Cyberbullying

Does cyberbullying affect teens today?

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), and defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web site, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others (Keith, Martin, 2005). It is an ongoing issue that is affecting teens throughout the United States, especially in school and the Internet. It is an important issue to discuss because it can cause long-term damage to victims and bullies. It is important to stop cyberbullying and get help for the people involved. Cyberbullying can be worse than other types of bullying because the bully may be anonymous. Though cyber bullying has become unfortunately common, there are some ways that kids, parents, and other concerned adults can help prevent or stop cyber bullying. The types of cyberbullying vary from flaming, impersonation, outing and trickery, and exclusion. "Flaming is sending angry or vulgar messages, impersonation is pretending to be someone else to make that person look bad or to place them in danger, outing and trickery is posting materials that contain sensitive, private information about another person or forwarding private messages, lastly exclusion is intentionally excluding a person from an online group."(Willard, 2005) "Specifically, a student is being cyberbullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over

time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. The person who intentionally inflicts or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon someone else is engaging in negative action."(Olweus, 2003, p.15). A survey found that 57% of students said that someone had said hurtful or angry things to them online with 13% saying it happens "quite often". 53% of students admit saying hurtful things to someone online and 7% admit to doing it "quite often". 35% of students have been threatened online with 5% saying it happens "quite often". (Keith, Martin, 2005).

Several researches believe that cyberbullying begins when parents decided to give their children cell phones. The objective of parents giving their children cell phones was to keep track of them and keep them safe. One important point that needs to be stressed is that schools should play an important role in combating cyberbullying. But what parents don't realize is that the same cell phones they are giving to their children have become tools of harassment. The newest forms of cell phones have the ability to send text messages, pictures, and even live video. To place a cell phone in the hand of a bored teenager is just like handing a gun to a wanted serial killer, in the end, either way someone is going to get hurt. Most parents tend to think that this kind of bullying is uncommon and that their child would never attempt to do something that mean to someone. Unfortunately not so, according to Alane Fagin, the executive director of Child Abuse Prevention Services (CAPS). "On-line bullying has become very common and is

particularly easy for girls to do. This an example of relational aggression where girls use

relationships as weapons. Imagine, she says, a group of girls sitting around a computer. The

person being instant messaged thinks she is only talking to one person. But before she even

knows it, the "target" has said something negative about one of the group members. The group

starts gossiping about her." "This leads to social isolation", says Fagin (cited in Wolfe, 2004).

"In general, girls inflict virtual abuse more than boys through instant messaging, online

conversations, and e-mails. A survey of girls ages 12-18 found that 74% of adolescent girls

spend the majority of their time online on chat rooms or sending instant messages and email

(Migliore, 2003)." Boys are more likely to make online threats and build websites targeting

others. Some tips for children when dealing with cyberbullying are as followed 1. Never share or

give out personal information, PIN numbers, phone numbers, etc. 2. Do not read messages by

cyberbullies; they can be used to take action. 3. Do not open a message from someone you do not

know 4. Do not reply to the person that is bullying or harassing you. Some tips for parents are 1.

Pay attention! Know how and when you child or children are using the Internet. 2. Try installing

blocking or filtering software. 3. Encourage your child to communicate with you if they are

being bullied. 4. Limit your child's time using the Internet. 5. Become more tech savvy.

Lastly, some tips for schools are 1.Enforce school policies for adequate Internet and cell phone

use. 2. Administer zero tolerance for any form of bullying. 3. Confirm that children and young

people are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with perceptively and effectively. 4.

Guarantee that parents/ guardians expressing bullying apprehensions have them taken seriously.

Traditionally, home is where a teen can go and escape a bully, but with the new advances

in technology, home is no longer a safe haven.

It is a fascinating time in history. Children have opportunities for learning that previously

seemed like science fiction. Schools, parents and children gain much from these advances in

technology, but at the same time, they create unique challenges. The primary thing that adults

need to do is to be more knowledgeable regarding the use of current technology and the ways

and means that children are using them. Many parents and teachers, who were not raised in a

cyber-world, do not feel comfortable with the tools children are using. By guiding children to use

the technology in ways that promote respect, understanding, and responsibility, we can lessen the

impact of this new form of bullying. In conclusion, with the expansion of the Internet and social

networking technologies cyber-bullying is becoming more common and more severe. The

information presented in this research paper should give people a better understanding of what a

cyber-bully is, how harmful they can really be, and how to prevent cyber-bullying from

happening. This research paper was written to inform society about what cyberbullying is and

how dangerous it is for teens.

Citation Page

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