



When Kids Are Traumatized at School

Educator Barnes – February 20, 2019

A story from West Virginia made my blood boil. Children, who were in a special education class, were mistreated by the educators that were supposed to care for them. School went from a haven to a place of terror.

A mother of one of the students became concerned when her child did not want to attend school, so she hid a recording device in her child's hair. What the device recorded was beyond disturbing.

Here are some excerpts provided by [WJAC Six News](#):

Instructor #1: *"This one I could punch her right in her face."*

A different instructor in the same class.

Instructor #2: *"You got to go pee-pee? Pee-pee? Or do you not have to go pee-pee and you just want to go **** * in a chair?"*

There's more:

Instructor #2: *"I'm going to pull your hair until you start crying."*

Instructor #3: *"Don't throw it. Don't throw. You animal you."*

Instructor #2: *"Yep. You wench."*

Instructor #2: *"You're like a pygmy. You're like a pygmy thing."*

These instructors not only target the child who has the hidden recorder but other children in the room. I can empathize with the parents' pain when they heard the recording. When my sons transitioned from daycare to PreK-3, I was excited. My excitement turned to sorrow once I learned a parent reported that the teaching assistant was calling my son the evil twin. When I would drop my identical twin sons off at school, one would run into his class, but my other son would cry when I would drop him off at his class. I thought it was separation anxiety. There are questions that bother me to this day. How did I not realize it was something other than separation anxiety? What else did she say to my child? What's worse was the unintended consequences. If you call one identical twin evil, it implies that the other identical twin is good.

It took years for my son to see himself differently and want to go to school. He asked me, "Why can't you be my teacher?" That broke my heart. Although the mothers in West Virginia say their children are happy now that they have transferred to another school, it is hard to know what long term effects the words of those educators will have.

The words we say as educators matter. I'll be honest, at times, frustration has caused me not to handle a situation in the best way, but I can't understand how educators could call children evil or threaten them with physical harm. If you are an educator and you are harboring that much anger in your heart, you need to leave the profession. If you are an educator and you are aware of another educator mistreating students, you must turn that person in and report

the actions. Too many children come to school with trauma, and school should never be the place students are traumatized.