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Cyberbullying and How It Affects Others

Cyberbullying tends to be forgotten in curriculums. Most teach not to bully but don't necessarily teach not to cyberbullying. Most reasons could be because people don't think it's as serious as it is, or maybe people don't think that it affects as many people as it does. CART should introduce a curriculum that teaches what cyberbullying and how it affects others.

Cyberbullying is a broad term, whether you're talking about its legal definition, or its casual definition. The most widely accepted definition, as said by the article "What is Cyberbullying" on the website *StopBullying*, is "Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets."

This can be separated into many categories based on what kind of cyberbullying is happening. One example is roasting. Roasting is when a person or a group of people tell offensive jokes about another person. Although this could be done while not online, it is mostly done online. Another type of cyberbullying is trolling. Trolling is when somebody posts mean comments or fights online with somebody purposefully to anger the reader. An example of this would be going to a forum that talks about political views and going to that forum for the intent to post comments that would specifically not align with their political views and fight with them purely with the intent of angering or enraging them. Much like roasting, this could be done offline too. Spamming is another type of cyberbullying. Spamming is doing something such as

posting, messaging, or commenting excessively with an aim in annoying the recipient. Outing is an especially damaging type of cyberbullying. It is the release of information without permission of the person of which the information belongs to. An example of this is somebody posting unflattering images which you may have sent to somebody in confidence. Finally there are mashups, which is content which makes fun of the original content. (Ivester)

Of course, there are claims that a way to solve cyberbullying is to just walk away from the computer, or phone, or whatever this bullying is occurring on. Although this can be true in some cases, in others this is not exactly true. One should think about it as how it affects these victims after they leave the computer. Think about Megan Meier. Megan Meier had created a Myspace account and had quickly met somebody, age 16 and had started talking to him. After a while, Josh had finally sent a message stating “Everybody in O’Fallon knows how you are. You are a bad person and everybody hates you. Have a shitty rest of your life. The world would be a better place without you.” (The Tragic Megan Meier Story). This plus some very mean comments that her “friends” had sent her, had finally led her to suicide. Cyberbullying can have some serious consequences, and just simply walking away from the computer that she was using would not have changed the fact that she had felt bad for the things that Josh and her friends had said. These things don’t just leave when somebody walks away from the computer. These things stay with that person and haunts them. If these things were to be taught were wrong, these sort of things would not happen.

The types of cyberbullying can be pretty extreme. In one case, with a person named Tyler Clementi, it was pretty severe. Tyler Clementi was a gay man who was in college at the time of this. Tyler had asked for privacy because he was having a date over and his roommate at the time,

Dharun Ravi, had agreed to this, but had left the webcam on and pointed it at Tyler's bed. When things became a bit more intimate, Dharun had invited more people to come watch online, humiliating Tyler online. After this, Tyler had committed suicide by jumping off of the George Washington Bridge (Tyler Clementi's Story). All of this was due to an outing of information that Tyler never gave permission to give. Dharun probably never realized how big of an impact on Tyler's feelings this would make, therefore did it anyways. Of course, it is completely possible that he did know, which would make the act that much worse. If Dharun was perhaps educated in the effects that cyberbullying could have on a person, and that the release of such private information, he would have not done the act that he had done. But he had indeed done it, and the consequences were everpresent. If people in general were educated, specifically at CART, perhaps something like this could be stopped and another person would be saved.

Cyberbullying is indeed a relevant thing. One may think that this is something that only happens to a select amount of people, not many. This is not the case. In fact, according to the article article "Cyber Bullying Statistics" on the website NoBullying.com, "About half of young people have experienced some form of cyber bullying. Of them, almost 20 per cent experience cyber bullying regularly." This is quite a large margin of young people who have experienced some kind of bullying. This is no small matter. If this many people have had some sort of cyberbullying, there must be even more who don't even admit it. If cyberbullying were to be implemented into the curriculum at CART, although it may not make a dent right away in the current statistics of how many people get cyberbullied, it could perhaps start a domino effect, where one school decides to do something about this cause, and others start to do this also, and

so on and so forth until finally a dent is made in the amount of young people that are cyberbullied.

In conclusion, CART should introduce a curriculum that covers cyberbullying. Cyberbullying affects so many people it can't be ignored. Not only this, but it can't just be solved by walking away from the computer. On top of this, the effects of cyberbullying can be devastating.

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