



Mains Practice Question

Case Study

Dr. Ankur Sharma is a surgeon. He comes from a well-educated family. Rahul, his little son, is 7 years old and is showing some troubling behaviour patterns. Rahul has been taking pleasure in hurting and torturing creatures for the last two years. It all started when he would pick up some insects such as cockroaches and worms and take delight in cutting them to pieces with a blade. The family keeps some pets including rabbits and some days ago Mr. Sharma detected the boy vivisecting a rabbit in a lonely corner of their garden. By the time Mr. Sharma intervened it was all over, and young Rahul was almost relishing the sight of his bloody hand. Mr. Sharma, of course, scolded the kid but they are worried about the gruesome incidents likely to happen from this kind of perverse behaviour.

What actions should the parents take? Select from the following options:

1. They should ignore the incidents as childish pranks.
2. They should explain to Rahul the need to behave kindly towards animals and to avoid violence in all forms.
3. They should take Rahul to a psychiatrist for counselling and treatment.
4. They should not let Rahul out of sight when he is alone.

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Approach

- Briefly introduce your answer by explaining the ethical issue.
- Discuss about various stakeholders involved in the case.
- Discuss your course of action.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

The case involves Rahul who is suffering from trouble behavior pattern as he is hurting and torturing creatures and how his parents can cure his behavior.

Body

- **Stakeholders involved in case:**
 - Rahul and his parents
 - Society at large.
 - Psychiatrist who would treat Rahul.
- **Ethical issues involved:**
 - **Emotional Intelligence:** It would help Ankur in handling the difficult situation arising from the above case.
 - **Empathy:** It is an awareness of the needs and feelings of others both individually and in

groups and being able to see things from the point of view of others, this would help Ankur in figuring out the issue with his son Rahul and find a way out from the situation.

◦ **Course of action:**

• **My course of action would be:**

- The first course of action will be unwise. The type of violent behavior shown by Rahul is unnatural. It should not be left unattended since the tendency may grow strong and become ingrained.
- The second course of action may or may not work. Parents can certainly inculcate non-violent thoughts and behaviour in Rahul. But it is a question as to what extent he would absorb such advice. As he is too young, he may not realise that the danger of his behaviour trait and after listening to his parents he continues to harm animals.
- The third option is the correct response. Normal children do not enjoy torturing and vivisectioning insects. If Rahul has been doing this, there may be some underlying pathology. The last incident is definitely serious. More than adults, children generally get attracted to pets and start enjoying their company. Instead, if the boy is killing a pet which is as innocent as a rabbit, there may be a serious disease which needs to be addressed or else it may spread and the boy may become more violent over time. Finally, he may end up even being a murderer.
 - Therefore, early correction could circumvent many ugly situations in adulthood. Outbursts of violent episodes may originate from unpleasant events and a sense of frustration. This diagnosis is important and only after diagnosis a cure can be sought. Sharma family would be well advised to consult a child psychologist for treatment of this pathological condition.
- The fourth option would be impracticable. Parents cannot keep continuous watch over children and is not possible to always keep a check on him, it would not be a permanent solution and may deteriorate Rahul's behavior.

Conclusion

The third course would be final course of action, as by taking Rahul to the psychiatrist for counselling would help him in curing his behavior. Further, they may encourage and suggest Rahul to play with children of his age and promote his interest in group activities as a means of socialization.