

Bullied Texas girl kills herself with gun in front of shocked family members

Ms Brandy Vela shot herself in the chest at home in Texas City, Texas. Her sister said she had always been bullied for her weight, but the cyberbullying intensified in April. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/BRANDY VELA

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Another life has been lost at the end of a gun barrel in America, this time as a result of bullying.

Ms Brandy Vela, 18, shot herself in the chest at home in Texas City, Texas, despite her family's pleas not to pull the trigger.

Her sister, Jackie, said she had always been bullied for her weight, but the cyberbullying intensified in April, according to CNN.

"People would make up fake Facebook accounts and they would message her and she wouldn't respond and they would still come at her," Jackie said.

"They would say really, really mean things like, 'Why are you still here?'. They would call her fat and ugly. She was beautiful, absolutely beautiful. The only thing people could find to pick on her was her weight."

Brandy changed her phone number and also reported the bullying to the police, but was told they could not do anything as the bullies were using apps and were untraceable.

On Tuesday (Nov 29), she texted Jackie saying "I love you so much, please remember that, and I'm sorry for everything".

Jackie knew something was wrong, and called her parents and grandparents. Together, they rushed back home, only to find Brandy in a room, holding a gun. They failed to stop the tragedy, despite their desperate pleas.

Brandy was taken to a local hospital where she was pronounced dead. Her organs were harvested.

Captain Joe Stanton of the Texas City Police Department told CNN that detectives were interviewing the family and following up on several tips that came in, and will be contacting those believed to be suspects.

Sheriff's deputies will also be addressing cyberbullying with students next week.

Ms Melissa Tortorici, communications director of the Texas City Independent School District, where Brandy was a high school senior, says the community is "devastated".

The high school hallway is decorated with blue hearts, in memory of Brandy's beautiful blue eyes, and students are planning to release blue balloons in her honour on Friday (Dec 2).