

THE TRUTH ABOUT

CYBERBULLYING

By Jesse Lake, DMYP for Wiltshire

An issue affecting many young people in the UK, and which has been in the news recently, is the worrying increase in cyberbullying.

Bullying has gone from the classroom and playground to the internet and text message due to the increase in young people having access to mobile phones, the internet and MSN.

Recently, research has shown that almost one in four young people who are between 11 and 19 years old have become a victim of cyberbullying. As an ex-victim myself I know how being bullied feels. It has an effect on the whole of your life. The bully targets you at school which is meant to be a safe place, and then at home, in your own private surroundings, the bully can attack by text or IM.

Bullying causes the victim great distress and has been known to lead the victim to self-harm, feeling shame, embarrassment, anger, depression, low self esteem

“The bully targets you at home in your own private surroundings”

and low self confidence. But what has made news recently, is that extreme cyberbullying has led young people to commit suicide. In some cases, cyberbullying or other forms of bullying can be a criminal offence.

If you are being bullied in any manner, I urge you to get help before it escalates. Go to a trusted adult; get a friend to tell someone what is happening; speak to someone from a helpline, DO SOMETHING to get it stopped before it's too late. Don't let the bully win.

If you know someone who is

being bullied, please report it to someone, even if your friend says not to. And if you're the bully, be ashamed and stop what you do. It's not big, it's not funny and it's not clever.

Please help put an end to cyberbullying and other types of bullying. Don't become another statistic.

ChildLine

If you or a friend need to talk to someone about bullying, you can call Childline on 0800 1111 or visit www.childline.org.uk/Info/Pages/Bullying.aspx

Did you know?

- A quarter of young people have experienced cyberbullying.
- Phonecalls, text messages and emails are the most common form of cyberbullying.
- More than a quarter of those who are bullied from a mobile phone don't know who's doing it.
- Cyberbullying is often nastier and more aggressive than face-to-face bullying.

Research by: Onyeka Igwe