The  Perfect  Online  Storm

What Every Parent Needs to Know

Presented by Hannah’s Heroes, Inc.
On January 16, 2015, a Titusville middle school student ended her own life.

Out of tragedy ……has come our inspiration

Hannah's Heroes, Inc.

—a non-profit 501(c)3 grassroots organization with a passionate mission to draw attention to our struggling youth population.
Co Founders: Lyn Cline (Hannah’s Mom) & Liz Mikitarian

- have worked with over 40 families with teen issues
- hosted a Bullying Town Hall Meeting
- Celebration of Hope w/ Danny Gokey and the YMCA
- Sources of Strength Programming in pilot schools
- My Uncle Keith Died book donation to elementary schools
- Partnership with Smile Angel Foundation
- Fundraiser being planned “Take a Bite Out of Bullying”
- podcast being planned
- community PSAs being planned

www.hannahs-heroes.org Facebook & Instagram
The Internet
Almost 93% of kids, ages 12-17 have access to the Internet.

Almost 1/2 report that they have experienced CYBERBULLYING.

Kids feel pressure to post provocative pictures, videos, and personal information.

Hard core pornography is readily available.

Sexual predators have unparalleled and anonymous access to our children.

Chat rooms or games that allow “chatting” (electronic communication) between participants can be dangerous for children.

The Dark Web ~ Bit Coin
- Many cyber crimes are untraceable.
- Many legal measures are unenforceable or outdated.
- Law enforcement and prosecutorial efforts are often underfunded.

Our major challenge:
Children are the “digital natives,” & parents are the “digital immigrants.”
What can a school, parent, grandparent, or guardian do
What To Do

• Look at sites together or review sites and apps yourself

• Social networking sites often have age limits…..check them.

• Tell your kids not to post personal information
  Remind them that photos - like your child in a uniform or team sweatshirt - can give away clues to where they live.

• Ask them not to send photos to people they meet online.

• Learn about privacy settings that allow kids to choose who can view their profiles. (although this is not fool proof)

• Explain that strangers who approach them online aren't always who they say they are - and that it's dangerous to meet them in real life.

Learn to “POST LATER”
• Consider using filtering software that monitors and records instant messaging and chat room conversations, as well as websites visited.

• Install software to block porn sites
  - Consider using a program that filters pornography keywords in several languages. Why? some teens have figured out how to get around filters by typing in porn-related search terms in other languages.

• http://www.stopbullying.gov/index.html
It is critical that you find out what your child is actually saying and doing while online....
Cyberbullying
Bullying is different than what we have experienced …

- When we were younger we were able to get respite from bullying ~ we went home.
- With the growth of social media and online access, our kids can be subject to relentless attacks.
Cyberbullying differs from schoolyard bullying.

~ Teachers can't intervene.

~ There's no one to filter it.

~ Cyberbullies don't witness their victims' reactions. They don't see the tears.

~ Cyberbullies can pose as their victims, create fake accounts and send out harassing messages or post negatively.

~ Cyberbullies may post humiliating videos/pictures of others.
• 85% of parents of youth ages 13-17 report their child has a social networking account. (American Osteopathic Association, 2011)

• 66% of teens who have witnessed online cruelty have also witnessed others joining; 21% say they have also joined in the harassment (PEW Internet Research Center, FOSI, Cable in the Classroom, 2011)

• Bullying over texting is becoming much more common (University of New Hampshire, 2011)

• More girls than boys (59% girls and 41% boys)
• 1 in 6 parents know their child has been bullied via a social networking site. (American Osteopathic Association, 2011)

• 1 million children were harassed, threatened or subjected to other forms of cyberbullying on Facebook during the past year. (Consumer Reports, 2011)

• 68% of teens agree that cyberbullying is a serious problem with today’s youth.

View Enough Is Enough's full library of statistics.
Reasons cyberbullies said they engaged in cyberbullying

- To show off to friends... be COOL
- To be mean
- To embarrass the victim
- For fun or entertainment
- The victim deserves it
- To get back at someone
- Everyone else does it

Youth agree that bullying online is easier to get away with than bullying in person and think it is easier to hide online bullying from parents than in-person bullying

http://www.internetsafety101.org
~Often, kids don't tell parents they're being cyberbullied. They are afraid their parents will overreact or take Internet privileges away.

~They fear that if the bully is exposed that the situation will become worse.
What To Do

If your son or daughter tells you, stay calm.

If it's a **one-time thing**, try to ignore the bully and block future contact.

If it **continues**.... reach out to the school or a local agency.

If the cyberbullying involves any physical threat, you may need to call law enforcement.
Tips from Netsmartz.org

• instant messaging ~ use the "block" or "ban" feature

• delete email account and set up a new one. Remind your child to give the new email address only to family and a few trusted friends.

• tell your child not to respond when attacked!

• never share Internet passwords with anyone other than parents

If the cyberbullying continues…
contact the school, local agency, or call the police.

Keep a record of the emails or messages as proof.
What Should Schools and Parents Do

Work together to resolve the situation

Ask the child being bullied what can be done

Develop a game plan

Avoid these mistakes:
- Never tell the child to keep ignoring the bullying.
- Do not blame the child for being bullied.
- Do not tell the child to physically fight back
- Parents should resist the urge to contact the other parents involved.

Follow-up.
Avoid strategies that don’t work or have negative consequences

• “Zero tolerance” or “three strikes, you’re out” strategies don’t work. Suspending or expelling students who bully does not reduce bullying behavior but may reduce reporting.

• Conflict resolution and peer mediation don’t work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.

• Group treatment for students who bully doesn’t work. Group members tend to reinforce bullying behavior in each other.
How Should Schools Handle a Bully

Make sure the child knows what the exact problem behavior is.

In most cases, do not have the bullied child confront the bully.

If the bullying involves a “group”, meet with them individually.

Show all parties that bullying is taken seriously.

Model respectful behavior to the bully.

Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied.
- Sometimes children bully to fit in. (peer pressure)
- Other times kids act out because something else is wrong

Use consequences to TEACH:
- Lead a class discussion about how to be a good friend
- Do a project about civil rights and bullying
- Read a book about bullying
- Make posters for the school about cyberbullying and being smart online.

Involve the child who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation.

The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others.

Follow-up and continue to teach the Bully

*Parents Remember, the law does not allow school personnel to discuss discipline, consequences, or services given to other children.
Pornography
*Distribution of hard-core pornography, will gross $13 billion annually.

*Internet child pornography is a $3 billion per-year industry

Pornography can just “pop up”, but some kids seek out web porn as well
What To Do

~ You can view the internet browser history.

~ get monitoring programs

~ Put your computer in a common area of your home, not a child's bedroom.

~ Go to websites that explain the short-hand used in instant messaging, like "POS" ("parent over shoulder") or "LMIRL" ("let's meet in real life")

Wondering whether monitoring means you're “spying” on your kids.....remember that your first job is to keep them safe
Sexual Predators
1 in 7 kids have been sexually solicited online.
(John Shehan, CyberTipline program manager for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in Alexandria, Virginia.)

Social networking sites  (Kik, Snap Chat, Instagram, Snapchat and FB.)

A child's online profile typically includes photos, personal interests and blogs.

Ways that they can be FOUND!
What To Do

"Instant message" only with family or friends they already know

Ask your kids to report any online sexual solicitation to you or another trusted adult immediately

Report the event to law enforcement and save all offensive emails or messages as evidence.
MAJOR OUTCOME of INTERNET USE

Damaged Reputations
A child's online reputation is a growing concern!

Schools and employers are rejecting young people for high school programs, internships, college admissions and jobs after checking out what applicants have posted or been involved in online.
Camera phones, digital cameras and webcams are everywhere and kids can be victims of their own inexperience.

Why teenagers post provocative photos of themselves:
:dared or pressured by others (boy or girlfriend)
:a game of one-upmanship
:trying to look cool.
:because everyone else is doing it

Once you post, it's there forever!
What To Do

• Explain that even if your kids delete their posted photos or videos, others may have already copied them into public forums and websites.

• Tell your kids not to let anyone, even friends, take pictures or videos of them that could cause embarrassment online.

• Talk to your kids about possible consequences.
So, how is your child?
Today's digital world can expose our kids to so much and the overstimulation or the inability to filter the good from the bad can often lead to depression and self-harm.
Know what to look for …
Emotional Changes

- Irritability, frustration, or feelings of anger, even over small matters
- Loss of interest or pleasure in their normal activities
- Loss of interest in, or conflict with, family and friends
- Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or fixation on past failures
- Exaggerated self-blame or self-criticism
- Extreme sensitivity to rejection/failure, need for excessive reassurance
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions, or remembering
- Ongoing sense that life and the future are grim and bleak
- Frequent thoughts of death, dying, or suicide
- Sadness, which can include crying spells for no apparent reason
Behavioral Changes

- Excessive tiredness or loss of energy
- Insomnia or sleeping too much
- Changes in appetite, weight loss or increase
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Agitation or restlessness: pacing, hand-wringing, or an inability to sit
- Slowed speaking or body movements
- Complaints of unexplained body aches and headaches, which may include frequent visits to the school nurse
- Declining school performance or frequent absences from school
- Sudden neglected appearance, such as mismatched clothes and unkempt hair
- Disruptive or risky behavior
- Self-harm, cutting, burning, or excessive piercing or tattooing
What To Do...
• Ask your teen “Are you thinking about harming yourself?”

• Take all talk of suicide or self-harm seriously.

• Talk to a doctor, school counselor or a mental health expert

• If your teen is having suicidal thoughts, get help right away.

• Call 211 ~ Brevard’s crisis and intervention service.

• Call a suicide hotline:
  1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

If you think your teen is in immediate danger of self-harm or suicide, make sure someone stays with him or her and Call 911 immediately.
In this ever-changing world, parents must stand in the gap and be the ‘first line of defense’ against child Internet victimization.
This is Hannah
Become a Hannah’s Hero...