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Imagine you arrive at school, head to your locker, and get shoved by a kid walking past. What would you do? Would you do anything at all? In fact, most victims of bullying struggle with the concept of standing up for themselves. Bullying is an everlasting occurrence in places all around the world, including online, and its effects can be devastating and conflicting.

First and foremost, victims of bullying are less likely to achieve higher grades. Victims often experience mental, physical, social, and academic matters of unhealthy occurrences such as depression, anxiety, aggressiveness, and health issues. On the other hand, kids who purposely bully others are more prone to get into fights, obtain criminal sentences, or abuse alcohol or drugs at an early age or at the time of adulthood. According to stopbullying.gov, "Kids who are bullied can experience negative physical, social, emotional, academic, and mental health issues. Kids who are bullied are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, health complaints, and decreased academic achievement. Kids who bully are more likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs in adolescence and as adults, get into fights, and have criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults." This evidence verifies that bullies and victims may experience concerning conditions that can drastically affect their future.

Furthermore, cyberbullying is another destructive tool for bullies. They use electronic devices and the Internet to speak harsh words toward their targets, demotivating them and making them feel utterly disheartened. Research presents that 32% of cyberbullying victims experience some sort of distress or feeling of isolation that can occur

throughout the ordeal of cyberbullying. More research results in anger and lashing out being found most typically developed during stages of cyberbullying. According to verywellfamily.com, "Not surprisingly, cyberbullying is a significant stressor in a young person's life. In fact, research shows that 32% of kids who are targets of cyberbullying report experiencing at least one symptom of stress. Cyberbullying sometimes causes kids to be excluded and ostracized at school. Consequently, they often feel alone and isolated." This supports the stance that youth who are cyberbullied have behavioral and mental issues and are less likely to be sociable.

In addition, a major way of preventing bullying is to become an upstander. Upstanders are those who act upon bullying. Upstanders do not stand by and watch someone get bullied or harshly teased like a bystander does. Ways to help someone out include ordering bullies to stop, encouraging others to assist the victim, encourage the victim to stand up for themselves, inform a trusted and safe adult, and many more. According to stompoutbullying.org, "Becoming an upstander looks like this: Taking action by telling the bully to stop, taking action by getting others to stand up to the bully with them, taking action by helping the victim, taking action by shifting the focus and redirecting the bully away from the victim, and taking action by telling an adult who can help." This verifies that upstanders can take several actions to prevent bullying and that there are quieter alternatives to being an upstander.

In conclusion, bullying is an infinite source of negative energy that inflicts harmful behaviors and mentality upon victims. Cyberbullying is a large cause of bullying that can affect the victim's state of mind and social aspect. Upstanders are one of the best ways to support victims. Bullying can affect everyone at any given moment, and not acting upon it might as well make you the bully too.

“Knowing what’s right doesn’t mean much unless you do what’s right.”

-Franklin Roosevelt