

## Shauna's Letter

I get tired of dealing with sexual abuse all the time. I once read another girl's words in a book about incest. She said: "There's an ending point to life. Why can't there be an ending point to this shit?" When I got so sick of it I couldn't stand it (or myself) any longer I began getting high. At first it was only once and a while with a friend. We could laugh and giggle and get completely buggy with each other. It was something special we did when we were alone in a peaceful place in the woods. Then I started smoking by myself at home whenever I wanted to capture that lighthearted peaceful feeling. Then it became an every night before bed thing. I would climb out on the roof and look at the stars. I had this whole ritual. Then it became an everyday thing and eventually it was everyday before, after, and during school. I was high more than I wasn't. Once I went through a real dry spell where I couldn't get a hold of any pot. I came home and my mother accused me of being stoned because she wasn't used to seeing me straight. I started to get scared when I realized I'd been high every day for a month and hadn't noticed the stars once. I kept telling myself I was okay because I didn't get drunk and do stupid things like my friends. Just the smell of beer and wine makes me sick. I'll never be a drinker. That's what my father used to do before he molested me.

— Shauna (age, 16)