

The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez Reaction Paper

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The case of Gabriel Fernandez was very crucial. It is difficult to imagine an eight-year-old child being brutally beaten to death, with no remorse. What makes this even more catastrophic is the fact that he was held in a cabinet as a prisoner and was feed kitty litter as a means of punishment. There have been various cases of abuse, but this case has shown to be one of the worst many have witnessed. From episode one into the last it is hard to fathom how a human can treat another in this manner, especially when it is their own.

Initially Gabriels' mothers presents as being an evil person. However, as the case proceeds it is recognized that the mother of Gabriel has witnessed trauma throughout her childhood. Gabriels mother was ganged raped at the age of eleven. In addition to that Gabriels' mother was also abused as a child by her parents. Another factor that was presented during the trial was Gabriels' mother IQ. This could have contributed to her, mistreating Gabriel.

There are various reasons why Gabriels stepfather may have treated him in that manner. However, the main reason is that the mother allowed this to occur. She gave him permission and also participated in his abuse. One story that was stated in the documentary many times was the last episode of abuse. This is where the mother had instigated to the stepfather that she was told by Gabriel to leave him. The stepfather stated in his own confession that he lost all composure during that point and began to beat Gabriel. Although Gabriel denies stating this, The stepfather continued to beat him. This seems as if she was deliberately trying to sabotage and put Gabriel in situations that would lead to abuse.

The system failed Gabriel. Many outsiders made note that Gabriel was being abused, yet nothing was done to protect him. Family members have also failed him. Pearl Fernandez

originally gave him up upon birth. She made it noticeably clear that she didn't want him. She gave Gabriel to his uncle and his lover. They were his caretaker since birth. Gabriel's uncle was in a same-gender relationship. The grandmother believed that a child should not be growing up in a household that displayed that behavior. She then advised that Gabriel go back and live with his mother. The initial downfall of Gabriel is being taken out of the home he was originally in. He had caregivers who loved him unconditionally. If the mother didn't want him, then they should have let him stay with a member of the family that did. This would have avoided his death overall.

A therapist is a mandated reporter. Their primary line of duty is to report any harm being done to a child. Therefore, as a therapist the first course of action is to let authorities know that the child is in danger. There are three forms of therapy that can be used to combat child abuse. One is Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), exposure therapy and Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR). With the (CBT) The child will learn the accurate way of dealing with toxic behaviors. The child will also learn different mechanisms of coping. This would enable them to express themselves. Exposure therapy would be used to confront the fears developed during the abuse. This form of therapy will aid in helping to reduce anxiety. In addition, the child will be able to speak on their trauma and approach their fears in a setting that is gentle. Lastly (EMDR) is a form a therapy that helps eliminate traumatic memories using eye movement. This form of therapy allows the brain to reprocess memories as the therapist moves back and forth (Corey, 2017).

As mentioned above there were plenty of things that they could have done to keep Gabriel out of harms way. They could have left him with the custodial parents that he originally had. He could have gone to live with other family members who cared for him. In addition, the

human service workers could have taken him out of the home or and did additional digging. There were so many people that came forth to speak up for him. For example, the security guard, the teacher, family members and countless people who witness his abuse. The social worker got various complaints, but took the mother word for it. I believe she should have done more surprised visits to catch the parents off guard.

Is his mom and step-dad evil or mentally ill? I do believe that the mom and stepdad has evil conation. It is obvious that the parents had full knowledge of what they were doing. They knew to lie and make up excuses for a reason. They knew that they had to hid certain events for a reason. That is where I say they were evil. If they were doing good, why would they need to lie? They knew they were causing harm to the boy, and lied to cover their tracks. Not only that when the worker would come to the home, they would abuse him worst. There was a point were Gabriel didn't explain to the teacher what was going on. As mentioned above the mother did have traumatic events however, as spoken in chapter 8 accountability is needed in order to make an improvement. Both the dad and the mother must accept responsibility for their behavior(Lisa Jackson-Cherry; Bradley T. Erford & , 2017).

This story has bought back alot of emotions from the past. As a person who has gone through different forms of abuse this story touched me differently. It also brings back memories of a period of time that I was in heavy need, and no one came to help me. I went through emotional, psychological, and physical abuse. However, there are things that happen to Gabriel I never witnessed, I relate to him very deeply. This year he would have been eighteen. It is sad that his life was taken at a very young age and unfortunately an example for many in the future.

References

Corey, G. (2017). Theory and practice of counseling & psychotherapy (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Lisa Jackson-Cherry; Bradley T. Erford & . (2017). Crisis assessment, intervention, and prevention (3rd ed.). Pearson Education (US).