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The Bully Suicide Project - Survivor Stories(6)

1. Tell Me About Yourself (What are your hobbies, beliefs, likes, etc)

I'm Heather Henrichson. I'm 19 years old. I grew up in the rural town of Bullard, Tx in east Texas. I grew up in Church my whole life and attended a private christian school for most of my school years. When I was in 3rd grade I gave my life to Christ and though I may stumble, God still remains the strong hold in my life. I enjoyed athletics when I was young. I competed in Volleyball, Softball, Cheerleading and Golf in middle and high school. I also love the performing arts. I love to sing and dance, along with participating in musicals. My sophomore year in high school, I started competing in pageants and ever since then I caught pageant fever and love competing. I love reading and writing and I'm attending Dallas Baptist University, in hopes of attaining a bachelors degree in Broadcast Journalism.

2. Tell Me About Your Personality

I often describe my personality as an extravert introvert. I love meeting new people and performing, but I also am shy in a way. An example is, I would rather sing in front of a crowd 100+, than perform in front of 10 people. But, I'm loving, caring and when I find something I like, I'm very passionate about it.

3. Tell Me About the First Time you remember being bullied (where, how you felt, the names, you were called, how you dealt with it)

I struggled with weight all my life. In the 3rd grade I was about 4'9" about 130 lbs. I started to notice that I was treated different from the other kids in 4th grade. I wasn't invited to parties, I was the last picked to play games on the play ground, I was even picked to play a boy in the school play. I remember I had two, so called "friends", that even cut me out of a picture because they said I was fat. I remember crying to the teacher about it. I would just go home and cry to my parents about it. But I never did anything about it. The years went on and I grew out of my weight and began to have a better self image but the scars are still there from a young age. When I began to compete in pageants, I began to be disliked and ridiculed by many of the girls in my high school. I was even threatened to be beat up and killed my one girl. I had done nothing to provoke this girl, what so ever. I hardly knew her. I'm very much a people pleaser and this reeked havoc on my self-esteem and confidence. It also

cause me to lose all close friends. I had no close friends, so I just concentrated and focused on pageants.

4. Names you have been called

Fat and dumb were the most used. But I was also called slut and whore by the girls in high school.

5. Tell Me About how bullying has affected you

I can't tell you how much it affected my self-esteem. Almost 2 years later, I am still dealing with it. It's a constant struggle. It affects my relationships with people daily. I don't seem to have very close relationships and friendships because of the fear of being hurt by "friends".

6. Have you thought about suicide? If so, what did you do about it.

My 8th grade year I had a knee injury and as a result I wasn't able to hang out with friends or participate in cheerleading and as I began to slip into a depression. I had thoughts of suicide and that scared me so much. A girl like me shouldn't be having thoughts like that. I thought I was going crazy. It was one of the most dark, desperate places of my life. I hated going to bed at night because, I would have to be alone with my thoughts and struggles--nothing to pull my attention away from them.

7. What are ways you have dealt with suicidal thoughts?

I put my everything into Christ. I just began to read my Bible every night. I was searching to find the comfort that I needed. I remember getting on my knees and crying asking God to help me through. I knew he would not abandon me.

8. What makes you a survivor?

The only credit I have to give, is to God. I would not have made it without Him. I knew He put me on this earth for a reason and taking the easy way out, was not the solution. I also began to put more effort in school and activities. I focused on other things as much as possible.

9. What is your message of hope to the person just like yourself?

Don't give up. I am thankful for all of my trials because I know that they have made me what I am today. I think God was pulling me closer to him in each and every hardship. I feel now that I can handle so much more than most people. I want to send a message of hope, to all who listen that hold on and pull through because there is

a greater plan and what each of us go through makes us who we are in the end.

10. The quote that you live by today because of your experience is....

" Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'who am i to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."-- this was a quote used in the movie "Coach Carter" and I love this. When I'm having a bad day, this is what I read to get me through.

The Bully Suicide Project :

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