





Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me. It's a phrase we've all heard before. But I'm going to let you in on a little secret: it's also completely untrue. Parents teach this phrase because they don't want kids being overly sensitive or fussing about every little thing someone says. But we all know that words can indeed hurt. In fact, they can hurt quite a bit--sometimes even more than sticks and stones.

Science shows us that when people say mean things, it goes right to the same part of our brain that feels pain when we're physically hurt. And these injuries can be very powerful. A few unkind words can cause someone to be sad with hurts they feel all day long, maybe even longer. People have used unkind words to spread hatred and even start wars. Some people are so mean with their words that they make someone else so sad and depressed that they think about hurting themselves, or don't even feel like living anymore. Yes, words can indeed hurt. That is why it's so important to be careful with our words.

Of course, you would never hurt someone with a gun or with knives, so be careful not to do it with your words, either. Because mean words cause injuries that bleed on the inside, we may not see right away the injury they cause. Yet unkind words can create hurts that cut deep, just like a sword might. Be sure not to use *your* words as a weapon.

