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What We Need to Learn From Covid

The pandemic has dramatically impacted our society. No one expected the pandemic to hit and see society rapidly change. America and other parts of the world had also changed in one blink of an eye. At the same time, the pandemic has made issues more visible—for instance, poverty, mental illness, health systems, and more. Many families have been placed on the edge for the past couple of years due to these issues. The world covid has created also impacted children—those who were born before and during the pandemic.

The pandemic brought the world to chaos, making people scared of normal things in their lives; going outside to get fresh air, socializing with others, and eating out on special occasions. However, this was different when the pandemic first hit. When covid was first discussed in the news, the virus was seen as something that would not be part of their lives. This includes myself as well. I never thought the virus would strongly affect my life until a famous comedian in Japan passed away due to covid soon after the quarantine had started. As Defoe mentions in his writings, “The mourners did not go about the streets indeed, for nobody put on black or made a formal dress of mourning for their nearest friends; but the voice of mourners was truly heard in the streets” (Defoe, 3). Seeing the comedian’s death and pictures of his funeral impacted many people worldwide.

As each individual has started to have a fear of the virus, families with children were impacted significantly more than others. CJ, a 4-year-old girl, was adopted into a nice family. However, when they adopted her, there were several things that caught their eye. CJ had cigarette burns on her body, missing patches of hair, broken teeth, was terrified of water, and occasionally ate food out of the trash. On top of that, she would shriek at anyone trying to

approach CJ(Wong). Her actions and proof of physical abuse show how parents have been stressed to the point where they cannot control themselves. It also shows how covid has affected children's development as well.

Young children are developed through social and emotional aspects (Chow-Johnson). Meaning schools and daycares were a big part of their development. These environments were places where learned how to share, create connections, and learn how to use critical thinking to solve their problems. In other words, a place to develop their skills. Not having a space like that outside of homes created many struggles for families and children. Families depended on schools and daycares for meals and to create time for work. Many schools offered children free lunches for those who were financially struggling. As it was normal for families to depend on school meals, after schools closed, low-income families struggled to get enough food onto their dinner tables.

A couple of months ago, I came across an article saying that they thought the virus would bring equality because it would affect everyone. It was an interesting perspective I had never encountered before. The pandemic has shown many inequality and issues hidden deep down—for instance, poverty. Those who were wealthy, they did not have to struggle at all compared to those who were financially unstable. Wealthy families moved to their mansions and were able to have access to many things. This had happened in the past as well. Defoe states, “But at the other end of the town their consternation was very great: and the richer sort of people, especially the nobility and gentry from the west part of the city, thronged out of town with their families and servants in an unusual manner”(Defoe, 2). People during the plague also evacuated to their mansions for safety, while others who could not afford to move were left behind to suffer.

Another similarity we can see is when people caught the virus. Before the vaccine was created, many people were sent to the hospital when they caught covid. Families often call an ambulance to take their loved ones to the hospital. In those cases, neighbors would know which families had covid, leading them to distance themselves from others even more. Although there were no signs put up at the houses that were affected, the situation was similar to back when the plague happened, “That every house visited be marked with a red cross of a foot long in the middle of the door, evident to be seen, and with these usual printed words”(Defoe, 6). Having the signs and seeing an ambulance brought more fear to families as the virus spread rapidly around the neighborhood.

This has also created distance between students in schools as well. When children found out one had caught covid, they would distance themselves from them. In some cases, this lasted for a long time. Children born or grew up (under the age of 10) during the pandemic have struggled to socialize with their friends, play, and develop skills due to the education to protect themselves from the virus; by social distancing and wearing masks. For instance, from these actions, children did not learn how to share. “Sharing” is an essential skill people need, especially when entering a work environment. The action of “sharing” can be seen as showing trust and open-mindedness. It is an essential skill everyone needs, and this is only one of the many skills people need to develop.

These issues should be prioritized as much as those in the medical system. It is said that without mastering the foundational skills, the disparities continue to widen, which makes the child fall back even more (Wong). As the pandemic is slowly coming to an end, we need to put more focus on learning from our mistakes and not leaving it as it is. Leaving the problems will create more issues and lead us to suffer again. This applies to all the problems that became

visible due to the pandemic. Through this experience, we have learned how people would react to stressful situations. It is our job to not let history repeat itself and be prepared for the worst that could happen again.

References

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