

Milly Rivera  
Health & Wellness Chair – Advocacy Team  
[mirivera@estee.com](mailto:mirivera@estee.com)  
[healthwellness@suffolkpta.org](mailto:healthwellness@suffolkpta.org)



## **Report as of January 6, 2019**

### **Cyberbullying's chilling trend: Teens anonymously target themselves online, study finds:**

While cyberbullying is not new, an alarming number of teenagers are posting mean things about online ages 12-17 have bullied themselves, according to the research by Sameer Hinduja, a professor of criminology at Florida Atlantic University and co-director of the Cyberbullying Research Center.

This is a new phenomenon happening to teens across the U.S. Hinduja says "we have a tendency to demonize the aggressor, but in some cases, maybe one out of 20, the aggressor and the target are one in the same. Researchers are calling this new trend "digital self-harm". "A strong link between physical self-harm and suicide attempts, and researchers are concerned that the same connection could exist with digital self-harm."

Over the past decade, suicide rates for girls ages 15-19 have doubled from 2007-2015, reaching the highest point in 40 years.

When the question was asked of boys and girls why they engage in self-harm, boys said they simply did it as a joke, to get attention. The girls said they did it because they were struggling with depression.

Teens that are depressed are more than likely to post on social media looking for a response. Peers often ignore posts that may indicate someone is struggling with mental health/depression or suicide problems.

### **On the Bully Pulpit to Stop Bullying:**

First Lady Melania Trump unveiled her new "Be Best", initiative aimed to promote well-being, combatting cyberbullying and fighting the opioids crisis. The ground work for this initiative began in March with executives from Amazon, Facebook, Google, Twitter and snap for a round table discussion on cyberbullying. The Obama administration is also contributing by funding research to explore different solutions, and by investigating civil rights in school. Schools that do not address bullying based on religion, race, and gender can be found in violation of the civil rights laws.

### **Instagram Unveils A Bully Filter:**

The social media giant that has 800 million users is adding a new filter to weed out comments meant to harass or bully. Instagram is using a machine-learning algorithm to detect offenders, called Deep Text, it was created by Facebook which owns Instagram. This new filter will sort into categories, bullying, racism or sexual harassment. Instagram has stated, it will not tolerate cyberbullying and will take action on those that do it, up to banning them from insta...

The company has also embarked on a "kindness" campaign hosting events to promote inclusion and diversity.

### **Resources:**

[www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)

New York Times

CNN