

Hardship Essay

Have you ever heard of D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) classes? I took this class in fifth grade. An officer would come in weekly and educate my class on drugs. I knew this information was important, but I didn't think much about it. This was until I entered high school, and I now know why these classes are significant to teach children.

For a long time, I kept many things to myself, mainly my home life. My mom's long-term boyfriend struggled with drug addiction. Many nights, he would call me down from my room and ask me to watch my disabled little sister while my mom worked late nights. He would say he was "going to the store," even though I knew the store had already closed. But there was not much I could do about it, so I would watch my sister waiting for him to come home for hours. I would go from comforting her so she would stop crying to my homework. I would juggle between the two, but eventually it was hard to do any homework at all, as it was late. Then, when I went to school, I felt judged by others. They knew about his addiction, and I felt as if they saw me as a bad person, too. Every night and day, the cycle would repeat.

As a result, I began to feel exhausted and overwhelmed. Along with that, I felt guilty for feeling this way because I knew my mom was working so hard to provide for us. These emotions made me wonder why all this responsibility was put on me. I knew I was being lied to by him and that his actions were hurting my family, along with the community, which led me to build up so many emotions of confusion, hate, and guilt.

As I cannot explain the entire story in this essay, I will share the ending. He ended up getting help and is now two years sober. As I look back on this time, I see perseverance in myself. As I was struggling daily, trying to contain all of my emotions, I continued to do well in school and stayed in extracurricular activities. I put in the effort to find time to finish the

assignment. This was huge for me because even though I was struggling, I found a part of myself that could keep me going.

I strived to do good not only for myself but to bring pride to my family. Now, as I'm writing this, emotions still arise, but I see it as growth. As I used to hide my emotions, I can now discuss them more freely in general, and also about this particular period in my life.

Everything I have taken away from this experience has made me a better person. I am more understanding, a better listener, and driven, along with many other qualities. I took the situation I was in, and instead of letting myself drown in it and follow the path I saw, I became a better person and drove myself to be the best version of myself.

I overcame this challenge and, in the process, learned so much about myself and what I want my future to be. The little girl who once sat and listened to the D.A.R.E. officer talking about drugs is now thinking about all of her life goals for the next four years. This experience influenced my life and made me have a goal to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree. While doing this, meeting new friends, exploring new places, and having new experiences are all more goals of mine.

This experience has brought me to want more for myself and is my motivation for every goal I make. I will never forget what I went through because from it I learned that things can get better. In the end, difficult experiences don't just bring pain, but they can foster growth, strength, influence you greatly, and make you want a better future for yourself.