

David Gallardo

Daniel Lazarte

Emma Rae Perez

Vivian Quach

Arlette Sainz

Joyce Win

Ms. Sutton

Contemporary Themes

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### Bullying: Statistics and Prevention

You see someone getting bullied. What do you do? How do you react? Would you interfere to help the victim, or walk away as if nothing happened? Most bystanders who witness bullying do nothing to help which is why bullying is one of leading causes of suicide. Suicide is never a solution and is an important issue that needs to be addressed.

According to the AFSP, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the third leading cause of death among teens and young adults. Most suicides are related to “any type of bullying such as physical bullying, emotional bullying, cyberbullying, sexting, and even by circulating suggestive or nude photos and messages about a person” (“Bullying and Suicide”). Roughly 160,000 kids stay home from school due to the fear of bullying. As of December 2014, about 4,400 people have committed suicide and at least 100 have attempted suicide; however, these statistics are rising. Although female victims are at higher risk of suicide compared to male victims, more men commit suicide because they are more likely to follow through due to their

**violent methods.** Bullying is a horrible experience that leads to a drastic actions. **Other than bullying,** depression is also a leading cause of suicide.

Over 90% of people commit suicide have clinical depression and/or another diagnosable **mental disorder.** Depression is described as “**general feelings of helplessness, worthlessness, and hopelessness**” (“**Teen Health**”). Often times, people who commit suicide had an alcohol or substance abuse problem. Adverse or traumatic life events in combination with other risk factors, such as clinical depression may also lead to suicide. Other risk factors include family violence, keeping firearms at home, physical or sexual abuse, and a family history of suicide. But suicide and suicidal behavior are never suitable responses to stress. **These factors can influence people to risk their lives and self harm.** These causes of suicide are also warning signs.

There are many warning signs of suicide and it is crucial to seek for and provide help. **Signs of suicide include:** “**showing signs of depression, like ongoing sadness, withdrawal from others, losing interest in favorite activities, or trouble sleeping or eating**” (“**Bullying and Suicide**”). People at risk may also say that their lives are too difficult to handle or say that life for their friends and family would be better without them. If a person is showing signs of these symptoms, reaching out to them or seeking professional help for them is the most effective way to assist them. It is important to people at risk of suicide to surround themselves with supportive family and friends. **With the support of friends and family, there is a high chance of preventing suicide.**

If you would like to prevent suicide, be willing to truly listen to the person. Letting the person vent or express their problems can help them to release the pain they are suppressing. You don't need to say much. There is no “right” thing to say. Just being with that person in their

time of need will give them a bit of relief that they are not alone. Let them know you are glad they turned to you. Avoid giving advice or arguing. Do not minimize their feelings or their problems, it does not matter how bad the problem is, what matters is how badly the problem is hurting the person. If you are someone in a lot of pain, give yourself some distance between thoughts and actions and know that people love and care about you.

### Work Cited

"Bullying and Suicide." - *Bullying Statistics*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Feb. 2015.

"Teen Health." *Teen Suicide Risk Factors and Prevention*. N.p., n.d. Web. 22 Feb. 2015.