



Bullycide: The New Generation of Bullying

By: Astrid Medina

Bullycide is the new term to describe today's generation of relentless bullying amongst teens and children that is leading to suicide. Studies have been conducted about the relationship between bullying and suicide on how a victim of bullying has had suicidal thoughts. Teens and children who face bullying live in constant fear for their lives thinking they have no one to go to for support. Victims believe the only way to end their bullying is by taking their own life.

In the United States, there has been many recent cases of teens and children being bullied at school or online that causes them to take their own lives. Teens and children are often bullied due to gender, race, physical features, sexuality, gender transition, weight, personality and jealousy. The rate of bullying this generation is reaching an all-time high with 1 out of 4 kids being bullied and 9 out of 10 kids in the LGBTQ are being tormented at school and online. About 28 percent of students between the ages of 12-18 are bullied throughout the school year while 43 percent are being bullied online. 160,000 students stay home every day from school to avoid being bullied. According to the CDC, suicide is now the third leading cause of death among teens and children which results to 4,400 deaths per year. 14 percent of high school students thought about committing suicide while 7 percent have attempted it.

Bullycide is connected to different types of bullying such as physical bullying, verbal bullying, cyberbullying, emotional bullying, sexting and sending messages about someone. These types of bullying can cause the victim to develop serious health issues such as depression, anxiety, sadness, anger and changes in sleep and eating habits. These symptoms can lead into adulthood if the situation is not being controlled. Bullying causes a decrease in academic achievement due to children not wanting to go to school, so they can avoid harassment. They are likely to skip class or miss school which causes low test scores and grades to drop. It can lead to negative habits on substance abuse, consumption of alcohol and engage in sexual activity. The symptoms from bullying can lead to suicide risks, not just bullying alone.

Warning signs of suicide include:

- Depression
- Isolating oneself from others and losing interest in favorite activities
- Talking about self-injury
- Venting on how they can't handle the situation anymore

13-year-old Rosalie Avila was a middle school student who committed suicide on November 28th due to bullying at school and on social media. Rosalie was ridiculed by classmates because of her braces and would call her ugly. There was even a video posted of Rosalie sitting by herself while a classmate was making fun of her. Her parents stated they placed Rosalie into counseling when they found her cutting herself and had become more isolated. They had no idea suicide had crossed her mind.

Parents and teachers need to be more alert on how serious bullying has become that is causing the lives of many innocent teens and children. Especially in schools, administrators and teachers need to develop helpful strategies and consequences that will prevent students from bullying. There have been recent cases of students and their parents notifying administrators that the student is constantly being bullied at school and online by someone or a group of students. Unfortunately, most schools have lacked to take action that results to students taking their life.

Parents should not allow their children to be a victim of bullying. It's important for parents to pay close attention to any change in behavior that indicate their child is being bullied. Parents should have good communication with their children, so they can be encouraged to talk about bullying taken place. Most teens and children don't want to admit they are being bullied at school. If parents see a serious bullying issue, they should tell their child it's not their fault and report it to school

authorities. Parents should seek professional help for their child to prevent them from having suicidal thoughts or intentions.

If you or someone you know are having suicidal thoughts please call the free suicide hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

References

- Bullying and Suicide. (2015, July 07). Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <http://www.bullyingstatistics.org/content/bullying-and-suicide.html>
- A. (2017, October). Suicide in Children and Teens. Retrieved April 23, 2018, from https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Teen-Suicide-010.aspx
- Effects of Bullying. (2017, September 12). Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/effects/index.html>
- Chuck, E. (2017, December 4). Bullying drove 13-year-old Rosalie Avila to kill herself, parents say. Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/bullying-drove-13-year-old-rosalie-avila-kill-herself-parents-n826281>