

## Say Goodbye to Cyber Bullying!

Camden Davis

Cyber bullying is a new kind of plague that sweeps the middle and high schools of the nation. It becomes more and more popular each day, leaving many students feeling depressed or angry. Nearly 43% of kids have been bullied online, and most kids have access to the web. In addition, 68% of teens agree that cyber bullying is a serious problem. Cyber bullying is an extremely easy form of bullying, because it isn't face to face. Bullying victims are 2 to 9 times more likely to consider committing suicide, than someone who isn't bullied. Only 1 and 10 victims will inform a parent or trusted adult of their abuse. Girls are about twice as likely as boys to be victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying. This makes cyber bullying very dangerous for girls as well as boys. Talking to an adult or parent will help get rid of suicidal thoughts. However, very few victims talk to an adult or parent.

According to student 1 (anonymous) when they were bullied they felt "Sad, angry and depressed" when they were being cyber bullied over a commonly used website known as MySpace. This student thought that cyber bullying could be prevented by "Not going onto websites that can offend you." This experience made the student unable to feel safe at his or her own house. It made the student think the same about cyber bullying; the student stated, "I always knew cyber bullying was bad." Luckily, it didn't give the student any suicidal thoughts. Student 1 wasn't bullied in any other ways though. He or she thought that the cyber bully "Didn't care about me or any of his or her other victims." Student 1 also thought "He or she was feeling good about himself or herself when he or

she was cyber bullying me.” The victim didn’t think that talking to someone would have helped.

Nick Yakaminski, a local Medea Creek Middle School student, has witnessed someone being cyber bullied before on x-box live, and he stated that he “felt bad for the victim.” He thinks that if people didn’t say “racist comments online” then cyber bullying would end or slow down. The thought of cyber bullying made Nick feel “self aware.” “Bullying on the web” is what he thought was the definition of cyber bullying. He thought that Facebook was a hotspot of cyber bullying. Nick added that talking to an adult might help the victims of cyber bullying. He would say, “you should be nicer and consider peoples feelings” to a cyber bully. He also thinks that others in their own local communities could help those who are victims of cyber bullying by “talking to the victims.”

Heatherly Davis, a parent of a Medea Creek Middle School student, states that her child has never been cyber bullied. Also, she has never been concerned that her child has been cyber bullied or was cyber bullied. Her definition of a cyber bully is “somebody on the internet that takes advantage of a weaker person by threatening or using an aggressive manor.” She thinks that most instances of cyber bullying occur by someone hunting down an individual victim over the Internet. She thinks that better communication can help prevent cyber bullying. Heatherly has restricted the websites that her child can use, due to the issue of cyber bullying. She said that bullying has changed since she was in middle school because of the Internet: “we didn’t have the Internet to bully with, however, bullying still occurred.” She also isn’t surprised by the ways that bullying has changed.

Dr. Bayles, the dean of students, replied to the question “How many cases of cyber have you received?” with “A fairly significant amount, because there are so many ways to do it.” She said that cyber bullying is a significant threat due to the fact that people can get their feelings hurt permanently. Dr. Bayles stated that Facebook and texts can be where cyber bullying occurs the most. However, according to Dr. Bayles, Instagram is a new form of bullying. The psychological damage to the victims is, “pretty extensive, because words can be damaging.” She declared that the forms of bullying can depend upon the student, and cyber bullying occurs in a group usually. Dr. Bayles pronounced that “education about cyber bullying” is the only way to prevent or slow down cyber bullying. She announced that cyber bullying occurs mostly by, “a comment or post getting out of control.” Her definition of cyber bullying is, “attempting to isolate a student from groups or threatening a student by use of technology.”

Travis Mitchell, a local Medea Creek Middle School student, has not witnessed cyber bullying before. He thinks that if filters were added to social media sites that block certain messages, then cyber bullying would end or slow down. “A person who is insecure and uses social networking to bully people” is what he thought the definition of a cyber bully is. He thought that Facebook was a hotspot of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying occurring everyday is how often he thought it occurred. Travis added that the victim should be careful who you have as a friend and ask for help, from an adult, after being bullied. He would say, “stop being so insecure and mean” to a cyber bully. He also

thought that others in their own local communities can help those who are victims of cyber bullying by “punishing the bullies so cyber bullying will stop.”

###