

We've Been There



Who's been there &

Amanda

is a senior in high school. She swims and plays water polo at the varsity level. Being a quiet, hard-working student, she hopes to attend the United States Naval Academy after high school. In her free time, she enjoys sleeping and camping with her family. As the oldest of three children, she loves the power ;-).

Bailey

is a fourteen-year-old freshman with the nickname "Fun Size"... like the tiny Halloween candy. She plays volleyball and basketball. Don't let her height fool you; she'll creep up on you unexpectedly. Bailey is known to make up words and say the most random things, but that makes us laugh. :-P She loves hanging out at the beach and surfing. Bailey is a very fashionable and friendly person.

Cassie

just finished her master's program at University of California, Riverside. She teaches high school English. Reading and cooking are her thing. She doesn't need a cookbook to make magic happen...she's that creative. On Sundays, you'll find her hanging out at church.

Chante

is currently a senior in high school. You would think you're seeing double when you go to her softball games. She and her identical twin sister, Essence, are the first ones to arrive and the last ones to leave the games. Don't even try to talk to her when she's reading...she dives into the story and is off to Lala Land. She loves spending time with family and friends.

Corinne

can tie her shoelaces with her toes. Can you? She has to find ways to entertain herself since her two sisters and brother moved out of the house to go to college. ;-) She's an animated sixteen-year-old who is a pole-vaulter and hurdler. When on family vacations, you'll find her playing volleyball, football, and soccer. When she finds time, she hangs out at the beach or watches Will Smith films.

is talking about it?

Essence

is a seventeen-year-old senior. She plays softball and is involved in many activities, including drama. She is the oldest child in her family...she beat her twin sister by 20 minutes. She likes to help others and thinks little kids are adorable. She also loves listening to music and going to church. When seeing the color purple, she gets super excited and screams, "Purple!!"



Martha

used to be on TV when she was a kid. We think she likes working with kids because she can look at them eye to eye (she's really short). Her organization, A Quarter Blue, helps educate, protect, and empower young people. She loves hanging out with her husband, daughter, and son. She loves to sing and watch reality TV shows about dance, fashion, and music.



Nathalia

is stuck as a middle child...her older twin brothers get the power. Her baby sister gets all the attention...not really, but it's fun to try to make her parents feel guilty. At our meetings, she gets so excited about sharing ideas that we have to remind her to let the quiet people share (Amanda). She is fun to be around because of her outgoing and caring personality. She calls herself a Mexi-Pina, (half Mexican and half Filipina) because she's proud of her mixed heritage. <(^.^)>



Rebecca

is loud, outgoing, and athletic. She has dreams of going to Mira Costa Community College. She loves rap music... but her brother and sister beg, "DON'T ask her to rap!!!" She makes a mental list of pranks to play on people. She once tried to make a cardboard car because she wanted her brother and his friend to go through the drive-thru to order a quesadilla. She is also the one who accidentally falls down anywhere, breaks chairs, and throws glass cups across restaurants during our meetings... but we still love her :-}







Dare to be Different

By: Amanda Hicks

Cliques are small groups of friends that spend a lot of time together in their group. They often dress the same and act the same. They think they are the 'cool' kids at school. They will do anything it takes to get everyone to like them.

Cliques are usually selective in who they let into their groups. Cliques will sometimes bully other kids because they may be different. They will say mean things and spread rumors about people that aren't true.

People in cliques usually don't have their own ideas about things, so they just follow what everyone else is doing in the group. It is okay to have a group of friends, but you shouldn't exclude others because they are different. If the people in your group bully others, it's time to get out! If you begin to lose your own ideas and personality by belonging to a specific group, that's not necessarily good. Don't change who you are just to fit into a clique. Your differences make you unique--and that is beautiful.

Being excluded from a group hurts. You may feel that you don't have any friends and don't feel like you belong. **DON'T WORRY!** Many girls feel that they don't belong because they are different from everyone else. **Dare to be yourself, even if it is different.** If you have to change to fit into a group, then that group is probably not meant for you. Find friends who will be there for you and share the same interests and activities as you. Take the time to develop an individual skill or talent. You will be happier and won't have to worry about what everyone else thinks. If you feel really upset and down, you can also talk to an adult. Talk to a teacher, a family member, or a friend's parent and tell them how you feel. Adults will usually make you feel better about the situation because they have probably been through it themselves. One more important thing to remember...**never let anyone look down on you.**

Things to Remember

Always be yourself...dare to be different
Talk to an Adult

Find a friend who accepts you
Develop a skill or talent
Never let anyone look down on you





Why is she here?

May I be your friend now?



HAHAHA

Look at you!

HAHAHA

Why don't they like me? What did I do wrong? Why am I so different?



Excuse me... Can I be your friend now?

Ewww... no!



I don't want to hurt you. I'd like to be a friend. We don't need friends like them.

I'm sorry. I didn't like what they were doing, but I didn't say anything. I'd like to get to know you. You seem nice.





You know we're too cool for her.

This doesn't feel right.

Who does she think she is?

I know, right?!

I know, right?!



I guess I don't need friends...



Excuse me... I'm sorry I hurt your feelings. That was wrong.



I'm not going to get hurt!

You drew that! I was embarrassed to wear my glasses around the girls! So, I never saw how talented you were.



DRAMA

BY CHANTE MCKOWAN

Drama is something that everyone may experience at some point in time, whether it is at school, home, or any other place. Drama can be caused by gossip, rumors, and cliques. Luckily there are solutions when faced with drama. You need to make a choice. Poor choices hurt people; however, the right choices can create positive results.

KEY

Problem

Bad choice

Good choice

Positive result



Have you ever spread a rumor or gossiped about someone?

Don't start it.
Stay away from it.
Don't spread it.

Spread it.
Exaggerate it.
Create another rumor.

Tell a teacher or an adult.
Stick up for the person.

Is there family drama, neglect, expectations, or abuse?

Don't tell anyone how you feel.
Fight with your parents.

Talk to an adult.
Find support.
Find a good role model.

Do you feel lonely and excluded at school because of cliques?

Join a group that causes trouble.
When you're part of a group, exclude others.

Look for people with admirable reputations.
Get involved in a volunteer group.





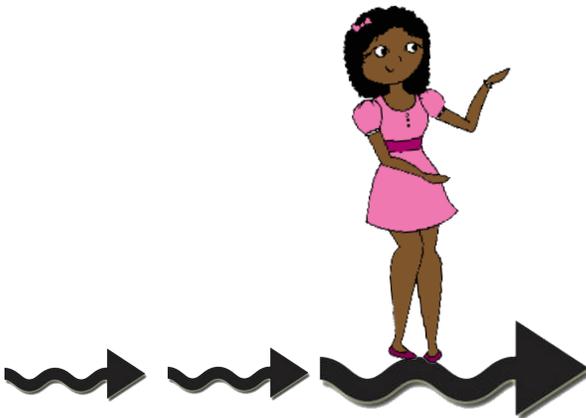
You will be trusted and people will respect you more.



You will not be in the middle of people's drama.



You will have encouraging people with whom you can talk.



You will be happier, feel better about yourself, and be more confident.

BULLIED?

By Corinne Ries

Bullying is making fun of someone, making threats against another, spreading rumors, and hurting others physically or verbally. This can be face to face or through technology.

Being bullied is for real. It's hard at times, especially when the bully is older than you. I struggled with a bully when I was seven. I was in the second grade and she was in the third. I went up to her and confronted her about what she was doing. Believe it or not, she left me alone. I stood up to the bully... me, the seven year old scrawny, little girl. I have some suggestions that made it easier for me and could help you or anyone who is being bullied.

If you are bullying kids, please change. I hope you learn to understand how words can be hurtful. You may need to hang around people who are a better influence.

Step One: Tell the bully how you feel.

Many bullies use verbal abuse as their weapon. Others do hurtful things. The first action you should take is to tell them how you feel. Tell them that you don't like what they are saying or doing. This might be hard at first, but you can do it! The best way to stop bullies in their tracks is to tell them that what they are doing hurts you. Some kids don't realize they are bullying. They don't realize their words or actions are hurtful. By telling them, they may change. Some kids bully because they are being bullied themselves. Others use bullying to show that they are "bigger and better." This is usually because they lack self-confidence. By standing up for yourself, you show confidence and courage.

Step Two: Tell someone.

After doing step one, if the bullying doesn't stop, tell someone. The best people for you to tell are the adults around you. These adults can be anyone: a teacher, a parent, or even someone kind in your community. You might think that adults won't understand what you are going through, but remember that they were your age once. You are worth being protected.

Step Three: Get Help!!

If the bully has become physical, do not confront him or her! Get help immediately! Your parents and teacher should be aware of your situation. One reason bullies cause pain is to release the pain they feel inside, but that doesn't justify them hurting you! Please get help from an adult!

If you think
you might be a
bully,
STOP IT!
It's not cool!



Internet Safety

By Bailey Wade

Everyone likes going on the Internet but there are people in the world that do bad things online. This page should help you with being safe.

You can help protect yourself by:

- * Only talking to friends who are known by your family
- * Having your parents check in with what you're doing online so they can see if anyone is being sneaky in getting information that could possibly hurt you
- * Having software that helps protect your online searches
- * Putting a private setting on your profile

Because you are worth protecting!

Don't give out your:

- * Date of birth
- * Full name
- * Location
- * Personal description
- * Habits, hobbies, and hang outs
- * Information about your relatives or friends

Because it is easy for an unsafe person to find you.

Don't do something that will mess up your present or future; like:

- * Putting people down
- * Complaining about teachers, coaches, and other people
- * Acting like a different person
- * Adding or accepting someone as a friend you don't know
- * Posting pictures you are not comfortable sharing with everyone, including your parents

Because colleges may look at potential students' profiles to see who they really are.

If people are being mean online:

- * Stop talking with them
- * Print out the conversation
- * Tell an adult
- * Notify your school, if they are fellow students

You need to be brave in protecting yourself. Be confident that you are worth protecting!

Stop talking with people if they take your conversations too far by:

- * Calling you all the time
- * Sending gifts in the mail
- * Telling you to keep your conversations a secret
- * Talking to you about inappropriate stuff

Never ever meet face to face with people you meet online.

Most kids have to live through some tough situations. Five girls tell their stories, share what they have learned, and give you a piece of advice from their experiences.

Interviews By: Essence McKowan

When you live with an illness...

I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes twelve years ago, at the age of five. My diabetes has since changed my life in nearly every way, but over the years I have been able to learn how to accept it as a part of who I am and to truly appreciate the life I have.

My friends and family have been a huge part of my world. They have helped me any time I've needed them.

As a young diabetic, I really depended on my parents and other adults to keep an eye on my blood sugar levels and adjust my medicine, called insulin. My mom even came to my elementary school at lunch every day to make sure I was okay.

It is important to me that my friends and peers have some knowledge of my diabetes. While a lot of diabetics I know would rather hide this information from their friends, I find that most people are not judgmental, but curious, wanting to know more and to understand that aspect of my life. I view diabetes as a condition I have that has strengthened me and helped to shape the person I am. It is not a disease of which to be ashamed or embarrassed.

While it may seem easier at times to have a "Why me?" attitude about diabetes, I think it has contributed to my intelligence, maturity, responsibility, and confidence. As a teenage diabetic, I now test my blood sugar, inject my insulin, and manage my dosages to make sure everything is under control. As a teenager and senior in high school, I spend most of my time with my friends, I have my driver's license, and I will be applying to colleges soon. Balancing my responsibilities is really difficult, but having a positive attitude and truly believing that diabetes has changed me and will continue to change me for the better, makes everything I deal with worth it.

When someone you love dies...

When I was eight years old, my dad was diagnosed with lung cancer. When my friends spent time with me, it made it easier. My friends helped me through it when they prayed with me and kept me busy so that I could keep my mind off of him being so sick. What made it harder was thinking it could happen to anyone...but it happened to my dad. When he was in pain, I wanted to feel it for him.

When I was eleven, my dad passed away. Night after night, I listened to Carrie Underwood's song "Temporary Home"; it helped. "...Old man, hospital bed. The room is filled with people he loves. And he whispers don't cry for me, I'll see you all someday. He looks up and says, 'I can see God's face.' This is my temporary home. It's not where I belong. Windows and rooms that I'm passin' through. This was just a stop, on the way to where I'm going. I'm not afraid because I know... this was my temporary home."

After he died, I kept thinking about my mom and my little brother, not myself. I just wanted them to feel better and to not be sad. But what I was really doing was hiding my feelings and not letting anyone know what I was thinking. My family sat me down and encouraged me to open up and talk about the whole situation.

I went to a counselor, but for me it didn't help...I thought to myself I'm talking to a complete stranger about my life. I never felt a bond with my counselor, so I talked to other people I knew who would take their time to listen to me. I liked telling people about my dad who didn't know him.

What I miss most about my dad is hugging him, feeling loved by him, and him just being there for me.

When my mom thinks about dating, it doesn't bother me at all. I just want her to be happy 'cause we all know that no one can replace my dad. I mean people could act like him and look like him, but no one could be exactly like him.

When your parents pressure you to live up to their expectations...

Coming from an Asian family, my parents want me to be the best. I'm the youngest and the only girl, so there are high expectations for me.

My oldest brother was a great student, but then he hung out with people who were bad influences. His grades dropped, and he made other poor choices that hurt my parents. They were pretty upset.

My second brother was the "typical" Asian kid. He was really smart and got into UCLA. Because he was so successful, their expectations for me increased. Growing up, I looked up to my second brother. In sixth grade, my parents started pushing their goals and expectations onto me.

Even though I got a Distinguished Scholars Award my dad didn't really show he cared. I got a really high score on my SAT, a test that helps get into good colleges. Even though my score was very strong, my mom wanted me to retake it to get a better score.

I know that my parents love me no matter what; however, I struggle with feeling loved and accepted. I am trying to understand their motivation as I get older. Since my parents didn't have an education growing up, their dream for me is to be really successful. They push me to have something they could only help their children achieve.

Talk to your parents about their expectations for you. They may have a good reason. Your parents probably mean well and want the best for you.

Expectations are when someone has a belief that you should achieve something.

When your parents separate...

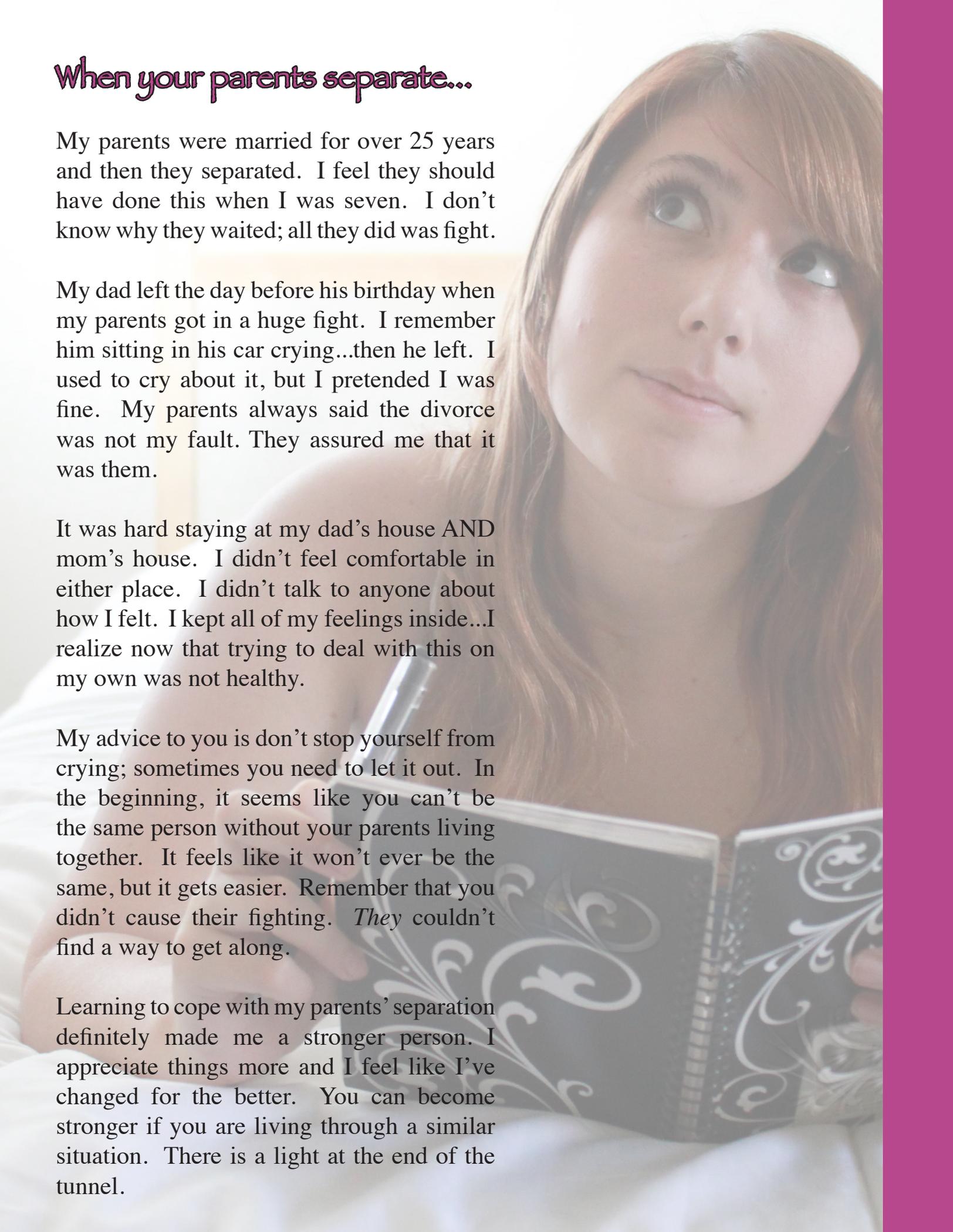
My parents were married for over 25 years and then they separated. I feel they should have done this when I was seven. I don't know why they waited; all they did was fight.

My dad left the day before his birthday when my parents got in a huge fight. I remember him sitting in his car crying...then he left. I used to cry about it, but I pretended I was fine. My parents always said the divorce was not my fault. They assured me that it was them.

It was hard staying at my dad's house AND mom's house. I didn't feel comfortable in either place. I didn't talk to anyone about how I felt. I kept all of my feelings inside...I realize now that trying to deal with this on my own was not healthy.

My advice to you is don't stop yourself from crying; sometimes you need to let it out. In the beginning, it seems like you can't be the same person without your parents living together. It feels like it won't ever be the same, but it gets easier. Remember that you didn't cause their fighting. *They* couldn't find a way to get along.

Learning to cope with my parents' separation definitely made me a stronger person. I appreciate things more and I feel like I've changed for the better. You can become stronger if you are living through a similar situation. There is a light at the end of the tunnel.



When someone abuses you physically...

My two brothers and I were taken from our mom's home after being found alone for several days with no food and no adult caring for us. I was nine and my brothers were eight and six. We were separated. I lived with a foster family for three years who showed me kindness.

I was returned to my mother when I was twelve years old. When we went to court, the judge asked us directly if we wanted to go back to my mom. I said, "No," but the judge did not listen to me. I did not push it; and we were placed back with my mom. If I had made the decision to stand up for myself, it probably would have made things much better for me.

The biggest lie I believed when I was younger was that having unlimited freedom was a treat. When I was thirteen, my mother and her boyfriend put me in charge of my twelve year old brother for four days while they went on vacation. They left no money for us and little food.

Once I was beaten by my mom and her boyfriend. The next day when I was getting dressed in PE, my PE teacher saw the bruises and welts caused by the beating. She asked me what happened. I told her my brother and I had gotten into a fight and that he caused the marks. My teacher believed the lie. If I had told the truth, we could have been saved from more abuse.

I have come to realize that if I had loved myself, I could have spoken up when I was scared. Many people did not treat me the way I deserved to be treated. I know now that there are kind people who will care for me and help protect me. Tell the truth when you are scared and hurt. Someone will care and help you.

When someone abuses you sexually...

When I was ten years old I believed everything that happened to me was normal. I believed a guy ten years older than me was my boyfriend and that he loved me. This was a lie. I would like girls to know that this type of behavior is very wrong. That guy needed help; I needed help. I wish I would have told a trusted adult. When this was happening to me, I had many weird and negative feelings. Just because you may be experiencing this type of unhealthy relationship does not mean that it's your fault. You can get help. If someone chooses not to believe you, go to someone who will...the sooner, the better.

Types of Abuse

~ Physical abuse causes bodily pain and leaves marks on your body.

~ Emotional abuse is when a person tries to control and hurt you by using mean words, fear, humiliation, and manipulation.

~ Sexual abuse is when someone touches or photographs your private parts or asks you to touch the private parts of others. This child, teen, or adult may convince you that this is play or that this is what loving people do. A doctor may have to exam you, but there must be another adult in the room.

***If you think you are experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, reach out to a trusted adult for help immediately. If friends ever share that this is happening to them, get them help. This is not a secret you should ever keep. Your friends and you deserve to be protected, respected, and treasured.

When a parent doesn't take care of you...

My biological mother was not a good mother at all. She hurt my twin sister and me a lot when we were little. My mother had us when she was young and did not know anything about raising kids. My parents separated and later divorced. When my sister and I were young, my mother hardly fed us. When we went back to our dad's house we would smell terrible. We even had dirt in our hair.

We were emotionally neglected and had separation anxiety. We were terrified of her. We would bang on the car door and cry because we didn't want to go to her house. I have no good memories of her that I can recall. During elementary school, we went through counseling to help us. I realized that my sister and I are valuable and worth being cared for, even if my biological mom was not the one who cared for us.

My dad met my stepmom when we were three years old. They got married four years later. Our stepmom helped us get through the struggles with our mom. I have a wonderful stepmother, whom I call "mom". Unlike the fairy tales with an evil stepmother, my stepmom is the opposite. She is caring and gives great advice. She always helps me with difficulties and encourages me to do well.

For those of you who are hurt by a parent, I advise you to find a role model. There are plenty of people out there who are willing to help you and give you the support you need, such as a counselor. If you are an older sibling, set good examples and help the younger kids. There are people in the world who love you and care for you. Don't lose hope!



What is depression?

By: Rebecca Hicks

Every girl once in a while feels sad and down, which is completely normal, but that usually passes within a couple of days. Depression holds on. It's when you feel a combination of negative emotions: anger, hopelessness, and despair. If you're bummed out for more than a couple of weeks, it may be depression. Depression is okay to have. You can get help. It will take a while, but don't be afraid. You're not the only one.



Signs of depression

If you experience these signs for two weeks or more, you need to reach out for help from a school counselor or another adult who can help you see a professional counselor.

- * Sad or anxious
 - * Feelings of hopelessness
 - * Empty
 - * Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
 - * Loss of interest of hobbies and activities you like
 - * Less energy
 - * Difficulty sleeping or all you want to do is sleep
 - * Danger to self and others
 - * Panic attacks
 - * Behavior or mood changes
- 

Coping with depression

- * **Getting involved in activities and exercise**
- * **Setting goals for yourself to achieve**
- * **Spending time with a friend or family member**
- * **Accepting that you are valuable**
- * **Standing up for yourself**

Are you depressed?

Take this self evaluation. However, the diagnosis and treatment of depression requires a trained medical professional.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>D</i> ecreased self-esteem | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>E</i> nergy loss | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>P</i> anic attacks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>R</i> arely happy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>E</i> xtrême loss of interest and focus | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>S</i> leep changes (too little or too much) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| <i>E</i> ating disorder (too much or too little) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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If you checked two or more boxes, please talk to someone. If you believe you or someone you know may be depressed, seek help from a doctor. Any time of the day, you can call (800) 448-3000 for advice.

DON'T COMPROMISE!

By Nathalia Vazquez

Compromise is when you do something even though you don't feel it is right. Don't compromise! Don't do something you know is wrong and that you don't really want to do.

Saying, "No!" to someone you care about may seem hard. However, if you feel in your heart that something is wrong, say, "No!" I admit, saying, "No!" and walking away may be difficult, especially if the people pushing you to do something wrong are close to you. But it is the right thing to do. Be courageous and stand up for what you know is right!

You have to realize, if someone is asking you to do the wrong thing, they are not true friends. If they get mad at you or stop talking to you for doing the right thing, they are not worth your friendship. They are not thinking very highly of you. You have to move on without them. If someone puts your character or safety in jeopardy, they can't be trusted as friends. Also, if close friends were the ones pushing you to do the wrong thing, you need to get new friends. A true friend stands by you when you do the right things. She encourages you to do what is right. She will want what's best for your life.

If the "cool" kids are asking you to do something wrong, you shouldn't go along with it. You have to stay strong and be brave...create the new cool by doing what is right. You may not be part of the "cool" kids group for not doing it, but at least you know you did what was right.

If an adult asks you to do something you are confident is wrong or that doesn't feel right, get another adult to help you with this difficult situation. Adults don't always do the right thing. Sometimes you need to tell a trusted adult if your opinions and ideas are not being respected.

If people keep trying to make you compromise your convictions after you already said, "No!", tell a trusted adult. Don't be afraid. Stand up for what you believe is right. You may be a role model because you are living above the negative influences. Stay strong! Be yourself and you will always find a friend who's perfect for you!

Making Friends

By Amanda Hicks



Quiet and Shy

If you are quiet and shy and don't know how to make friends, here is some advice:

- Don't be embarrassed if someone starts a conversation with you.
- Find a common interest with someone and ask them about it.
- Be willing to say, "HI!" and don't feel embarrassed about it. Once you have said "HI!" it gets easier and easier to talk to that person in the future.
- If people compliment you, accept it.
- Don't be afraid of those who are loud and outgoing.
- Don't be afraid of rejection.
- Be the girl you would like to meet.

Loud and Outgoing

If you are loud and outgoing, here are some ways to be a good friend to someone:

- Befriend those who seem to be having trouble fitting in.
- Don't think that quiet people think they are too cool to have friends. They probably want someone to say, "HI! How are you? What's up?"
- Don't reject someone if they seem too quiet. Find a common interest that both of you have.
- Make sure you quiet down to listen to the answers of the quiet person. Give her the opportunity to talk and be heard.
- Be the girl you would like to meet.





BEAUTIFUL



BE KIND!
COURAGEOUS!

BE BOLD!

BE CONTENT!

BE HOPEFUL!

BE SENSITIVE!



HARDWORKING!

BE CONFIDENT!

BE POSITIVE!

BE ENCOURAGING!

BE UNIQUE!



HELPFUL!

BE YOU!





THE BEAUTY WITHIN!

After we sat down and decided we wanted to have an article about beauty, we just began talking. This is a conversation among us girls about the topic of beauty.

Nathalia: There was this one question. It said, "What would you do if you dated an ugly girl?" Someone replied, "You can't ever date someone ugly, because there is no such thing as an ugly person."

Chante: You judge in different ways. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. People see beauty in different ways. I could see one person and say that person is beautiful, but someone else could think that they aren't. I think everyone has a beauty quality in them.

Bailey: Beauty can be on the outside, but mainly it's on the inside. You appear beautiful if you are nice, cheerful, and helpful. If you're cocky, rude, and mean, you're not beautiful to me and some other people. 'Cause if you're not beautiful on the inside, it kind of ruins your outside.

Martha: I remember watching a movie, and I thought the guy was beautiful. Then I saw him in an interview, and he became one of the ugliest people I have ever seen. In this interview, his true personality came out. The character he was playing was beautiful, but who he was just became really unattractive. It proved to me that it is truly your heart that shines out and makes your outward appearance beautiful.



Nathalia: I agree with what you guys are saying; I believe that everybody is beautiful. I don't think it matters what's on the outside. There's an old saying, "It is what's on the inside that counts." You may be pretty on the outside, but you might have an ugly personality which makes you unattractive.

Amanda: I think that beauty is just being happy and having a positive attitude and having a healthy mindset. It doesn't matter what other people think; it matters how you feel about yourself, not how others see you.

Essence: I think beauty is how you portray yourself to others. If you have an ugly heart and are a mean person, you might look pretty and have nice hair, but you don't have true beauty. True beauty is born on the inside and how you are as a person.

Martha: What makes the world beautiful is the uniqueness of each of us. If we all looked the same, whether in the same skin color or personality, there would be no beauty. It would just be the same thing over and over. But because of our unique cultures, our unique upbringings...our uniqueness brings out a beautiful world. We were each created to look like US and that's what is beautiful. (*Essence and Chante looked at each other because they look alike as identical twins.*) Not that being a twin is ugly.

Essence: (*LOL*) We're the same person on the outside.

Martha: But you're not.

Chante: But we are different in a lot of ways. Our personalities are kind of the opposite.

Essence: I am the crazy, outgoing one that doesn't read. She likes to read and be quiet. We have totally different personalities.

Martha: If I slow down and think, I know who is who because of your different personalities, which affects your outward appearances. We all need to slow down and truly look at people, then we will be more likely to see everyone's unique beauty.

Amanda: Don't compare yourself to another. Just remember there will always be someone else that thinks you are beautiful. You might not be beautiful to that one person, but you will always be beautiful to someone.

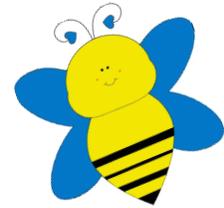
Rebecca: It is always important, as far as image, to know that you are valuable. You are an important person. You need to value yourself and know that you are here for a reason. This will lead you to be happier about yourself.

Corinne: It's also helpful to see yourself as beautiful. Sometimes people don't see the beauty within themselves. We all need to search and find our own unique beauty.

Amanda: It's also helpful to find a talent or something you are good at.

Corinne: Or just something that makes you think that you are beautiful.

Essence: Find your strengths and use them to help make the world a better place. You will feel better as a person and show everyone that you are confident and beautiful!



From Dark to Light

By Nathalia Vazquez

Through the dark,
Through the cold,

She saw

A shiny light.

It took years to see,

But she finally saw

The end of the silence.

She saw the hope coming back,

And the joy was out in its power,

She couldn't believe how relieved she
felt.

She met the greatest people

That boosted her joy and hope.

She couldn't imagine life without
them,

'Cause that would be a joke!

I'd tell you about her story,

of all the sad things that happened;

But as people say,

Everyone wants happiness,

No one wants pain,

But you can't have a rainbow,

Without a little rain.

The Ride of Life

By Rebecca Hicks

Long dark tunnel

You go down like a funnel

Lost and confused

Emotionally bruised

You see a small light ahead

Hope it's ready to shed

Through the struggles and sadness

Life doesn't have to be madness

You will fall, but have no doubt

You can find your way out

Out of trials

Into smiles

You will find a wonderful life

Away from this strife

Life can be a ride

There's no need to hide

Someone will throw you a rope

To help you find new hope

PREVENTING & EMPOWERING

~ www.aquarterblue.org

info@aqarterblue.org

Free seminars and resources to equip and empower all ages and professions.

~ www.getsafeusa.com

Training to be "free from fear" through fun, innovative, and proven training, and personal safety and awareness programs.

~ www.radkids.org

National leader in children's safety. Their programs help children and parents utilize knowledge, skills, and power to protect themselves from violence and harm.

~ www.usa-sos.org

Safe Online Surfing Internet Challenge

REPORTING

~ If you are not sure, be safe and call your local police department or ChildHelp at 1-800-422-4453.

HEALING

~ www.boystown.org

Call all day any day (800) 443-3000

Boys Town (Don't worry. It's for girls, too)

Boys Town helps children who are living with fear. They offer guidance.

~ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

~ www.aquarterblue.org

info@aqarterblue.org

Refers victims to local programs and professionals. Holds art workshops to help work through trauma. Celebrates artistic expression through art exhibits.

**It's time to educate, protect, & empower our children!
95% of sexual abuse is preventable through education.**

**Throughout April
Child Abuse Prevention Month
Wear BLUE shoelaces~Paint your nails BLUE~GO BLUE!**

Show your desire to protect children & support victims who courageously go to authorities.

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