

A PROGRAM AND SERVICE OF  
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC RISK RETENTION GROUP, INC.



[Toolbox](#) [My Diocese](#)

[Adrian Alarcon](#)

## Toolbox

Archdiocese of Los Angeles - San Pedro Region ▼

[Training](#)

[Acronyms and Other Internet Shorthand](#)

[What is VIRTUS®?](#)

[VIRTUS Online](#)

[Protecting Children](#)

[USCCB Current Resources](#)

[Update My Account](#)


[Contact My Coordinator](#)

[My Local Coordinator](#)

[My Report](#)

### **The Devastating Effects of Verbal Abuse**

**By The VIRTUS Programs**

Remember the old saying, sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me? Well, Florida State University researchers have found that it's not true. 

A study by Florida State researchers has found people who were verbally abused in childhood were 1.6 times more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety than those who had not been verbally abused. Those who were abused were also twice as likely to suffer mood or anxiety disorders during their lifetimes, according to psychology professor Natalie Sachs-Ericsson, the study's lead author.

"The old saying about sticks and stones was wrong. Names will forever hurt you," says Sachs-Ericsson. The study was published in the Journal of Affective Disorders. FSU researchers teamed with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and included 5,614 people from the ages of 15 to 54. The study revealed that 30 percent of participants reported a parent sometimes or often verbally abused them. This high percentage surprised researchers, according to Sachs-Ericsson.

Parents, Sachs-Ericsson says, often are merely repeating parenting styles from their own parents—or they may not know of positive ways to motivate and discipline their children.

The result is that, over time, children who are verbally abused come to believe that what their parents are saying about them is true. They lock on to the negative statements about themselves and use them as an explanation for anything that goes wrong. For instance, if a parent tells a child that he or she is bad or unlovable, when something negative happens, say the child doesn't make the basketball team or the cheerleading squad—then the child will fall back on the pre-programmed reasoning of being "bad" or "unlovable." This pattern of thinking often spills over into adulthood, thus causing much anxiety and suffering later in life as well.

Preventing, avoiding, or breaking the chain of these negative behavior patterns must be accomplished in order to build a healthy environment for children. Additionally, parents and caregivers can strive to learn how to cultivate their children's self-esteem, thus equipping them to better deal with all of life's challenges and rewards.

**Author:**

**VIRTUS**

**Other articles by this author:**

[Creating a Safe Christmas Celebration](#)

[Helping Young People Cope](#)

[Technology Safety](#)

[Playground Safety](#)

[Common concerns about investigations](#)

Article Posted on: 2012-12-18 15:24:19.0 - It has been viewed 270 times

[\(Acceptable Use Policy\)](#)

3901462

NE

LV={ts '2020-09-29 21:37:00'}

LO=/virtus/index.cfm