

The purpose of the first paragraph is to reveal stats and quotes from mainstream sources about the growing struggles teens may have regarding each topic. The purpose of the second paragraph is to reveal God's perspective by seeing what the Bible says regarding each topic and how we can receive help and guidance in our life's purpose through a relationship with Jesus.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined by Google as seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone perceived as vulnerable. One third of American teens are bullied⁷². Young people who are perceived as different from their peers are often at risk for being bullied⁵⁰. Persistent bullying can lead to or worsen feelings of isolation, rejection, despair or depression and anxiety, which can contribute to suicidal behavior⁹⁰ or school shootings⁹³. Types of bullying may include cyber, electronic, physical, sexual, verbal, social, psychological or emotional.

The Bible says this behavior is wrong (Prov. 6:16-19), but we're to love our enemies and pray for bullies (Luke 6:27-28), live at peace with people as much as possible (Rom. 12:18), overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21) and trust God to take care of bullies (2 Thess. 1:6). For those who've been or are being bullied, God defends the weak and oppressed (Psalm 82:3-4) and has a specific purpose for everyone (Eph. 2:10). The Bible says if God is for you, who can be against you (Rom. 8:31)? We are more than conquerors with Jesus (Rom. 8:37), and have a glorious, pain-free future ahead of us that's worth it all (Rom. 8:18, Rev. 21:4).

BIBLE VERSES TO CONSIDER

Proverbs 6:16-19 "There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community."

Luke 6:27-28 ""But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

Romans 12:18-21 "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good."

2 Thessalonians 1:6 "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you."

Psalm 82:3-4 "Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Romans 8:31 "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Romans 8:37-39 "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:18 "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

Revelation 21:4 "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Proverbs 18:6-7 "The lips of fools bring them strife, and their mouths invite a beating. The mouths of fools are their undoing, and their lips are a snare to their very lives."

1 John 2:9 "Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness."

Ephesians 4:29 "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

Leviticus 19:18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord."

Matthew 5:11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

Proverbs 24:16 "for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes."

Proverbs 17:9 "Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."

Proverbs 22:10 "Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended."

Romans 2:1 "You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things."

Matthew 5:38-45 ""You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

Mark 12:29-31 ““The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Luke 6:31 “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

1 John 4:20 “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.”

Romans 12:17 “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

2 Timothy 1:7 “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

1 Corinthians 16:14 “Do everything in love.”

Psalm 121:2 "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Matthew 10:28 "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

1 John 3:16-18 "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

Galatians 6:9-10 "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

STATS & QUOTES TO CONSIDER

60% of middle school students say that they have been bullied, while 16% of staff believes that students are bullied.

160,000 students stay home from school every day due to bullying. (NEA)

30% of students who reported they had been bullied said they had at times brought weapons to school.

Bullying was a factor in 2/3 of the 37 school shootings reviewed by the US Secret Service.

28% of U.S. students in grades 6–12 experienced bullying.

70.6% of young people say they have seen bullying in their schools.

6% of students in grades 6–12 experienced cyberbullying.

6% of high school students (grades 9–12) were electronically bullied in the past year.

Most bullying happens in middle school. The most common types are verbal and social bullying.

Young people who are perceived as different from their peers are often at risk for being bullied.

Research indicates that persistent bullying can lead to or worsen feelings of isolation, rejection, exclusion, and despair, as well as depression and anxiety, which can contribute to suicidal behavior.

Bullied students reported that bullying occurred in the following places: the hallway or stairwell at school (42%), inside the classroom (34%), in the cafeteria (22%), outside on school grounds (19%), on the school bus (10%), and in the bathroom or locker room (9%)

Statistics suggest that revenge due to bullying is the number one motivator for school shootings in the U.S.

Girls have also borne the brunt of the rise in depressive symptoms among today's teens. Boys' depressive symptoms increased by 21 percent from 2012 to 2015, while girls' increased by 50 percent—more than twice as much. The rise in suicide, too, is more pronounced among girls. Although the rate increased for both sexes, three times as many 12-to-14-year-old girls killed themselves in 2015 as in 2007, compared with twice as many boys. The suicide rate is still higher for boys, in part because they use more-lethal methods, but girls are beginning to close the gap.

These more dire consequences for teenage girls could also be rooted in the fact that they're more likely to experience cyberbullying. Boys tend to bully one another physically, while girls are more likely to do so by undermining a victim's social status or relationships. Social media give middle- and high-school girls a platform on which to carry out the style of aggression they favor, ostracizing and excluding other girls around the clock.

Before social media, bullying was something only done face-to-face. However, now, someone can be bullied online anonymously

While social media made making friends easier, it also made it easier for predators to find victims. The anonymity that social networks provide can be used by the perpetrators to gain people's trust and then terrorize them in front of their peers.

Anonymity allows for cyberbullying. This is especially problematic for teens, as bullies can target and prey on vulnerable high school peers without taking personal responsibility.

Nearly half of young people (47%) have received intimidating, threatening or nasty messages online.

More youths experienced cyberbullying on Instagram than any other platform at 42%, with Facebook following close behind at 37%. Snapchat ranked third at 31%, and YouTube at 10%.

Seventy-one percent of the survey participants said that social media platforms do not do enough to prevent cyberbullying.

71% of young generations say they are concerned about cyberbullying

Girls (40.6%) are much more likely to be victims of cyberbullying than boys (28.8%).

A 2015 random sample study of 11-15-year old's in the Midwest found that over 34% reported being the victim of cyberbullying in their lifetime.

A study by McAfee, found that 87% of teens have observed cyberbullying

More than half of teens have witnessed cyberbullying on social media.

95% of social media-using teens who have witnessed cruel behavior on social networking sites say they have seen others ignoring the mean behavior; 55% witness this frequently.

66% of teens who have witnessed online cruelty have also witnessed others joining; 21% say they have also joined in the harassment.

1 in 6 parents know their child has been bullied via a social networking site.

In 2014, Teens who report being bullied say it was because of their: 61% appearance, 25% academic achievement/intelligence, 17% race, 15% sexuality, 15% financial status, 11% religion, 20% other.

There is online bullying among youth 8-17 worldwide.

Bullying over texting is becoming much more common.