

11:59

Talk about Autism:



Welcome to our live online Q & A on autism and bullying - we're delighted to welcome Kevin Healey as our guest. Kevin will be answering your questions about autism and bullying, his own experiences, and his new global anti-bullying campaign which has attracted support from celebrities such as Ricky Gervais, Katie Price, and Keith Duffy. Please start sending your questions through.

11:59



Kevin Healey:

Good Afternoon everyone

11:59

Talk about Autism:



A little reminder of how the live online Q & A will work. We receive your questions and David decides which ones he would like to answer. Your questions won't appear instantly on the screen. If you don't want to ask a question and just want to watch, that's absolutely fine. You don't need to do anything, the screen will automatically update itself.

12:00

Talk about Autism:



The event will last for an hour. We're sorry if your question is not answered - we often receive a high volume of questions and can't get to all of them.

12:00

Talk about Autism:



Lastly, please be patient - this event is happening live and we will be as quick as we can. Also, please forgive any typos - again this is a live event. So now, over to you to ask your questions to Kevin!

12:00

Talk about Autism:



I will ask the first question: What gave you the idea to start your anti-bullying campaign?

12:02



Kevin Healey:

I started the campaign in april, due to the fact i have been bullied now for over 35 years from a child and sadly its just got worse, so therefore i launched the campaign in April

12:03

Comment From Guest

What helps you to keep going when there are so many trolls and unpleasant people out there? I admire you sticking your head above the parapet!

12:04



Kevin Healey:

Guest- i have to keep going, simply because if i dont keep going the trolls win, and im not going to let them win im on a mission now to get new laws implemented for people with autism who are most at risk

12:04

Comment From Jammy

what would success for ur campaign look like

12:05



Kevin Healey:

to change the current laws, because the current hate crime laws simply don't work for people with LD and autism

12:05

Comment From George78

have you spoken to many schools about the problem of bullying as i think this is where a lot of bullies learn their ways and it just continues through their lives. there should be better attempts made at stopping bullies and helping those who are bullied cope

12:07



Kevin Healey:

i havent spoke too many schools due to the vast amount of schools in the uk however i believe jodie marsh is covering schools on bullying, but i agree children need to be educated form an early age on bullying form about 5 onwards

12:07

Comment From Guest

What gave you the ability to start this campaign up, is seems to be growing very successfully and I wonder if you had a specific strategy for this?

12:09



Kevin Healey:

i have been campaigning for autism for 12 years now since i go diagnosed so im quite use to campaigning, however i find that im in a position now where its personally affected me so therefore im campaigning for myself and thousands of people who are been bullied i get inundated with emails, phone calls etc daily, there is no strategy in just so passionate about it and will continue

12:09

Comment From Mumof2

What sort of behavior does the campaign class as bullying, as often I'm told that what other children are saying to my son are just 'what kids do' and it infuriates me.

12:12



Kevin Healey:

it classes it has cyberbullying, trolling, stalking, twitter abuse (which i get allot of) verbal abuse physical bullying anything to do with bullying and its not just on line, kids to bully and so do grown ups byt the key of educating and awareness is from an early age and we all know kids can be cruel sadly but awareness and education is needed in schools and there should be a new currilcium in place

12:13

Comment From Jammy

THANKS Kevin! This sounds like exactly what we need but what will the hate crime laws do,

how can they be used against bullies in the workplace or even on the street?

12:15

Kevin Healey:



yes the hate crime laws what i want to happen is for prosecution to take place either a fine, or prosecution such as jail if we take a look at the USA some states now have bullying laws and they prosecute, so i want that to happen here in the uk the newest state to bring in cyberbullying laws is NOVA SCOTIA canada (well done them)

12:16

Comment From Sara

What has been your biggest campaign win so far?

12:18

Kevin Healey:



lord sugars son who supported me with a billboard campaign which went across to over 20 million people over 5000 screens amazing support

12:18



12:19

Comment From Iqbal

Hi Kevin, thanks for doing this. What do you think about all the threats on Twitter recently? Does it make it easier for people to understand that bullying online is a big problem?

12:21

Kevin Healey:



very hard i came off-line for three days last week i was just so overwhelmed by the abuse on twitter, but i cant let them win its so hard and can be so draining as well but im not going to let these vile trolls win me allot of high profile ppl who have been attacked on twitter have deactivated there accounts and come of completely but im not going anywhere until laws changed i wont give up or give in

12:21

Comment From Alex

If an organisation wants to join up to support the campaign what is the next step?

12:23



Kevin Healey:

yes of course they can contact me if you goto autism-campaign.co.uk if you click on charity supporters

12:23

Comment From milk2sugars

did being diagnosed later in life help you? do you wish you had been diagnosed when you were younger? do you think it would have made any difference to the bullies?

12:24



Kevin Healey:

no difference at all i think people with autism are seen as easy targets to bully and to be picked on i was bullied from the age of 5 and i didnt get diagnosed until the age of 27

12:24

Comment From kim

Firstly, I wanted to say that I think your campaigning for bullying is fab, What I wondered is if you think your campaign is helping people around you think differently around bullying?

12:26



Kevin Healey:

if you mean family and friends yes they think differently more aware and more awareness is needed

12:26

Comment From Mark

Can you recommend any good anti-bullying resources?

12:27



Kevin Healey:

yes there are lots of charities out there bullying uk and allot more if your google them there is lots of info out there on the net, i will but a link up with resource and support on the official campaign site this wee so people can see autism-campaign.co.uk

12:27

Comment From MichelleD

are there any events coming up or things people can do to get involve din the campaign? i think it's amazing.

12:29



Kevin Healey:

not at the moment but there as been some talks of roadshows across the uk but this would take allot to implement people can get main updates by following me on twitter thats where im most active with the campaign [@kevin_healey](https://twitter.com/kevin_healey)

12:29

Comment From Mala

What has been your biggest personal achievement in your campaigns?

12:31



Kevin Healey:

getting 104 MPS to sign the EDM172 ON HATE CRIME you can see the info hear and please all of you get your MPS to sign it - there is also a ten min rule ill scheduled for end of october <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/172>

12:32

Comment From Guest

The police have the anti-bullying charter 'stand by me' but dont seem to use it at all

12:33



Kevin Healey:

yes police seam to be powerless at the moment when i received a death threat from overseas nothing could be done so im fighting for UK laws and international laws- police cant police the internet thats why new legislation and a BILL is needed thats what im campaigning for

12:34

Comment From Mala

What are your views on Inclusion within Schools?

12:35



Kevin Healey:

every school should have an anti bullying policy in place - yes i think its a good thing

12:35

Comment From Mala

Why not collaborate with other Campaigners like Anna Kennedy OBE?

12:39



Kevin Healey:

Anna is campaigning on school children and so is jodie marsh it would be good if they joined forces to tackle all the schools , mine is a global campaign on children and adults with autism, people or other campaigners need me contact me directly if they want to support there is lots of other campaigners out there i dont have time to chase people to ask if the want to join my campaign, its a personal campaign as i have been personally affected and other people are not covering adults which is so important that why i started my campaign in april this year

12:39



Talk about Autism:

Ambitious about Autism have an anti-bullying teaching resource aimed at primary school children aged 7-8 which might be useful for people: http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/page/about_autism/resources/woodfer_s_world.cfm

12:39

Comment From darren

With the number of people who use Twitter, do you think it's possible for it to be moderated? Have you had any contact with the people at Twitter about your campaign?

12:41



Kevin Healey:

yes im in contact with TWITTER UK team and know all of them there they have been supportive, but twitter as millions of millions of people using it every day i dont think it can be moderated as such but there is the new report abuse button they are rolling out

12:41

Comment From FANBOY

why do you think people with autism are bullied so much? do you think it's because it's a hidden disability or because sometimes it 'goes over their heads'?

12:42



Kevin Healey:

yes because its hidden and they are very venerable easy targets to be picked on

12:42

Comment From PeterPaul

have there been any pledges or acknowledgments by the government that the hate speech laws are going to change

12:42



Kevin Healey:

no not yet but still working on that

12:43

Comment From Sara

Is there a reason why you made your campaign autism specific rather than encompassing all disabilities?

12:43



Kevin Healey:

yes because im personally affected it laws changed then it will open the floodgates for other people with conditions and disabilities

12:44

Comment From Ted

Thanks for everything you do Kevin, I think it's important to raise awareness. If you weren't campaigning on bullying id there anything else you'd like to be involved in?

12:45



Kevin Healey:

im not sure since diagnosed that all ive done is campaigned as well as founded two autism charities and an autism radio station, but campaigning is what im best at to make a change for others

12:45

Comment From Iqbal

Yes, don't give in Kevin! I hate all the abuse on Twitter but it's not going to stop me either.

12:46

Comment From Henrik

Which other campaigners inspire you?

12:46



Kevin Healey:

think it has to be Joanne Lumley

12:47

Comment From Ann Memmott

Hi Kevin, great campaign. I was interested by research showing that autistic children in schools were often unaware of much of the bullying that was going on. They often mistook it for friendliness or humour. Do you think bullying statistics for autism may be underestimated as a result of this kind of thing?

12:52



Kevin Healey:

yes it need addressing also the stats people can't get a true figure

12:53

Comment From Tim

In my social circle, the Steven Simpson case open a lot of eyes to the abuse of autistic people. How good or bad do you think the media coverage of that was?

12:54



Kevin Healey:

think it was good because ethe media addressed it and sometimes they dont address these issues at all so more awareness again is key BBC news featured me last week also channel 5 news and the daily mail so yes victims need to come forward

12:54

Comment From Guest

I used to work in a nursery and feel I was bullied and taken for granted because of my disability. What would you advise for getting back into employment. How do I explain how my autism effects my job as I never know how to explain it?

12:55



Kevin Healey:

think its imprtant that all people with autism disclose there condition just incase something in the future goes wrong with there employment

12:56



Kevin Healey:

you could also take someone in with you to help to eamplain to the employer also about autism

12:56



Talk about Autism:

Kevin is typing his last answers now - we have about five minutes left. But if you would like to continue the conversation after the live Q & A please visit the Talk about Autism forums: <http://www.talkaboutautism.org.uk>.

12:56

Comment From Sharona

What advice would you give an autistic child who was being bullied at school now? My nephew's being bullied and I know his mum's tried to comfort him but it's not really working (she's spoken to the school too). I want to be able to support him too but don't know what to say

12:58



Kevin Healey:

just talk to him and tell him the bullies are the bad people address it with the school head like my mum did she said if the bullying did not stop she would take me and my older brother out of the school so the head addressed the whole school

12:58

Comment From Sara

What are your hopes for the future of your campaign?

12:59



Kevin Healey:

to get the laws changed via a bill and new legislation on bullying if it takes month or years i wont give up!

12:59



Talk about Autism:

OK, our time is up and we're going to have to leave it there. It just remains for me to say thank you very much to Kevin for his time today - it's been a great conversation! Don't forget to follow us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/talkaboutautism>) and like us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/talkaboutautism.community>).