

# Background: Past to Present

Shea was raised by his mother, a single parent. While Shea was still an infant his father left him, his mom, and his sister. However, 8-10 years passed and Shea would be given the opportunity to meet his father. His father tried to stay at his mother's house one night, which Shea's mother refused to let happen for the safety of her children. Shea's interaction with his dad was brief and simple, but for Shea it was a dream come true and he cherished the two days his dad was around. Then came the third day where Shea's dad left again all-the-while promising to return soon, which he never intended to do. The next time Shea heard anything about his father was that he was locked up and the last knowledge of him was that he had passed away. This betrayal left young Shea with trust issues and a fear of being abandon.

The absence of Shea's father in his life left him longing for acceptance and Shea's mother tried everything she could for him, to provide him with every opportunity to succeed in life. No matter how hard she tried to teach the importance of being thankful for what they did have, all Shea could focus on was what he did not have. Shea can remember when he played football, how he would dread going to the end of he season award ceremonies because the fact that he had no father was thrown in his face more at this time then at any other time. At these ceremonies Shea would always be awarded trophies and certificates which did nothing to blind him from the happiness of his teammates and the joy on their father's faces when those teammates were given their awards. Or when Shea would overhear the whispers of his teammate's parents to his coach trying to get the coaches to replace Shea with their kids. This never came to pass because Shea had a drive in him that the other kids just couldn't match. Shea would be at these ceremonies alone because he had no father and his mom would be working late or attending her classes to become a nurse. At these events, Shea can recall slipping away from everybody and going outside to sit alone in the grass, with his awards discarded to the side, and he would just watch the traffic, wishing he could be in any of those passing cars that had both parents present. During this period in Shea's life he began to harm himself by burning himself with a lighter or making little cuts on himself with knives from the kitchen. This time in his life, was just the seed of Shea's self-destructive behavior and the desire to find acceptance among the wrong crowd.

Reflecting on his early childhood, Shea remembers three separate traumatic acts of sexual abuse which he endured. When he was just six years old, a friend of his sister molested him. Then at the age of nine, a man that his mother had married, (who should have been a guardian and role model to Shea), sexually assaulted him also. Another