Finding HOPE

Area high school student tells of her ordeal with cyber-bullying, attempted suicides, and getting help

McCLATHCY NEWSPAPERS ILLUSTRATION

THE FOLLOWING article was written by an area high school student. The Sun Chronicle agreed to keep her name anonymous.

Cyber-bullying can have a profound effect on someone's life.

It can lead to severe depression, self-mutilation, the harming of others, suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide. It could lead to death.

On Sept. 29, an 18-year-old man jumped off a bridge in New York and fell 200 feet to his death. The cause? His roommate videotaped him having sex with another man and posted it on Facebook.

I am a 14-year-old girl and I myself have been a victim of cyber-bullying. Here's my story.

The insults and harassment were beginning to bring me down emotionally. Not only did it start to impact my life, it also started taking a toll on the lives of the people around me.

I started becoming very moody. One moment I would be happy as ever, jumping around with a big smile on my face. The next I would become an emotional wreck. I would become very obnoxious. Very mean.

SEE **HOPE**, PAGE D2 ▶

HOPE: Teen survives cyber-bullying ordeal

FROM PAGE D1

I would say hateful, horrible things to the people I loved without even realizing I was saying them.

No one knew what was wrong with me. I kept all my problems to myself.

It was May 8 of this year when things started to get serious.

That night I had gotten into a big argument with one of my friends. The girl soon got another girl involved and they both ganged up on me.

They verbally insulted me, picked on me, and brought me down through their dreadful text messages.

Instead on telling my mom, I took a razor blade to my wrist.

Every day I have to look at that horrible mistake. Every day it makes me regret doing it a little bit more.

Things started getting better until a month or two later.

It was July 14 that I thought was the end. I remember swallowing the pills and calling my mom. I don't really remember the ambulance ride; I think I blacked out.

When I woke up, I had an IV in my left arm and I was hooked up to a big machine.

Everyone kept asking me, "why?" But I didn't know how to answer.

Earlier that day I had gotten text messages from people I once called my best friends. The messages were hate mail.

Some said, "I hate you." Another said, "You're a whore." Another, "You're a slut."

It was the last text message that really got to me. It read, "I hope you kill yourself."

This person knew I suffered from Major Depression Disorder (MDD). He knew I would take that message seriously. He thought I should die for the mistake I had made a month before.

I overdosed on 8,875 milligrams of medication. I ended up in the emergency room for 13 hours. The next day I was immediately put into a day program to help me recover.

I went to a place called West Wood Lodge and the people there were really nice and made it really easy to talk about my problems.

I went there for two weeks. I learned that if you are getting insulted because of a mistake you made, because you're friends with certain people, because of your race, your sexual orientation or even your favorite color, just IGNORE THEM.

The first thing you should do if you're being harassed is save the message, e-mail, voicemail, etc. The second thing you should do is tell a parent, principal, guidance counselor, or anyone that has some sort of authority over you.

The most important thing to do when being cyber bullied is to not respond. When writing back, you are just as responsible as they are.

No one in the world has the right to tell you you don't deserve to live. Everyone is here for a reason.

If you are being cyberbullied then save the message and tell an adult. Bullying is against the law in the state of Massachusetts. Don't let it take you as far as it took me.

Talk to someone.