



Casey Nolan Fitzgerald

Died Age 20

Heroin & Cocaine

On January 13, 2005, my only child, Casey Nolan Fitzgerald, age 20, died from a heroin and cocaine overdose. He was sober the last 5 months of his life, but he relapsed. It didn't work. Casey was a bright, creative child with ADHD, and an IQ of 140, who lived a life too fast and too short. He left behind a son who is now the tender age of 2 1/2 yrs. Casey, Jr. will never know his father. Although they were never married, I consider the partner of my son, Rosie, my daughter-in-law. It has been 14 months since Casey lost his battle against drugs.

I mark time by "before Casey died" and "after Casey died." I don't have guilt that there wasn't a program—he was in rehab at age 13 and with counselors. There was the variety of emotional nightmare stories we all shared to try to get my son off drugs and find the calm within himself that drugs falsely provided. But drugs became his sole purpose in life, not to get high any longer, but to stop the sickness the took

over his body daily.

I have no choice but to move on or hold on, whichever comes first. With the support of an incredible local organization, The Hearts of Hope, www.themomsquad.org, a grief counselor and also the support of friends who hold me close when I need it, and kick me in the butt when I need it as well.

If nothing else, I have learned that life is too short to live it without passion. Passion to shake other parents! Drug use is not only financially and emotionally devastating to the user, but it has ravaged the promise of a future I dreamed of for my son. A future I hope to see someday in my grandson. One that can be clean, sane, safe and happy. A dream? A hope? God, I hope so.

~ Joan Baker



Remembering Lost Promise