

My experience as a member of the Drug Free Clubs of America has taught me many, many things. As a three year member of the club, it has truly shaped me as a person. My school, family, community, and even friends have all changed for the better. Being a part of this club has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my highschool career.

My first year in the Drug Free Club was my sophomore year of high school. When I joined the club, I thought it would be a great way to show my friends and family that I was committed to being drug free. I had a great way to say no to drugs and escape the peer pressure that comes hand in hand with highschool. As I attended my first Drug Free rally, it was amazing to look around and see my peers and community come together as one to fight against the drug epidemic. The Drug Free rally inspired me to keep making the right choices and lead a completely drug free life.

The following year, my junior year, I rejoined the club as soon as the school year started. Little did I know, the club would mean more to me this year than any other. In the month of November, I discovered that my own mother was abusing drugs. I told my grandparents, whom I had always lived with, and we decided to try to get her to go to a rehabilitation facility. As most addicts do, my mother refused to go and denied using any drugs. That night is one that will forever live in the back of my mind. Seeing someone you love so much being blinded by drugs and turning their back on you is one of the hardest things a sixteen year old could go through.

Through the rest of the school year, I was going through an extremely difficult time. Although I seemed fine on the outside, I was battling my own demons on the inside. As senior year began I once again joined the Drug Free Club. My family was so proud of me for committing to staying drug free. During my final rally as a MADE member, I had the opportunity to hear stories from other kids like me whose parents had abused drugs. Being able to hear their stories and how they did not let their parents choices define them was truly amazing. Knowing there is an entire community behind me and supporting me finally lifted my spirits.

Without the Drug Free Clubs of America, I'm not sure where I'd be today. It has shown me that I'm not alone in the battle against the drug epidemic. The Drug Free Club has changed everything around me, my school has encouraged more and more of my peers to stay drug free, my family and friends have shown me endless support and encouragement to stay drug free, and the club has opened up a conversation about drug use. It has taught me that I am strong and I can overcome anything. Above all, my community has come together to show the next generation that they can live a drug free, full, and beautiful life. I have met so many kids who have been through the same things I have been through, together we will end the drug epidemic. I could not be more thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful club.