Can Preschoolers Be Depressed

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In our society, mental illness is stigmatized due to which many people are left helpless and without proper diagnosis. Owing to the lack of information regarding different types and symptoms of mental disorders people are unaware of the severe consequences of mental illness on any individual. In the article “Can Preschoolers Be Depressed?” the author Pamela Paul also highlighted various types of disorders and the necessity of early diagnosis to treat any mental illness The author also highlighted that people always associate mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, etc with adults only when in reality and individual regardless of age can be depressed. It has been observed that people often confused personality traits with the mental disorder illness and think that if a person is showing signs of depressions then it is his or her personality and thus hindering the chances of getting diagnosed properly.

In the article author, Pamela also highlighted that even preschoolers can also experience depression by taking the example of Kiran (Paul, 2019). According to the author, Kiran was a nice and obedient child and always had empathy for others however unlike many other kids of his age he was not joyful and always used to say nothing is fun. For him all the things and fun activities that a typical four-year-old child might enjoy were boring. He used to get frustrated a lot. The author also discussed that unlike many parents who think that their child is just throwing tantrums, Kiran’s parents took him to the child psychiatrist to determine the cause of deviation in his behavior. The psychiatrist diagnosed that Kiran had depression due to which he was unable to perform his routine task actively like other children of his age.

The author also discussed the point of view of several researchers and psychiatrists that depression among children is real. According to the author, one psychiatrist named Daniel Klein also stated that when asked about the history of depressive symptoms from adults, all of them answered that they had the symptoms of depression as long as they remember. This statement provides evidence that the roots of depression start very early and without being diagnosed and treated properly the symptoms can get worse over time. The author discussed that according to the chief of the emotion-and-development branch chronic mental illness is indeed predominantly the illness of the young as it begins in the early childhood years of an individual while also influencing his or her future.

Another issue that was highlighted in the article was that although very people are aware of the early childhood depression yet it is still a subject of debate as no one wants to pathologies preschoolers as at this stage a child does have mood swings and tantrums (Paul, 2019). Also, parents do not want to think that maybe their child’s different behavior is a sign of mental illness owing to the stigma associated with it. Additionally, children are worried that a psychiatrist may suggest antidepressants or other medications that may affect their children's health. It has been observed that many pharmaceutical companies want to take leverage from taking medication for children that have a mental illness. However, many psychiatrists and researchers oppose the concept of using antidepressant medication to treat children that young.

While discussing the diagnosis of mental illness among children, one thing that hinders the diagnosis is the lack of awareness of parents regarding mental disorders. Most of the parents think the depression is permanent and they consider themselves responsible for their child being depressed. The author Pamela Paul also highlighted that during pregnancy if a mother is depressed then a child may also possess a few symptoms of depression as well. However, this is not always true. Although, there are situations where family interaction does create negativity in a child’s life yet still many other factors re there that influence a child’s mental health.

In the context of depression, the most common symptom that is observed in the children having depression is sadness. A depressed child has difficulty in resolving the sadness. This sadness becomes pervasive that inhibits his or her functioning. Additionally, children in preschool lack linguistic sophistication and therefore are unable to describe their symptoms and feelings in words. Due to this reason, it is a bit challenging to interpret the feelings a child suffering from depression. Typically, children experiencing depression are insecure about their self-image and often have a feeling of guilt and shame if they are unable to do any task. Another issue that is faced while diagnosing a mental disorder in children is that most of the time depressive symptoms are mixed with the symptoms of ADHD (Paul, 2019). Also, if a child is depressed he may not depict aggressive behavior and disrupt class and are therefore left under-noticed and in turn are the ones left undiagnosed.

The author Pamela also discussed the intervention of parents and teachers in reducing depression among children. According to the author, it is undeniably true that early diagnosis can facilitate a lot in treating depression among children that are in preschool yet regular counseling and therapy sessions may also aid in treating depression. According to the author, a therapy named Parent-child- interaction therapy (P.C.I.T) has shown a significant result in the children that have depression as children can openly share their feelings with the aid of pictures and support of their children that may, in turn, facilitates in treating the depression they have. However, there is still a need for spreading awareness among people regarding mental illness that it is not an insult and is not always associated with adults.

**References**

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