

Note: The following Essay Entry is from a Middle School Student ...

I saw him. Laying on the ground helpless while kids ripped his books and stomped on them. Slowly, they got tired of the books and started to stomp on his hands. Then his legs. The whole time, I watch as it slowly gets worse and worse. The teachers don't care, the students don't care. I am his only hope. I hear him crying as he lay there being bootstomped by 3rd graders, but I am too scared. I don't do anything. I stood there for the entire recess, just staring at the poor kid being beat up, just frozen in my step, not wanting to interfere. I had no emotion towards the kid. I knew I could've stopped it, but I don't want to be bullied myself because those kids, I've never even met them, but he needs help and I do nothing.

I experienced it early. When I was in 4th grade actually. Some kids had found a kid reading at recess and proceeded to laugh and make fun of him. It eventually led to them kicking him and ripping his books. That wasn't the worst part though. During all that, 3 classes passed him, going out to recess. The teachers didn't even look at him. And the whole time watching was me. He yelled for me to help him and I just stood there. That's right, I was too scared to help when he was my three year junior. I was selfish. Everything I did was for me. All I wanted was to not be bullied, and helping others being bullied would have definitely done it. And I admit it, easily. As a child, I was a total jerk. I never even told my parents about that incident. I don't think they know now.

In this world, so much is linked back to youth violence. Terrorists in the world have been in warring countries as children and just wanted to do something to stop it all. Suicide. School shootings. Opening fire in crowds of people is so common today. You know why? It's because in poorer neighborhoods some people have experienced violence every day since the age of five. For them, there isn't anything they can do to empower themselves without making that kind of statement. At this point, they're so common, they barely get news attention and people resort to even bigger stunts to make their way onto the news and it all just spirals out of control.

All around me, there is bullying. Every single day. Every single school in the country. Bullying leads to hatred and hatred to more school shootings and more mass shootings. There is an average of well over 9,000 shootings a year and they don't have to happen if people just stand up to it. If I stood up to it. If every person paid attention and did something to stop it, I would bet you my life's fortune three times over that so many of the killings, maybe HALF of them, would stop. I know that it's hard to stand up to people, I know, I'm someone myself, someone who has been bullied and has seen bullying and has done nothing about it! I've done exactly what I'm trying to tell people not to do. I'm telling you not to do it because I know the pain of watching idly by and watching people go into depression because of all the pressure upon their heads. So no, the psychopaths aren't the problem, the bullies are and the people who don't do anything. Stop them and stop it all. Stop the suicide. Stop the shootings. Stop the unnecessary death.

There is a person out there. It could be you. What matters about that person is that they saved someone's life. That they stopped bullying. They stopped violence. They reported it. They dealt with it themselves. It doesn't matter how they saved a life, but THE FACT THAT THEY DID. What if you were the one being bullied? If they didn't do anything, how would you feel? Would you ignore bullying? Will you step up and be that person? That person who saved someone's life. It could be you. It SHOULD be you. Is it you?