



Jillian Annette Cleary

Died Age 15

Methamphetamine

We lost our 15 year-old daughter, Jillian, February 29th 2004. She tried methamphetamine for the first and last time. She became sick, and her friends were too scared to get her medical attention and she was too sick to get help for herself. By the time we found out what had happened, it was too late. I stood at her side as she died and there was nothing they could do to save her.

Her friends knew she was in trouble, yet did nothing to help her for fear that they would get into trouble. Jillian paid for her mistake with her life. We will continue to pay for the rest of our lives. There are no words to describe how special she was to us, nor are there words to describe our pain. There is nothing we can do to repair our lives.

People should know that she was a good student and well-liked by her teachers; she was responsible and helped take care of her younger sister and brother. She loved to read, and loved Harry Potter. She was never in trouble. She belonged to a Christian youth group and was very active with the church.

She was a young girl who had friends who had done meth without dying or getting sick. They told her it was so much fun. She tried it and she died. People ask sometimes, "How did your daughter die?" and when I tell them drugs, it's easy to see the look in their eyes--as if drug deaths don't matter.

No one saw this coming. It was a complete shock to our family. Now I know better. Now I know that teens often make decisions about drugs that have nothing to do with their upbringing or intelligence. Maybe if one person chooses not to take drugs even one time because they heard Jillian's story, then it was worth talking about.

Trying to change drug use in this country seems like trying to hold back the ocean with your hands. Perhaps one child may be affected—may realize that even one time may cost their life--and choose not to try drugs. This is our prayer, in memory of our girl, Jillian Annette Cleary.

~ Stacie Russler

Remembering Lost Promise