

Stereotypical Children Ila Keyser and Aleksa Salter

Stereotype: *Noun*- “A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing” (Merriam Webster).

Jeriah Scott and Finley Lewis were two of my most difficult students to counsel. Neither boy could open up, as they didn't know how to properly communicate their emotions. I started weekly sessions with them around March. They were recommended to me by their teacher, Mr. Laries, someone who typically connected with his students instantaneously. He had seen a recent decline in participation and test scores from Finley, and Jeriah had noticeably more aggressive tendencies.

My first session with Finley went very well. He is a very bright boy with sad circumstances. Finley has autism, which affects his ability to reason, communicate, and conduct social interactions. Our sessions consist of brainwave stimulations that get Finley to think about his own emotions. Unfortunately, Finley's problems started with his bully, Jeriah Scott.

Jeriah was what everyone would call your stereotypical bully. He realized Finley was different from his other classmates, so he constantly pointed it out to anyone that would listen to him. But, there was more to Jeriah than just his words and actions.

In January, Jeriah transferred to Franklin Schooling. His aunt gained custody of him after his mother and father were found guilty of illegal drug dealing. Jeriah was very psychologically damaged from this, and Finley was the perfect target to help him cope.

Guiding sessions with these boys the past few weeks has helped me realize that stereotypes are not true depictions of one's character. We all need to push past the fact that someone is different from us and value them as a human being.