

## **The Effect of Parental Conflict, Domestic Violence and Other Factors on Children Which Leads to Voluntary Placement in Foster Care: A Study on Cathy Glass's "A Terrible Secret"**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper explores the impact of parental conflicts and other factors on children which pave the way for the children to voluntarily place themselves in foster care. Children may be more likely to experience behavioral, social, and academic problems as well as mental health issues when there is frequent, intense, and poorly resolved conflict between the parents. Also, it may have a major impact on a child's long-term outcomes. Conflict between parents hurts teens. Children show sorrow when their parents are fighting. Their reactions include fear, anxiety, irritability, melancholy, and depression, and they are at a greater risk of having negative personality development. Investigating parental conflict and its detrimental effects on teenage personality development was the main goal. This research will be done through the study of Cathy Glass's "A Terrible secret". Cathy Glass work is strongly identifying with true life stories and inspirational memoirs genres. In chronological sequence, the prolific novelist Cathy Glass has produced 34 books in all. She frequently examines the difficulties these helpless infants confront and how their foster carers, like Cathy, assist them in overcoming these difficulties in her novels, which are centered on the lives of children in foster care.

**Keywords:** Parental conflicts, Emotional abuse, Parenting, Psychological effects

### **Introduction:**

Parents bear a huge responsibility for their children's personality development. Conflict is a common occurrence in families. The foundation of a child's growth is thought to be based on experiences that are family-centered. Yet, when parent-child conflict is managed or resolved destructively rather than constructively, it may have unfavorable effects on both the parents and the kids. Previous research on the effects of parental conflict on children has shown that both constructive and destructive marital dispute resolution tactics can have a variety of effects on kids. Destructive parental conflict, in particular, can have greater detrimental effects on kids' health and behavior. To produce positive reaction emotions from people, constructive style usage comprises verbal and physical affection, support, resolution, and issue solving. Verbal abuse, nonverbal aggressiveness, physical violence, and withdrawal are destructive strategies that cause bad feelings and behavioral responses. Researchers have discovered in earlier studies that children's perceptions of the dispute between their parents have varied emotional and behavioral

repercussions on them. Children who frequently hold themselves and their parents responsible. Children who felt threatened by their parents' argument were far more likely to develop behavioral issues, while those children who did not feel frightened were more likely to suffer from depression.

One of the basic human needs is to feel safe. Emotional security refers to a family member's sense of assurance and safety. Better mental and physical wellness, as well as improved school adjustment, are facilitated by a sense of security. Both boys and girls need to feel secure emotionally. Family harmony is especially vital for youngsters.

Emotional insecurity is the term used to describe a child who is extremely concerned about both his or their safety and the welfare of the family. Children's emotional instability is a result of destructive and unresolved parental disputes. Children who are insecure may also have trouble finding friends, keeping their mental health in check, controlling their behavior and emotions, and doing well in school. Because they depend on their parents as well as other family members for food, shelter, emotion regulation, and a variety of other needs, children are especially vulnerable to instability. Children may become less confident in their parents' ability to just provide all these crucial things, such as affection and emotional support, when they witness their parents arguing. Even worse, when kids see their parents arguing, they frequently feel they are to blame—even when they are not at all involved in the arguments.

### **Cathy Glass Experience On Fostering:**

Former federal servant Cathy Glass abandoned her job to establish a family. After attempting unsuccessfully to have a child with her former husband John, the author made the decision to foster a kid. She saw an advertisement for a foster home for a girl named Mary in her local newspaper and applied to be a foster carer. Based on her own child-rearing experiences, Glass published *Happy Kids: The secret to raising well-behaved, contented children* in 2010. Glass blends writing for a living with sporadic freelance journalism and business writing. She had written about health and social issues for *The Guardian* and the *Evening Standard* prior to the publication of *Damaged*. Harper Collins published Glass's debut book, *Damaged*, in 2007. It centers on Glass' friendship with Jodie, a victim of abuse. In March 2008, a year later, Glass released *Hidden* as a follow-up. Cathy has already released 25 memoirs on foster care.

### **Foster Care Placement Due To Parental Conflicts:**

A juvenile may be placed in foster care in a ward, group home, residential child care community, treatment center, etc., or in the private residence of a state-certified carer, sometimes known as a "foster parent," or with a family member who has been given state approval. Usually, the government or a social services organization arranges for the child's placement. Unless living with a family member, the institution, group home, or foster parent gets reimbursed for costs. Some states offer financial assistance to relatives or "Kinship" carers of children who are wards of the state. Usually, parental abuse, abandonment, and neglect result in the removal of children

from their parents' custody and placement in the foster care system. The number of kids in foster care has dramatically increased since the establishment of the system. Many foster children experience medical, mental, and behavioral problems as a result of their past; for this reason, it's critical that they are assigned to a stable foster family.

### **Emotional Abuse And Psychological Effects:**

A pattern of behavior known as Emotional or psychological abuse harms a child's sense of self-worth and has a detrimental effect on their emotional growth. Even when the children are not involved, parental disputes can disturb children. Children and teenagers' mental health, stress levels, behavioral issues, and school performance all suffer when they witness or participate in parent-child conflict. Children are very perceptive and aware of their parents' interactions. Even young children react when their parents are fighting. By the age of 3, kids can detect even minute signs of tension between their parents. Conflicts between parents can be especially harmful for kids if they are frequent and destructive. The individual who is emotionally abusing the child may also reject, criticize, threaten, demean, and berate the youngster in addition to withholding love and support. They might also make fun of the child, call them names, and insult them. One of the most difficult types of abuse to identify is emotional abuse, which can take place in addition to physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. It frequently happens subtly and sneakily, progressively eroding the child's self-esteem and sense of security and belonging.

Emotional child abuse is motivated by control and power just like other types of abuse. The offender uses emotionally harmful and unpleasant words and acts to manipulate and control the youngster. The terrible long-term impacts of emotional abuse include elevated rates of illness and mental health issues. More difficult to identify than other types of child abuse, emotional abuse can be. It typically occurs in a child's household, frequently without any outside witnesses. It's possible that there are no clear, external indicators of abuse. The only thing that occasionally points to a problem is a child's behavior. Dramatic behavioral changes and developmentally inappropriate conduct, including children acting very immature or too mature for their age, might be indicators of abuse. For instance, a young child who was once confident and did not want extra attention may suddenly start to attach to non-abusive people. A kid can also start misbehaving or struggle in school or on the playground. The behaviours, speech, and actions of parents, caretakers, or other major individuals in a kid's life that have a detrimental mental influence on the child are referred to as emotional and psychological abuse in children. "Emotional abuse or psychological abuse is a pattern of behavior that damages a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth," the U.S. government states. There are both long- and short-term impacts of emotional abuse. They could be both bodily and psychological, like tremors and a beating heart, or both, like guilt and anxiety.

### **Cathy Glass's "A Terrible Secret" Portraying the Impact Of Parental Conflict And Other Factor On The Protagonist:**

Tilly lives with her mother and stepfather. She has an older stepbrother and stepsister, but they do not live at home. Tilly despises David, her stepfather. She witnesses him abusing her mother, yet she will not leave him. Domestic violence often plays a significant part in many childcare cases. There is support available for victims of domestic violence wanting to flee from their abusive partners, but the victim must make the decision to leave, with all the emotional and functional implications that accompanies it. Tilly requests to enter foster care and is assigned to Cathy out of concern for her own safety. Tilly does not want any of her friends to know that she is in a foster care like many other children and young people in care do not want their classmates to know they are living with a foster carer, especially when they first come into care. Sometimes they say they are staying with an aunt or family friend. When the truth eventually comes out, which it usually does, they are often pleasantly surprised to find that being in care doesn't have the stigma they thought, and other children take it in their stride or are interested. When Tilly shows up with a graze on her face, Cathy starts to worry more and more about Dave's behavior, especially after finding out that he has been showering Tilly with gifts. Cathy worries about her own daughter, Lucy, in addition to attempting to care for Tilly and keep her safe. Cathy hopes she makes the proper selection because she must make one that will impact the rest of her life. One of the problems with fostering is that there is often much going on with the looked after child that the carer's own children, whatever their age, can fall into second place.

After Tilly has been placed in foster care with Cathy, she often visited her grandmother where she learned about her mother's past. When Tilly's mother was fifteen, she got in with a group of lads older than her. At seventeen she was pregnant. She did not find out until it was too late. People often find in fostering there are peaks and troughs of activity, but generally after the first few months things usually get a bit easier as the child or young person adjusts to being in care. Usually, but not always. Sometimes the challenge continues. After some days Tilly started spending every other weekend with her mother and grandmother. One day Tilly receives an inappropriate picture of her from an unknown number Later on they find out that these pictures were send by Tilly's stepfather. And later he was sentenced in prison. Tilly's mother was a victim too of domestic violence and probably was not in any position to protect her. We could also imagine the mind games played in that house, resulting in Tilly feeling confused, alone and frightened. It would take time and probably counselling before she began to come to terms with everything that had happened. Some people never do their adult years are blighted with the memories of their unhappy or abusive childhood.

### **Conclusion:**

In addition to the acute physical harm that mistreatment of children can cause, a child's responses to neglect or abuse can have long-lasting, even generational effects. Childhood abuse is associated with costs to society as a whole, as well as long-term physical, psychological, and

behavioral effects. These effects could exist separately, or they could be connected. Abuse or neglect can prevent a child's brain from growing normally and cause psychiatric problems like low self-esteem, which might eventually result in risky behaviours like substance addiction. The type, regularity, duration, and intensity of the maltreatment as well as the bond between the victim and the abuser all have an impact on each child's results, which can vary greatly depending on the child's age and developmental stage at the time the abuse took place. Certain long-term physical consequences of neglect or abuse may manifest right away (such as brain damage brought on by head trauma), while others may not manifest or be detected for months or years. Physical violence and physical wellbeing are clearly related, but it is also crucial to understand that mistreatment of any kind can have long-term physical effects.

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