



Sharing stories is a powerful way to connect with other people. By sharing their own personal stories, teens can connect with others who are dealing with the same challenges that they are. If a story is accepted for publication, it will be published online in **Teen Health & Wellness**. Every published author will receive a Certificate of Achievement from Rosen Publishing, which can be added to a student's digital portfolio to use in job, internship, and college applications.

GETTING STARTED

What have you had to deal with or overcome? Write from your personal experiences. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Identify a situation or challenge that changed your life.
- What was it like and how did it make you feel?
- How did you deal with the problem or find a way to live with it?
- What did you learn about yourself and those around you?
- What advice do you have for another teen going through the same thing?

GUIDELINES

- Suggested story length: 250-1,000 words.
- You must be 13-19 years old to be published. Authors will be identified by first name only—unless you request anonymity.
- Choose your words wisely. We can't publish slurs or profanity.
- We can't return submissions, so keep a copy for yourself.
- We need parent/guardian permission if you're under 18. We'll send you a form to include with your submission if it's accepted. Just fill it out and send it back, even if you get published anonymously or under a pseudonym.
- Include the following originality statement at the end of each submission: "This will certify that the above work is completely original," followed by your full name to affirm this is your work.
- Request anonymity. If you don't want your name published due to the personal nature of a piece, we will of course respect your request, but you still must include name and address information.
- Writing may be edited, and we reserve the right to publish our edited version without your prior approval.
- All works submitted become the property of Rosen Publishing and all copyrights are assigned to Rosen Publishing. We retain the nonexclusive rights to publish all such works in any format.

SUBMISSIONS

Submit your story here: teenhealthandwellness.com/page/main/SubmitStory.html. New personal stories are added to **Teen Health & Wellness** on an ongoing basis. You can send us a personal story at any time!

PUBLISHED STORIES:

If an essay is selected for the database, the writer will receive a Certificate of Achievement from Rosen Publishing notifying them of acceptance.

SAMPLE STORY:

Bullying – Brian's Story

When I think of someone being bullied, I usually think of someone beating another person up or taking his or her lunch money. I know it sounds kind of corny, but that's how I view a bully. At least I did before I was bullied. It all started the beginning of sophomore year, when slapping a kid in the face was considered "hilarious." The joke lasted a week or two, but for one particular person it did not. It continued on for some time. It actually is still going on to this present day. Only it doesn't stop with a single slap. It continues on with name-calling, taking my things and then breaking them, and even sexually harassing me when others aren't around. I tell myself not to stoop to his level, because then I will be no better than him, but it continues. People laugh every now and then when he touches me or breaks something of mine.

Sometimes in bed I lay awake thinking, why? Why does he do this? Then one night it dawned on me. He does this because he is upset with his own life. The kid who bullies me is not too good looking and doesn't have a lot of friends. I am pretty sure that he is even depressed from time to time because of this. I try not to make it seem like it is a big deal because I know it will only make matters worse and give him even more attention. So every time he hits me or calls me names I know it's because he just wants attention, no matter whom he hurts in the process.

I've learned a lot over the past two years about bullies. Not just who they are or why they are bullies, but how to break the cycle. I hear about people being bullied, and then they become bullies because they feel they need to lash out at others to compensate for the fact that they feel inadequate. I, on the other hand, will not become a bully. I will break the chain and not hurt someone the way someone has hurt me. Hopefully by doing this I will have made a difference and let one kid live a non-tormented life.

—Brian

You can view more stories on a wide range of topics, such as: being adopted, cerebral palsy, coping with Covid-19, and more. Find them in the **Teen Health & Wellness** Personal Story Archive here: teenhealthandwellness.com/static/personal_story_archive.

**To learn more about the Personal Story Project, visit
teenhealthandwellness.com**