

## Rick's Rant - October 2011

(Let me explain: I have no permission to create and post this document, but I don't think Rick would mind.)



Every year in this country 300 kids take their own lives. It is a mind-boggling number. And this past week one of those kids was Jamie Hubley. He was 15, he was depressed and he happened to be gay.

And because this is 2011 we don't just read about a kid like Jamie, we can Google him and then the next thing you know, you're sitting at home watching his videos on YouTube. And he was gay all right. He was a great big goofy gay kid singing Lady Gaga on the Internet. And as an adult you look at that and you go, you know what, that kid's going places. But for some reason, some kids, they looked at that and they attacked. And now he's gone.

And because this story is all too familiar we know exactly what's going to happen next. Grief counselors will go into the school, as they should. But what about the old fashioned assembly? You know, where the cops show up and there's hell to pay and they find out who's responsible. You know like when the lunchroom is vandalized. Because the kids who bullied this boy, they know who they are. And more importantly other kids know who they are.

It's no longer good enough for us to tell kids who are different that it's going to get better. We have to make it better now, that's every single one of us. Every teacher, every student, every adult has to step up to the plate. And that's gay adults too. Because I know gay cops, soldiers, athletes, cabinet ministers, a lot of us do, but the problem is adults, we don't need role models. Kids do. So if you're gay and you're in public life, I'm sorry, you don't have to run around with a pride flag and bore the hell out of everyone, but you can't be invisible either. Not anymore. 300 kids is 300 too many.