
BSTTW TEEN NEWS

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Teen Burn Survivors Helping Others

By: Michael Appleman

AS a Teen Burn Survivor you can understand what it is like to be burned. Your lives changed but did not end. Each one of you found a way to work through the medical and emotional difficulties.

The picture to the right is of a young Vietnamese boy who was burned at home by boiling water. Look at his face you will see the pain he is in. His parents do not have the money to pay for the medical expenses. **BSTTW** was given this picture within 48 hours after the accident occurred in Lau Dung, Viet Nam.

Burn survivors like this young boy needs our help. Families in the United States and the world do not have the finances and insurance for the medical attention needed. **BSTTW** needs your help getting the funding to aid him and others like him in Viet Nam, the USA and around the world.

If any of you are interested in joining the **BSTTW** Support Team or would like to have a Fund Raising Event in your town, please contact us by phone or at: teen@burnsurvivorstw.com

**Giving Back Is Very Important
Start Now**



A FAMILY AROUND THE WORLD

Mother Of A Teen Burn Survivor

By: Clarinda Jones

I know being a Mother of a teen burn survivor is not easy. So surely being a teen burn survivor is not any easier. Even though we all deal with our pain in different ways, I know there is a hidden burn inside both mother and child. That is the pain of a burn that others will never see. My son, Robert, goes through the ridicule and name calling on a daily basis. He suffers from the emotional pain that you cannot see. This hidden monster is the anxiety, depression, anger, sadness and more.

As a loving mother I cannot give up on my son. I pray that our children will survive and some day help and teach others. We must realize and remember that no matter what part of the world we live in, all of us are on the same team. Just dealing with the issues is not enough. So all parents and teen burn survivors need to hang in
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THE ONE BURNED IS NOT THE ONLY ONE HURTING

By: Renee Powell

A burn injury is the worst injury the human body can suffer. But the one that has been burned is not the only one hurting. Everyone who loves that person, especially a mate, is dying inside. And the very worst thing you can do is fight, bicker, argue among yourselves. You may think how could a family do that to one another during such a trying time? I certainly never thought any of this would happen. Well, I was wrong.

April 30th, 2001 began as any other Monday. Ken must have pulled me back into bed three times that morning. I can still see his smile and the love shining in his eyes. But he finally got around for work, kissed the kids goodbye and me and said, "I love you. See you tonight." Little did I know those were the last words I would ever hear him speak.

At around 1:30 that day, someone came through the door of the direct care home I worked at, calling my name. It was Ken's sister, Becky, and she said the words I shall never forget. "You need to leave. Kenny's been hurt really bad. You have to get to the hospital."

I simply nodded, thinking she was exaggerating. I went to the phone to call someone in. Before I could, my sister called. She was also Ken's step mom and told me how bad he was. She was hysterical and crying. Paul, her husband, had been burned as well, even though not as badly. But someone came in right away. When I got to the hospital, they were getting ready to life flight him to Kalamazoo to a burn unit. I, of course, was in no condition to drive an hour and a half. So my sister, Ken's other sister, Ethel, and myself piled into my mother's van, the map to the hospital tightly clutched in my hand. Paul

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and Fred, Ken's brother, were on their way also, in Fred's truck.

Bev, my sister, talked the whole way on how horrible it was. The explosion had taken off the roof of the dock at Tri State Cylinders, where Ken, Paul, and Fred all worked. Ken had been bleeding off gas outside, and an idiot decided to go in and light the furnace, and it mixed with the gas outside. The explosion knocked Ken across the street to his dad's back yard. When the ambulance came he wouldn't let anyone help him, he climbed on that gurney himself.

"Renee," Bev said. "The hospital said he may be dead before we get there. I'm sorry, but I thought you should know." The things you should know are if you have clean clothes for that day, or if you need to stop at the store for a gallon of milk. You should never have to know that the man you plan on spending the rest of your life with could be dying.

We arrived at the hospital at the same time as Paul and Fred. The nurse explained to us that Ken had suffered 3rd degree burns everywhere but his feet, and would most likely not survive the night. It was decided that his dad and I would be the first to see him. In order to go into his room, gloves, mask, bonnet, and a gown had to be worn. No matter how strong you are, you are not prepared for that first glimpse into hell. Cause that is what it is.

Ken was wrapped in thick gauze everywhere but his feet. I only knew it was him by his stubby toes. He was hooked up to a machine that monitored his heart, blood pressure, pulse, and oxygenation. He also had several IV's going. And, of course, he was on a ventilator, even though we were told he was breathing on his own when they got him. I covered his hand with his and told him he had to get better. We were to be married in a few months, and he couldn't

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miss that, could he? The nurse in the room looked at me with pity. His dad kept peeking in the room, wanting to see if I was done yet. I guess he expected me to just say goodbye and let him go. Cause he had no faith that he would I spent most of that first week at Ken's make it. I spent most of that bedside, my hand on his arm, talking to him, telling him how very much I loved him. The nurses got to know me well, and would tell me if they were giving him a new med. they knew now that was the first thing I checked, and if I had questions, I would surely ask. They had him in a drug-induced coma, so he would rest.

Since he had so little reserve skin, his skin had to be grown in a lab in Boston. It turned out that his face was only 2nd degree and a couple other areas were not burned. As time passed, he defied the odds with every day that he lived. His father gave me nothing but trouble, told me when I could see him and when I couldn't. At one point, he thought I had tried to get Ken's workmen's comp checks, and called the hospital and told them I could not see him anymore. Do you think that stopped me? The nurses just pretended I wasn't there. I talked to them every morning and every evening, and was there as often as I could be. But I didn't understand why his father was being this way to me. What had I done, but love his son, and refuse to give up?

I know once his dad had said to me" Are you sure that you want to be with him? Do you have any idea what he is going to look like?" I looked him straight in the eye and told him that did not matter. I loved him, and was not going anywhere. Scars did not matter the least to me. I remember very well the first time they called and told me he was awake. I will never forget walking into that room and saying his name, and his eyes opened, and filled with tears. He knew who I was and while he couldn't talk, he didn't have to. I say it all in those eyes, and when he pulled me to him, I could not stop the tears. At

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that moment, I really thought he was going to be ok.

He got his first infection at that point and they had to put him back under the paralyzing drug. There was a meeting with his father and his doctors, deciding if they should go on. It was his father who just wanted to end everything, and let him die. I began to wonder if he was human. How could he even think of doing such a thing? The nurses asked me for my opinion and I told them to wake ken up and ask him what he wanted. Well, it turned out we did not have to resort to such matters. Ken pulled through the crisis, much to the amazement of others.

Two months later, they were bringing him awake. A lot of his skin had healed and where he had been grafted, it really looked good, except for his back. That still continued to be stubborn and didn't take very well. The last time I saw him alive his precautions had been reduced. I only had to wear the gown and mask. for the first time I was able to touch my lips to his when I told him goodbye. He moved around a great deal that day, and I thought it was only a matter of time before he would be awake.

Two days later, his kidneys shut down, just like that and he was gone before I got there. I walked in that room, and there was no machines beeping, the ventilator wasn't making his chest rise and fall. He lay there, his beautiful eyes shut forever. And I wanted to die along with him. I could not picture a life without my Ken, and still have trouble doing that.

I went to his dad's and all of us were there. His sisters, and Fred and as soon as they saw me, they came and held me. And I knew I would always have a family.

At the funeral home, his dad came up to me and told me how sorry he was. And I knew then that in his own way he was trying to atone for his

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behavior. He said he had really wanted him to make it, and said I would always be his daughter, for I had stayed by his side until the very end. We remain close to this day. They are days we cry over him, cause we loved him best.

His mother came in from Tennessee, and after the funeral thanked me for loving her son and making him happy. I miss Ken everyday, and wish that he was here. Cause some days, it seems unbearable without him.

But I hope I have made my point. At times like these, when emotional pain is at its peak, the worst thing you can do is fight. Cause that only makes the pain worse. A family needs to stick together and be there for one another. That is the most important thing.

Is There A Perfect Person?

By: Delores Lekowski

It isn't easy being a teen, especially now days. There is so much pressure and so much influence. Pressure, pressure and more pressure. Where does it all begin and more importantly, where does it end? It begins with how you see yourselves. You know what I mean, you think that you have to be perfect, talk about pressure; this is a goal that is not possible, that is unless you are God. Look around you; do you see a perfect person? We all have a flaw or two; this is what makes us interesting. I believe that it is more of a tragedy to be flawed on the inside then it is on the outside. It is the inside that makes up a person; you know, that thing that we often refer to as the soul. So, if the inside, the soul, is so important, why do we spend so much time working on the outside and ignoring the inside? It is that visual thing; we use our eyes to judge people. After all this is what advertisers use to sell their products, and of course they focus on the perfect body, perfect hair, perfect, perfect, perfect. Now remember, I already told you there isn't any perfect person, so why do

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they look so perfect? It is their commercial, therefore, they can make their subject look anyway they want, this is how they sell their product. An air brush here, lighting there, camera angles, whatever it takes to make a perfect ad, and a perfect product with perfect people. With all of these high doses of perfectness, we begin to see ourselves as less than perfect, after all, there isn't anyway that we could compete with the people that are presented to us as perfect. I am here to tell you, there isn't any competition. When the commercial is finished, these perfect people go back to being flawed people, and are part of the same flawed world that we are.

Since we are not perfect on the outside, wouldn't it make sense to perfected the inside, our character, our compassion, and our honesty? We are, what we are on the outside, these things we can't change. What we can change is the kind of person that we are. If everyone looked exactly the same on the outside, all men looked alike, and all women looked alike, I would bet you a million dollars, that we would all work hard to become the best person possible, we would have to, this is the only way to make us different, make us stand out.

Guess what? We might live in a visual world, but when they talk about the beautiful people, they don't necessarily mean they are beautiful on the outside.

Yes, we are flawed on the outside, but on the inside we are flawless, all we have to do is developed this beautiful person and present it to the world. Let us be judged by our inner beauty, after all, this is the one place where we become who we are. When you get right down to it, this is what every person wants to be judged for. Beauty is soon forgotten, what we will remember about a person will be, how their
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inside beauty touched others. This is the important beauty, the unforgettable beauty.

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there and work together. We must talk, listen to and support each other daily. Whenever possible, we should reach out to each other and share the difficulty times. Seek out a counselor that can help you and your child. I know some burn survivors and parents move on with their lives and others continue to struggle. As a parent I find that the hardest thing I ever had to do was to see my child suffer mentally and physically. In time and with the help of **BSTTW** and other organizations, the world will understand the pain that so many of us go through without having to feel it themselves. We must keep on climbing to be our best and love each other.

God, The Positive Attitude

By: Johanna (Joho) Catsburg

Before I got burnt, I wasn't a Christian. I was normally always quiet because I could never get a word in, with my older sisters talking for me all the time! (no offense to you girls ;)) But I was normally a quiet girl.

Anyway, after I got burnt I kind a got depressed and stopped talking all together. Those were the elementary years, when kids were the meanest. I'd always be shy and would never want to talk about my problems.

A little while after, I started going to different camps, a burn camp, and different Christian camps. That's where things started to change.

God had started to change my whole attitude and my whole life around. The only way that I've become so happy was because I had that personal relationship with my Lord, Jesus Christ. I started being less shy, talking more and now you just can't get me to stop. It really helped my attitude about everything, and even though I was burnt... it didn't matter because

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what Jesus went through on this earth was far more greater than any sorrows I've ever had. And the part that shocks me the most... He did it all for me, and you! Something I don't at the least deserve. John 16:33

I am now happy all the days of my life because I know I am being guided through the darkness of this world. Being burnt was a trial in my life, but

it has just made me even more stronger. I can no longer be sad, depressed or anything of that sort because I am following Him, I won't be stumbling through the darkness, because I now have the light that leads to life. John 8:12

Anyways, juss always know, there is always someone to help you through a problem or a trial. And your not alone in the world, He will guide you if you let Him.

Peace Outtie y'all!

Fitness for The Burn Survivor Part 2

By: Paul Mueller

Fitness for The Burn Survivor Part One is in the **BSTTW** Teen News December 2001.

My recommendation to you, the reader is this - if you have not returned to an active life that you loved and looked forward to, do so as soon as

possible. It goes without saying that you need to follow the advice and guidance of doctors and

physical therapists. They are the professionals that can help guide recovery. Accept ownership and accountability for doing whatever possible to regain an active lifestyle. This will have a very beneficial byproduct of self-esteem and confidence. The fact is, you and I were burned, we cannot change that. I think that if we could, we all would turn back the hands of time. What we can change is how we handle our lives. We **CONTINUED Page 6 "FITNESS"**

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all know someone who was burnt worse or less than we are. That fact does not preclude us from the fullest recovery possible. My Father has always told me to try. Until you try, how can you say "I can't"? I respect and love him dearly for that and will never forget the feeling of self-worth that he instilled in me very early in my life. My burn physician kept telling me that he was going to have to operate on me. I considered that a challenge and I was set on proving him wrong...and I did. I did not require surgery, skin grafts and God-willing I will be left with little or no scarring. Clearly, without Divine intervention and my hard work and support from many friends, surgery would have been a reality. We all possess a hero and a sense of determination that can make us soar to new heights. I want you to find that determination and intensity that lives inside of each and every one of you. You have it in you, I guarantee that. Maybe it is hidden, but dig down deep and resurrect that unquenchable desire to succeed. Our lives may be filled with setbacks but the reward for trying is far greater than anything we have ever experienced.

Start off slow and be patient. Obtain the advice and guidance of someone that you know who frequents the gym, hiking trail, swimming pool, or bike path; whatever you have a passion for. Find a mentor or coach to push and encourage you if the going gets tough. Remember, I started with 3 pull-ups – and laughed at myself about it. I used to do 30, we all need a starting point. Increased blood flow from exercise helps the healing process and will help the psyche. My exterior, physical appearance, that I felt others would see have not even been noticed. Some of my friends in the gym were not aware of my injuries, or where I had been for 2 months. I had to physically show them the Jobst garments that I was wearing. I thought that they would stick out like a glaring spotlight. They did not notice, and even more importantly, did not even care. They were just happy to see me again. We often

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do not realize how many true friends we have until times like this. We all have to walk through the valley of decisions. I was given the choice to sit it out or dance, I chose to dance and hope that you too choose to dance.

Seize the day, notice the moment!!!!

BSTTW CONTACT INFORMATION

Emergency Contact

We have an Emergency Email Form on the Internet. Go to:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/emergeemail.html

You, your family and friends can also reach us by phone at 941-364-8457. If we are not in the office or it is after hours, you will be given an emergency number to call. A support team member will respond to you within 24 hours. **BSTTW** has at least one individual on call 24 hours day/7 days a week to meet everyone's needs.

You can contact Pastor Dale at:

PastorDale@burnsurvivorsttw.com

BSTTW Director

Michael Appleman: Executive Director
michael@burnsurvivorsttw.com

DONATIONS

As a 501 (c)(3) Non Profit Organization, all donations, big or small are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Donations from Companies, Churches, Organizations, Communities and individuals will help **BSTTW** to do the work that is needed for all Burn Survivors, family members and the public around the world. Remember your donations can be money, clothes, a used bicycle etc.. All will help burn survivors and their family. Many families loose their homes and property. Please personally think about and talk to your family and friends about donating to **BSTTW**.

Mail your donations to:

Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc.
650 N Beneva Road #105
Sarasota, Florida 34232

Donate on line at:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/donations.html

If you have any questions call us at 941-364-8457 or email **BSTTW** at:

donations@burnsurvivorsttw.com

Volunteering your time to BSTTW

We always can use your help. There are many children, adults and families around the world that need support and other help. You can take part in rebuilding the lives and helping people reenter their community. If you are interested contact **BSTTW** by phone or email us at

volunteers@burnsurvivorsttw.com

Purchases

BSTTW has an online store where you can purchase Skin Care Products, Books and Video Tapes. Got to:

www.burnsurvivorsttw.com/sales.html

You can also purchase Skin Care Products by phone.

BSTTW ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBERS:

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