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BULLYING: A TEENAGE NIGHTMARE

Bullying is hurting or frightening someone, often over a period of time, and often forcing that person to do something they do not want to do. Bullying causes distress and trauma on a daily basis, and the pain inflicted is intentional. Statistics show that 1 in 3 children are affected by bullying in their lifetime (in the U.S. school system), but the story isn't very different in India either.

INTERVIEW



[Updated Monthly brings you an exclusive interview with the heads of the student council of Sanskar School, Rupal Bisht and Siddharth Biswas (left to right).]

Hello Bhaiya and Didi. How do you feel about the topic at hand, as you are aware that it has been tackled many times before?

Rupal: Bullying has been a common topic of discussions, but I for one feel like it cannot be stressed enough. Bullying is still prevalent, it only takes a quick Google search to find more than enough proof of this and that is what is so disheartening to see.

Siddharth: Bullying is a child's nightmare, but no one understands it better than teenagers. This issue has been tackled before, but many adults have a condescending and "all – knowing" aura who simplify and undermine this topic far too much. It is uplifting to see teens bring up a topic that concerns them and hope that this will be a fresh take.

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What is your advice to the victims of bullying?

Rupal: I definitely agree with Siddharth. It is infuriating, but sarcastic comments and snarky reverts will worsen the situation. Keeping a calm face and later reporting it to adults is advised, but if the bullying escalates to violence or assault, authorities should be reported to immediately. And also, don't be afraid or ashamed to report incidents of bullying, because it is never the victim's fault.

Siddharth: Bullies are people who want to show off their power, and that is mostly because they are very insecure internally. To students, I would say that when faced with a bully, do not pay attention to their words. If they insult you, do not revert back, instead try complimenting them. It seems outdated, but nice and kind words shock those who don't expect them.

What are your suggestions to authorities on how to deal with bullying?

Rupal: Before we make any comments, I would like to clarify that Siddharth and I are both on some levels of school leadership but do not have a lot of experience with controlling mass level bullying. The main issue is that we still use old fashioned ways of control and healing, where the victim is forced to talk about things they don't wish to and the bullies are demonized.

Siddharth: I definitely agree. Counseling for victims is a great idea, but this is required more for the bullies so that it helps us know what makes them tick and provide a better insight into their psyche.

Lastly, what is your advice to students who witness bullying?

Both: A lot of people say that remaining silent in the face of bullying makes you as bad as the bully, but that does not always mean you confront them or threaten them even if you feel uncomfortable or outnumbered. The best and most treasured form of support comes from peers and fellow students. Even if a child faces relentless and cruel bullying, a simple act of kindness or even reporting a bully to authorities can be a message of hope and love. Do not be intimidated by the empty threats of those who are too weak to be vulnerable, and never remove your conscience out of fear. You never know; one act of yours can save or destroy someone's life.

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NEWS

- Post the announcement of the Lok Sabha election dates, it has been unearthed that about 20.3 million of the first-time registered voters and college-level contestants come from the home state of Rajasthan, as opposed to the most populous state of Uttar Pradesh. This election also boasts the highest number of women and minority voters in the last ten years.
- CBSE has scrapped the traditional one-paper system and has, for the first time, issued two levels of the Mathematics papers, namely Basic and Standard. The decision has been lauded for attempting to cater to different intelligence levels and to make Mathematics an easier subject for those who wish to pursue different streams post-matric.
- By 2020, India is set to become the world's youngest country with 64 per cent of its population in the working age group. With the West, Japan and even China aging, this demographic potential offers India and its growing economy an unprecedented edge that economists believe could add a significant 2 per cent to the GDP growth rate. There is however, an expected drop of about 453 million by the year 2026 due to declining healthcare facilities.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVERYONE shares their past experiences when they grow up. Some people tell stories of their childhood. It is an important and beautiful part of our life, where we spend our childhood to make a better future for us and our society. People only want to tell the happy parts of their school life. But, there are a few people who keep a part of their life secret, where something happened which no child ever wants to invite upon themselves. Such a thing is bullying. Bullying is something which affects the mentality of students, making them undergo severe peer pressure. Children cannot concentrate on their studies and their behavior changes too. Students do not share these things with their parents or teachers and carry on keeping it a secret, though there are a few students who do share their problems with elders and stand up against bullying, hoping that no one else has to undergo the same pain. They realize that bullying only destroys these beautiful memories, so they speak up against this and make their lives better, overcoming peer pressure. What do you want to share in the future, the story of when you stood up against bullying or when you just kept quiet and suffered?

- DIKSHA AGARWAL, X A