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Do The Write Thing

Many stories have the same conflict where a violent bully is present, and the protagonist must overcome them, but youth violence is much more prominent in today's generation than it seems. In fact, studies made by the WHO, World Health Organization, show that 200,000 homicides occur among youths ages 10 to 29 annually, making up 42% of the homicides made globally each year. Due to an increase in youth violence over the years, many young individuals, such as myself, have become more prone to violence and fear. Violence has affected my life by causing me unnecessary fear and anxiety and even making me think poorly of myself.

Violence causes so much stress and fear that it produces several problems, especially in my daily life. When someone is exposed to violence, especially my age, it often builds up too much pressure and emotions. I dread going to art class to this very day, because the students that accompany me are extremely violent towards each other. They would do many irresponsible things like shooting each other with water aggressively, or vigorously hitting and slapping each other with hard, wooden rulers. From a glance, the situation may not seem like a serious issue or threat, rather that they were just being playful, but no one knows the horror that I went through. Art class used to be a pleasant experience for me, since I looked forward to it after a long, grueling day of school. Art is very near and dear to my heart, since it brought me peace and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Art ignited my passion and made me part of who I am today. When I saw what happened to the other kids, I was in great terror. Something about seeing others harm one

another, just for the satisfaction of getting revenge and abusing others, just didn't feel right to me. One day, something tragic happened, when two art students started bickering at each other, and it resulted in a massive fight. They were forcefully throwing punches and even went for some kicks, and I could feel the heat and intensity. Suddenly, one of them got hit so hard that it knocked the wind out of him, and he couldn't breathe. A million thoughts rushed through me, wondering what had just happened and if I was even safe in art class, the only thing that brought a smile to my face, and I felt like I was about to burst. Another incident was when we were having a good time playing dodgeball in physical education, but everyone suddenly got hostile towards each other, throwing with all their might. The chaotic scene simply just reminded me of the experience in art class, and I didn't want to see that happen again. One might say that they were just passionate, and that they were just playing as well as possible, but only I could see the rage igniting in their eyes. Out of nowhere, a fast ball whooshed past my face, as if it was a bullet, and hit my friend square in the face. Blood. That was all I saw, blood. A wave of a thousand different emotions washed past me, and I was scared to death. Why, I asked myself. What would drive these people to do such acts, to hurt their fellow comrades, to laugh hysterically at the sight of their pain? Had this what our society become? Was this what people wanted, seeing others suffer the consequences of their actions? I still see my friend's blood in my eyes to this day, as if it were burned into my retina, and I don't think I'll ever unsee it.

Violence has gone so far as to make me lower my self-esteem and think negative thoughts about myself. Something I think often gets overlooked is the fact that verbal abuse is indeed a form of violence. Something to take into consideration if you still find verbal abuse a non-violent issue is that it not only deeply upsets the victim, but also plays with them mentally. Verbal abuse and verbal violence are some of the worst types of violence out there. While

physical violence may harm others and cause pain, most of the pain is temporary, but verbal abuse causes so much mental pain that it hurts just thinking about it, and you feel like you're on fire with all the emotions and thoughts you have. Trust me, I know from first-hand experiences that that pain never goes away. Some might say that mental violence is simply another type of mental torture. An experience that I can recall is something that has happened over a period of two years. I remember the first time I met this kid, and he seemed like a genuinely nice person, and we formed a hefty bond, but I never should have let my guard down. He started shaming others for every little flaw that was visible to the naked eye, but he picked on me the most. He started his spiel one day about my weight and how fat I was, saying that people like me are a waste of oxygen, and that information hit me like a truck. That information disturbed me for weeks, and I couldn't stop thinking the same things repeatedly, until I was on the verge of my breaking point. Was I just a waste of oxygen, rather a hinderance to those who don't have weight issues? What good am I doing for the Earth and everyone on it? Perhaps the question that hit me the hardest was why I even existed, and if the world would be a better place without me. He kept bullying me for one and a half years. I thought that I was a fat, good for nothing, helpless child that couldn't do anything right. After months of this torture running through my mind, I felt as if there was only one option. I felt that I would rather die than sit through hours of mental torture and beating myself up thinking about it. To make matters worse, members of my family also pointed out the weight issue to me, but rather as concern over abuse. At that point, I thought that even my friends and family members were disgusted by the sheer sight of me, and what good was I if even the closest to my heart thought poorly of me. I thankfully stopped myself before things went too far, but I was on my last straw. I've learned from that experience that those who you least suspect are usually the ones that betray you in the end. The kid is in my school and my

hallway to this day, but every time I see him, I don't interact since it may stir up a totally different situation.

Violence may not seem like such a serious topic, but we live in a society where youths are becoming more aware of violence at a younger age, and they must also notice the red flags about violence. I've learned through my gained experiences that violence is not a force of good, but rather a source of misery and the hope to see the demise of others. While my experiences may seem sorrowful, it only scratches the surface on the topic of violence and the consequences of it. As a consequence of youth violence, I've gained unneeded stress and fear and made some terrible self-opinions. While I've had many tragic moments, others have even lost their lives from violent actions and negative thoughts about themselves.