddenly comes out to someone, it can disturb the balance.

Long term, sexual abuse in childhood can lead to some form of mental problem eg. depression, alcoholism, substance abuse, anxiety disorders. Some abused children may become pedophiles when they grow up. Moreover, abused children may experience problems of sleeping and eating. They also may regress to thumb sucking and bed wetting.

According to the American Psychological Association, there are some pretty clear signs of sexual abuse in children: maltreated children may know more about sex, than you've learned or may have an inappropriate interest in sex compared with age (however, experimenting with masturbation is normal).

If your child tells you that was sexually abused - maybe not exactly with these words - then this is the clearest sign. Children rarely lie about something like that.

Children very rarely report that they were abused. They usually afraid to blame the parents. Abuse is usually revealed when an adult realise it or when a child comes out to an adult (usually not the parent), or when a doctor finds signs of sexual abuse on the child's body. Also, abuse can be perceived or detected by the child itself when it grows older and has the ability to recognize the nature of his experience.

Children 'speak' to each type of abuse with indirect ways. Usually, children who were sexually abused, may:

* have unsettled sleep, frequent nightmares and disturbances in their appetite.
* have new fears and phobias (eg. a person, a movement or a place) that it is not easily explained by the parents, and those who know the child's temperament.
* have strange sexual behaviour for their age - often includes elements of adult sexual behaviour (eg vocabulary, movements) that look alien on them.

**PREVENTION**

The primary method for preventing pedophilia is avoiding situations that may favor pedophile behaviours.

Children generally should not be left alone with strangers. It is preferable that parents supervise their children when socialize without terrifying them. Those who take care of a child during the absence of the parents, should be reliable.

Furthermore, training is needed so that the children can learn to avoid situations that make them vulnerable to pedophiles. They must learn to protect when facing a predicament - to shout, to run and ask for help. Also the adults working with young people need to learn to avoid situations that may be considered to serve pedophile purposes.

Most children who are sexually harassed know the abuser, so just some recommendation from the parents towards their children not to trust strangers is not enough. You should tell your child that no adult should touch them or require them to touch him in any way that brings embarrassment, upsets them or scares them. Teach children to say "no" to such cases and to report it immediately if it happens. Also they need to learn that no adult should ever ask them to keep as a secret a touch or a kiss.

Often pedophiles choose single parent families, where mothers may be particularly grateful for the help offered in the custody of their child. Generally, you should be suspicious of someone who shows excessive interest in children, particularly if they want to be alone with them.

To protect children from possible abduction, you can advise them to never get in a stranger’s car if a driver ever stops and asks for directions.

Because pedophiles usually operate on the Internet, it is advisable to keep an eye on what your kids are doing on their personal computer. Tell them that is dangerous to meet in private with anyone they have met through the internet and also not to give out personal information, such as the place they live.

Moreover, children should know what to do in case they get lost. You can give them a prepaid phone card to use in such cases. They need to memorize the phone number and address. Tell them to call the police if they cannot find you and not to accept any help from a stranger. If you are waiting somewhere to pick them up, tell them to wait inside a shop or in a restaurant - somewhere where there are many people around.

For children who have been sexually harassed, it is advisable that parents address mental health professionals to resolve any emotional problems that have been caused to the child and to protect their mental health.