



NOAH RISH

is a seventh grader at Learwood Middle School in Avon Lake.

He really enjoys music and is a member of his school choir as well as the Oberlin Touring Choir. He also plays the trombone and the drums.

When Noah has free time he likes to read, play video games, write and draw. He hopes to one day go into the medical field.

No one ever said stopping hate was about huge things. For me, it was about the little things in my life that made the difference of life and death. In sixth grade, I was diagnosed with clinical depression. Before this, I was bullied because most of my friends were girls. Some people called me “gay” or “faggot”, even though I wasn’t. All of these words hurt me in a way that I could never recover from. I hated myself and what people said to me and I wanted to end it, but didn’t know how. The only thing I could think to do was to take my own life. I was tempted to commit suicide for months because of all the hate I felt inside that no one else knew about. One day my mom went up to my room to talk to me, and I told her what I felt and how I wanted to end my life. Afterwards, mom told me that life isn’t worth throwing away. I went to counselors to talk about all of this, too. Although these things helped, I still felt horrible inside.

None of my friends knew about this, and I didn’t want to tell anyone, because I didn’t know how they’d react to all of this. I didn’t know what to do, so I didn’t tell them I had this illness. However, they still helped me through my problems. They were kind, and generous, and helped me realize that all of the people who bullied me were wrong and that I should be happy and not worry about what others thought about me. Their simple acts of kindness were literally the difference between life and death for me.

I want to help these people who have mental illnesses like depression, but who don’t know how to deal with it. An easy way for everyone to do this is for them to think before they say things to others, and simply being kind to everyone, especially people who seem down and lonely. If we can just do these little things like this, it will make an enormous difference.