

Dear 8th Grade Students,

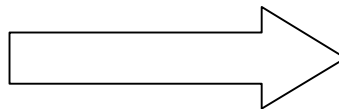
On Saturday, January 2, 2016 at 1:37 a.m., my 24 year old son, Josh Brabender passed away from a heroin overdose that occurred 48 hours earlier. As a result of the overdose, he stopped breathing for some time. Although the life squad was able to restart his heart, his brain had been without oxygen for too long. Machines kept him alive for 2 days, but when it was clear Josh had no brain activity, we made the decision to remove all life support. Josh passed away quietly while I held his hand with his family all around him. He died with dignity surrounded by love.

This is very difficult for 8th graders to hear. Why would I burden you with this information? The answer is because when Josh was in 8th grade he was perfect and beautiful and innocent just like all of you. In high school he discovered drugs, and eventually he found heroin. Heroin wrapped itself around his neck like a python until it eventually strangled the life out of him. It is the devil incarnate – pure evil.

If there is one chance in a million that I can save one of your lives, and spare your families the unbearable pain of burying their child, then it is worth it for you to hear my son's tragic story. When you are confronted with the first opportunity to take drugs, and it will happen – remember my son. Consider your parents. Picture them trying to comprehend how they lost their perfect and beautiful and innocent child to the demon heroin.

May God bless you all
Sincerely, Mr. Brabender

Before Heroin



After Heroin

