“**Poke me**, *message me*, write on my wall, *friend request me*, **tag me**.” All common lingo for the Facebook or myspace junkie. Today, more than 1 billon people are on social networks, and in some cases, using it to hurt others. Cyber bullying has become a major problem in society today; 50% more kids are being bullied on the Web than in 2000. Because of all of the advances in technology, and major boosts on social networks, cyber bulling has become more prevalent in today’s world.

egan Meier, a quiet, young girl who lived in Missouri, committed suicide on October 17th, only 3 weeks before her 14th birthday. Since the 3rd grade, Megan received help from a psychiatrist, due to issues with depression, self-image, and attention deficit disorder. She was extremely self-conscious about her body weight, yet her parents still considered her “bubbly and goofy.” As a typical teen, Megan had a MySpace, where she added new friends and was able to post pictures and information about herself. One day, Megan received a friend request and message from a hot young boy by the name of Josh Evans. He was supposedly new in town, being home-schooled, and did not have a phone number yet. But Megan didn’t mind the online contact one bit. Josh told her how beautiful she was, and instantly, Megan was hooked. She would come home from school and be so excited to go onto her MySpace account and see what Josh would have to say to her. Even her mother, Tina Meier, saw how much her spirits were lifted, all because of this new boy. Tina kept a close eye on the relationship between her daughter and Josh.

On October 15th, the mood of the conversation completely flipped. Megan received a message from Josh saying that he heard she was a bad friend, and that he didn’t want to be friends with her anymore. Messages were sent back and forth between Megan and Josh, some using foul language, and angry tones. The last message sent to Megan was, “Everybody in O'Fallon knows who you are. You are a bad person and everybody hates you. Have a bad rest of your life. The world would be a better place without you.” Megan went running downstairs to her mother, who was frustrated that she was using such foul language. Megan felt like no one, not even her own mother, was on her side. She ran up to her bedroom, closed the door, and hung herself to death. A few minutes later, she was found by her mother, and despite attempts to revive her, Megan was pronounced dead.

So who was this Josh Evans character hiding behind the walls of MySpace? Through neighbor’s gossip, it was found that Lori Drew, a mother of an old friend of Megan, created the Josh Evans account. She created the account with her 13-year-old daughter, and her 18-year-old employee. Lori Drew declined making the account at first, but later admitted to it. She claims the account was a joke, and all she wanted was to boost her confidence and see what she had to say about her daughter. Still, no charges were filed against her.

Today, Megan’s mother, Tina goes around to schools to promote awareness of cyber bullying and to spread her daughter’s story. She hopes to teach children the effects of bullying and hopes to help save the lives of other children being bullied on the Internet.



For more information on the Megan Meier case, or to view information about her mother Tina, please visit http://www.meganmeierfoundation.org/

“The mission of the Megan Meier foundation is to bring awareness, education, and promote positive change to children, parents, and educators in response to the ongoing bulling and cyber-bullying in our children’s daily environment.”

**An Unthinkable Loss** Parents Tina and Ron Meier (left) grieve the loss of the daughter all due to a terrible “joke” by their very own neighbors.

**Hoaxed on MySpace** Megan Meier (above and left) was bullied on the popular social network, having bulletins posted about her saying, “ Megan Meier is a slut. Megan Meier is fat.”