Bullied to Death

Rochelle Sides

Sometimes victims of incessant bullying grow so desperate that they feel they have lost all hope. Suicide among bullying victims is such a staggeringly common phenomenon that it has even coined a new term: “bullycide.” According to some statistics, one child or teen attempts suicide every thirty minutes as a direct result of chronic bullying.

Corinne Wilson was one of those teenagers. She took her own life in 2004 at the age of thirteen. According to this essay written by her mother, Corinne had endured exclusion, taunts, and verbal abuse from other girls for several years before committing suicide. As in many other stories of female bullying, Corinne’s primary attackers were also her best friends, at the center of her social life. When these so-called friends finally turned on her in one particularly cruel campaign, Corinne made a desperate—and tragic—call for help.

After Corinne’s suicide, her mother, Rochelle Sides, became an antibullying activist. Sides used Corinne’s experience to help pass the first antibullying law in Texas and now, as the codirector of Bully Police USA, she works to pass similar laws in all other states. Sides also speaks about her experience and Corinne’s tragedy to school groups, community forums, and the media. Corinne’s story is collected with those of other teens who took their own lives in response to bullying in a book, Bullycide in America.

Corinne Celice Wilson was born on Monday, September 30, 1991, at 2:06 P.M. She is the youngest of four children and the only girl. She was the most beautiful baby with big blue eyes and blonde curly hair. From the day she was born she was an amazing child. I know that every mother says that,

Rochelle Sides, “Corinne’s Story,” JaredStory.com, Reproduced by permission.
but she was so bright and full of personality. She did everything early, said her first word at 8 months, walked by 11 months. I should have known then what was in store for me, but as a young mother of four I just thought it was because she was trying to keep up with her older brothers.

A few months before Corinne was 2 her biological father and I separated and later divorced. I met the man Corinne knew as her daddy when she was barely 3. We all moved to Texas in 1995. Corinne seemed to blossom under all of the love that my husband’s family gave her, especially her Grandma Jewel, who fell madly in love with Corinne from the first day, as most people did that met her. That all changed when we moved to Rockdale, Texas in 2000. She had trouble from the first day; she missed her old school and friends and didn’t feel as if she fit in here.

**Not Part of the Team**

I thought that if she played a sport, that would help her to meet people. Unfortunately, it made it worse. It was Corinne’s first year playing softball, and she was placed on a team of girls that had played for a considerable amount of time. They teased her relentlessly about her inability to play. She would cry after every practice.

I spoke to the coach about it and it seemed to let up, but they continued to exclude her at practice, which followed through to school. Corinne would periodically come home from school crying, saying, “No one likes me, I hate it here.” I would tell her to try to be nice to one person every day and soon she would have a friend. It seemed to work; she made a friend and they seemed inseparable. However, that is when the trouble started for us, as Corinne started changing her personality to match her new friend’s. My husband and I thought it was a phase. It came to a head when Corinne and this girl got into trouble when they were at the girl’s house. Her father and I ended the relationship, so we thought.