

Youth Violence

Violence isn't always physical, it's not always hands-on experiences, not always by the male/female figure in the house. Violence can be from ourselves, mentally violent, physically violent. Every day roughly 132 people commit suicide, the most common reason for suicide is coming from depression or being mentally violent on ourselves. This is what happened to me.

When I heard the topic of youth violence I didn't think about how physically violence the first thing that came to my mind is mental violence. All my life I have had rough issues regarding mental health. I haven't had any physically violent experiences from others. I have suffered from a few stages of cutting myself every so slightly. I was raised in a religious household, and I always tried very hard to live up to those standards in the church. As I grew older, I had more personal struggles that I had to deal with, causing me to take time from the values and standards that I once lived up to. I was diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety in second grade. After I started to fear that my dolls were going to kill me in my sleep. This came very shockingly as I absolutely loved to play with my dolls. When I would have a hard time falling asleep at night because of my sudden fear, my parents knew something was up. They took me to a child's psychologist where I was then diagnosed at age 8 with ADHD and anxiety. This took a huge toll on not only me but my parents as they were losing sleep. This was a weird time for me, I absolutely hated going to a therapist because I didn't realize how much it was going to help me in the end, I just saw all the negative things in it. I was the only one in my grade that was going to a child psychologist at age 8, and I hated not feeling like everyone else. I've come to get used to my ADHD and anxiety, but that wouldn't be the end of my mental health journey.

In the beginning of Junior High, I noticed some depression coming on. It was never horrible until March of 2020, when the world was shut down and we were stuck inside. I hated this. I was always in my room, scrolling through social media sometimes comparing myself to others. I hated the way I felt but I didn't care enough to do enough about it. I loved to hide myself away in my room, occasionally not eating as I hated knowing that I could get fat from this. It always came back to how hard I compared myself to others. I thought to myself, how come I looked like this? How come I thought like this? I always asked myself these questions without ever actually taking the time to think about the answers to them. I always just thought that there was no solution for this, I was going to be stuck like this forever.

Depression is the most common mental health issue in teens 15-24. Most people mistake depression as being sad, depression is a type of sadness but it's different from being sad. Sadness is a normal reaction to a loss, disappointment, problems, or other difficult situations. Feeling sad from time to time is just another part of being human. In these cases, feelings of sadness go away quickly and you can go about your daily life. Depression is a mental illness that affects your mood, the way you understand yourself, and the way you understand and relate to things around you. Depression can come up for no reason, and it lasts for a long time. It's much more than sadness or low mood. People who experience depression

may feel worthless or hopeless. They may feel unreasonable guilt. Some people may experience depression as anger or irritability. Most people lose interest in things that they used to enjoy and may isolate themselves from others. Some may experience difficult thoughts about death or ending their life (suicide). Depression lasts longer than two weeks, doesn't usually go away on its own, and impacts your life. It's a real illness, and it is very treatable.

These days I think a lot about social media when I think about reasons kids have depression. Kids are spending roughly 6-9 hours a day on social media. When I am on social media, I find myself comparing myself to others. When I compare myself to others, I tend to find myself in a depressed state. But there are so many steps we can take in order to help prevent the spread of this social media spread that leads to common youth violence. Parents should set time limits on their kids' phones, especially on social media. I have a limit and a password on my phone. My mom and I set this on my phone just a couple weeks ago, as I found my depression getting worse and worse. I have definitely been able to tell a difference. Depression numbers are rising, as more social media platforms come out. I think that the biggest cause of youth violence mentally is from social media. So if we lower the amount of time we are on it, and raise the age of getting a phone. Then we will find our numbers of suicide, depression, youth violence mentally and physically going down.

A community can help reduce youth violence physical and mental violence on youth by simply loving each other. Depression causes you to isolate yourself from others, those we isolate ourselves from should not let us become alone. A community simply can help the mental side of youth violence, but listening to the signs of depression and taking it seriously. Tell someone. Suicide is not a joke, and it needs to be taken way more seriously. The communities can help reduce physical violence by reporting any signs of abuse. We will never be able to control youth violence, but maybe my one story will help others understand it more.

This is my story, but it is not the end, only just the beginning of it.