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TEEN BULLYING & SUICIDE:



What You Should Know

Dear Friend:

The tragedy of suicide is magnified tremendously when it involves a young person taking his or her own life. The loss and sadness it causes family and loved ones is unimaginable.

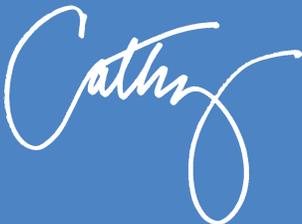
We are hearing more and more these days about the problem of teenage bullying – both in person and in cyberspace – and the significant role it has played in cutting short so many young lives so tragically.

Indeed, some recent studies suggest that there is a strong correlation between bullying and teen suicide. A series of bullying-related suicides, including many we have recently heard or read about right here in New York, have drawn much attention to the connection between bullying and suicide.

This brochure contains valuable information about teen bullying – including cyber bullying – and its link to the alarming rate of teen suicide. It also helps explain how to recognize the signs of bullying, and what you can do to help prevent it. Additionally, some important contact information is included concerning suicide prevention.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

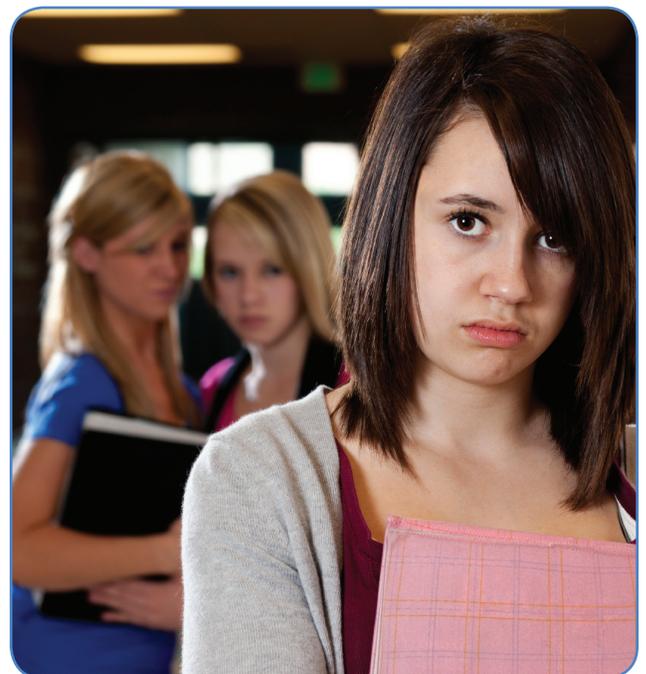


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Bullying and Suicide

The statistics on bullying and suicide are alarming. According to information provided by www.bullyingstatistics.org:

- The Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) reports that suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people, resulting in about 4,400 deaths per year. For every suicide among young people, it is estimated that there are at least another 100 suicide attempts
- Bully victims are (on average) about 5 times more likely to consider suicide than non-victims, according to studies by Yale University
- A study in Great Britain found that at least half of suicides among young people are related to bullying
- According to statistics by ABC News, nearly 30% of students are either bullies or victims of bullying, and 160,000 kids stay home from school every day because of fear of bullying



WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Some Warning Signs of Suicide

- Be mindful. If your child appears to display any of the following personality characteristics, it may indicate that there is a deeper problem that may lead to suicidal thoughts
- Showing signs of depression like ongoing sadness, withdrawal from others or losing interest in favorite activities
- Talking about or showing an interest in death or dying
- Engaging in dangerous or harmful activities, including reckless behavior, substance abuse or self injury
- Giving away their favorite possessions and saying goodbye to people
- Making comments that things would be better without them

What is Cyberbullying?



As the Internet and online social networks continue to grow, so does the phenomenon known as cyber bullying. This type of bullying describes when a child or teenager is harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, threatened or tormented using digital technology. Emotionally, cyber bullying can be scarring, since it involves threats and humiliation.

Alarming Cyberbullying Statistics

- 58% of kids report that someone has been hurtful or mean to them online
- 21% of kids report that they've received threatening messages
- 42% of kids classify mean behavior towards them online as bullying
- 53% of kids admit that they have said something mean to someone else online

WHAT TO LOOK FOR: *Some Useful Tips*

Encourage kids to follow these simple rules if they are faced with a cyber bully:

- Tell someone about it. Find a trusted adult – either a parent or a teacher – and report the incident
- Do not delete the bully's messages. Save them somewhere on your computer or cell phone where they are easily accessible, should you need them as evidence of wrong doing
- Do not open messages from others that have sent you previous bullying messages. If you receive a message from someone you know is a cyber bully, ignore it
- Block cyber bullies who attack you during chats and other social media
- Do not agree to see someone you just met online in person, without talking to or bringing a trusted adult along

BULLYING IN SCHOOL: *Is Your Child A Victim?*

Here are some helpful signs for parents of teens to look for that may indicate their teen-ager might be a bullying victim:

- Coming home from school with damaged, ripped, or missing clothes, books or other possessions

According to a recent study by the American Medical Association, almost 30% of American teenagers are involved in school bullying. They are either being bullied, are doing the bullying, or both.

- Having cuts and bruises that are not explained
- Isolating from friends and family members
- Seeming afraid of going to school, whether it be walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in school activities with other teenagers
- Lacking interest in schoolwork or having failing grades
- Complaining often of headaches, stomachaches, or other physical problems
- Having trouble sleeping or suffering from bad dreams
- Lacking an appetite

Some Tips On How To Prevent Teen Bullying

EVERYONE should take an active stance against bullying including parents, teachers, school administrators and teens themselves.

- If TEENS see an act of bullying in school, they should IMMEDIATELY report it to a teacher or other responsible adult at school
- PARENTS should encourage their own TEENS to notify them IMMEDIATELY if they themselves become victims of bullying
- PARENTS should alert their TEENS about the harmful effects of bullying, and encourage them to be kind and understanding to others, regardless of the differences that may exist between them
- TEENS should step forward and speak up for a friend that is being bullied. They should let others know that bullying of their friend will not be tolerated and will be reported.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Regular communication between PARENTS and their TEENS about the topic of bullying will make it more comfortable for TEENS to speak up about bullying

