

Billy's story

a tale of personal experience

Billy's story has been reproduced from 'It's just easier': The Internet as a safety-net for same sex attracted young people, by Lynne Hillier, Chyloe Kurdas & Philomena Horsley (2001) Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

(The Net has) given me the opportunity to explore my feelings. Information can be gathered, sharing experiences with others and learning from their experiences. Realising I'm not alone. If it weren't for the net, I don't know what would have happened but I know I wouldn't be as well equipped as I am now (which isn't much anyway). It's opened my eyes but in a way made me more depressed. I know more but I can't do a damn thing about it. The whole waiting till I'm 18 is killing me.

If the Internet had never been invented: I would definitely be less informed...much much less. I would be more

depressed. Doing worse at school. Be more stressed. I might not even be typing this right now, might have suicided, totally cracked from the pressure. If starting from now I can't use it: I would be more depressed, lose my communication with others like me, and feel lost.

I can be myself. I can think before I type so I don't screw things up as I find it hard to talk to others. I can communicate with people around the world who are in a similar situation to me. I can communicate as myself, a boy, and learn of other people's experiences. The fact that I am (ugh) biological female is no matter. (Neither) my face or voice is projected so the only thing they get is what is on my mind.

I've learnt of the experience of others. Been able to tell others of my own experiences as a transgendered youth. It's terrible having to keep this to yourself with no-one to talk to, to reassure you you're okay. The Internet puts me in touch with people who tell me their good experiences and I cheer up while I'm depressed. (I met someone in

RL) Uh well it was more of an information exchange meeting. Nothing changed any opinions. I just heard her experiences of being transgendered and she answered some of my questions, gave me some advice...

(My least favorite activity is) talking to my parents. Or the lack of talking to my parents. We don't get along. There's really nothing to say. They don't understand me (they don't know I'm trans). They think I'm weird and abnormal anyway. They control every aspect of my life; they treat me like a kid who doesn't know anything. I hate them because they think they are great but they are ruining my life. There is so much I want, things others take for granted that I can't have, can never go back and do. They say no to anything boyish and try to force me to be girly so actually I'm pretending to be someone else every day. The real me is trapped inside.

...the people I talk to on the net are in the same position so they must be supportive. The net, you don't see these people every day. I've told no-one in real life for fear of

rejection (although my parents pretty much reject me now). Also, I hate being different. All I want is a normal life.
