

My name is Amy Mantha from Agawam Massachusetts. I am a Sophomore Psychology major and Forensic Psychology minor. As you may know, there are many consequences of the new sexting phenomenon. A major concern is bullying or cyber-bullying. In the scholarly journal *Social Development*, researchers state that the basic motives underlying human behavior is a need to be accepted and recognized by others (Olthof & Goossens). A review of the research states that cohesive norms are norms that are tied to popular people within culture which is an example of why others join in with the original bully. These norms are important because adolescents are greatly influenced by these norms. The need to belong may also be regarded as a major source of the need for power. Being bullied by a more powerful person or group than the victim is more severe than the effects of being bullied by a person of equal power because the victim is apt to feel more helpless. While boys usually engage in direct bullying, girls are more likely to indirectly bully such as spreading rumors and enforcing social isolation (Banks 1997). Some of the consequences of bullying are long-term for the health and well-being of victims. Low psychological well-being, poor social adjustment, psychological distress and physical wellness are a few examples.

When I was a junior in the academic year of 2007, I witnessed someone becoming a victim of sexting and bullying. A seventeen year old female student sent pictures of a nude part of her body... and it wasn't her elbow, to a male student who attended another school. That male student happened to be friends with every student in my school. The pictures were released and were sent to every cell-phone on the premises. My phone had vibrated in my purse and when I opened it, I was shocked at what I saw. I immediately heard gestures of disgust from behind me and I knew at that time they had received the same picture. I quickly deleted the picture and listened to everyone else hit send to other students in school. The female students in school started calling her vulgar names and started spreading rumors. Because the foreign object that was included in one of the pictures was also an object in the school cafeteria, the object was the perfect stimulus for a target. She stopped eating and avoided other. Eventually everyone stopped talking about it. The *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* states that suicide is commonly multiply determined. Jesse Logan, a high school student, hanged herself after being repeatedly harassed by the girls in her school after they received nude pictures from her ex-boyfriend. Hope Witsell was also a victim of cyber-bullying when a nude picture of her was released by a boy, whom she only wanted attention from. All of her classmates bullied her to the point where she could no longer bear it, and she hung herself. She was only thirteen. When is bullying going to stop? When all of the victims of bullying commit suicide? It shouldn't take the death of a kid to motivate addressing this problem. It's a step in the right direction that the Connecticut Legislature does not need a rash of teen suicides to recognize this as an important subject and to start intervening. Thank You.

References

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