

**In this issue...** we tackle one of the biggest issues facing youth today and one of the emerging issues in suicide prevention: cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is a relatively new phenomenon, but is on the increase and is just as damaging (if not more so) than other forms of bullying. It can leave victims feeling trapped and isolated, with nowhere to hide.

Our feature article this week is all about providing information on what is cyberbullying, knowing how to spot it, and learning what to do if you think someone is a victim of cyber bullying.

In this issue we also review the book '?' as well as tell you about upcoming suicide prevention & bereavement support events.

## What is cyberbullying?

According to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), 'Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM) and defamatory personal websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others'.



## How big of an issue is cyberbullying?

The following statistics from a Queensland study by QUT of 120 year 8 students:

- 14% said they had been a victim of cyberbullying
- 11% said they had cyber bullied others
- 25% said they knew someone who had been cyber bullied
- 50% said it was on the increase
- text messaging and email are the most common methods used

**Pre-teens and teens are the most active users of cyber communication and are therefore most at risk of cyberbullying.**

(<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/talkout/profiles/researchers/marilynCampbell.shtml>)

## What are the effects of cyberbullying?

People who experience cyberbullying often:

- experience feelings of hopelessness, fear and isolation
- become withdrawn and depressed

- feel unable to escape the situation as cyberbullying intrudes into a person's home and personal spaces via internet/mobile phone etc.
- consider suicide as a way of escaping the pain and in some cases attempt or complete suicide.

## How can I tell if someone I know is being cyberbullied?

A recent survey conducted by i-SAFE America concluded that 58 percent of children who have experienced cyber bullying never told an adult or their parent (cited in <http://www.cyberbullyalert.com/blog/category/cyber-bullying-effects/>).

While it can be very difficult to tell if someone is being cyberbullied, below are some warning signs to look out for:

- Spending long hours on the computer or mobile phone and getting anxious if they are without it for long periods of time;
- Closing his or her browser or mail windows immediately when you enter the room;
- Getting evasive or defensive when you ask about his or her Internet /mobile phone activity;
- Constantly cleaning out or delete their message or search history folders;
- Being less attentive or interested in school work (including falling grades and/or reluctance to attend school);
- Noticeable change in behaviour (such as eating habits, willingness to go out, interaction with friends/family);
- Change in health status (e.g. frequently complaining about headaches, stomach-aches or nausea);
- Appearing fearful or evasive when discussing their social activities or friends;
- Becoming emotionally distant and withdrawing from support networks (e.g. teachers, parents etc).

## What do I do if someone I know is being cyberbullied?

If you think someone is being cyber bullied the most important thing to do is TELL SOMEONE who can do something about it.

If you are not sure if the situation needs reporting or unsure what to do about it there is a free advice and help line run by The Line **1800 MY LINE (1800 695 463)**.

**"Unless we have a culture in schools where the kids aren't afraid to tell us about bullying then we're not going to be able to do very much."** Marilyn Campbell,  
Psychologist and teacher

Useful cyberbullying websites



- [www.theline.gov.au](http://www.theline.gov.au)
- [www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)
- [www.cyberbullying.info](http://www.cyberbullying.info)
- [www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)
- [www.bullyingnoway.com.au/.../cyberbullyingmain.shtml](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/.../cyberbullyingmain.shtml)



## Book Review

"**Bullicide: Death at Playtime**" by Neil Marr and Tim Field is an in depth and raw investigation into youth suicide in the UK as a result of bullying. The book states that a child completes suicide as a result of bullying (referred to as bullicide) once every half hour. It also says that over 19,000 children attempt suicide every year due to the direct results of bullying.

A large number of these are cyber bullicide victims.

The book provides true case studies of young people who have taken their own life and looks at the circumstances that led to their tragic death. It also provides information on some of the commonalities of victims of bullying, the profile of a bully and how bullying leads to bullicide. There is also an extensive list of resources and further reading.

This book takes an honest and sometimes raw approach to this issue and although it is a decade old (2001) it remains completely relevant today. If anything, the book serves to shine a light on the stories of victims, the pain and anger felt by the survivors left behind and shows just how far we still have to go.

A sometimes upsetting, but very worthwhile read!

## Key Upcoming Events

For information on these and other upcoming events please visit <http://www.livingisforeveryone.com.au/Events.html>.

- **Rising to the Challenge** (17 Feb - 18 Feb)  
2nd International Urban Mental Health Conference
- **The 13th Annual Health Congress** (2 Mar - 4 Mar)  
Successfully implementing critical health reform across Australia
- **Young people, risk and resilience (7 Mar - 8 Mar)**  
The challenges of alcohol, drugs and violence conference

- **11th National Rural Health Conference** (13 Mar – 16 Mar)  
Rural and Remote Australia: The Health of a Healthy Nation
- **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Service Delivery**  
(12 Apr 2 - 13 Apr)  
Working in partnership to improve service delivery and 'Close the Gap'

**'When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun'.**

~Annie Johnson Flint~

## Training in Suicide Prevention and Bereavement Support

- Would you know what to do?
- Would you know what to say?
- Would you know where to go for help?



Are you interested in finding out more about Information, resources and training for those that support people who are at risk of suicide or lost a loved one to suicide? Hope for Life will help you to develop the skills, confidence and knowledge to respond to these situations.

The Salvation Army Hope For Life Program gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing through the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

## Contact Us:

W [www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au](http://www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au)

E [admin.hopeforlife@aue.salvationarmy.org](mailto:admin.hopeforlife@aue.salvationarmy.org)

P 02 9356 2120