

Rosa's Story

My name is Rosa*, and I am eighteen years old. My father abused me from the time I was eleven to fifteen years old. I never told anyone what was happening to me and what my father did to me because I was afraid and embarrassed. I had never heard of a father abusing his own daughter. Furthermore, he threatened me saying he would kill my mom. I didn't want anything bad to happen to her. I cried often and was very sad, but no one knew what was going on with me. I wanted so much for someone to take me out of my home, which was like hell to me. I never had a normal life like other girls. My life was so complicated and difficult that I often wished I would die. Finally, after a few years had passed, I could no longer stand the way my father treated me like his wife and how he hit me. I denounced him. When my mom found out, she cried a lot. But, she was supportive and helped me denounce my father. They put him in jail, which he very much deserved after all he had done to me.

After that, the prosecutor's office brought me to the Hovde House of Good Treatment, where I found out that I was pregnant. I wanted to die; I did not want the baby within me. In the most difficult moments, the staff of the Home was there to give me the strength that I needed and to help me understand that my child was not guilty for what happened to me. After that, I began to love my baby. Now, she is one year old. I love my daughter very much. Each day, I feel more and more proud of my daughter. As well, I want to thank the shelter very much for all of the support they gave me and for giving me the opportunity to study computation. Learning about and working on computers opened my eyes to another reality, connecting me to new opportunities. My dream of studying to be a bilingual secretary grew out of the computer classes given at the shelter. I hope to learn English via the internet, which will be very useful in my job.

Presently, I am doing much better. After leaving the shelter, I am now working with the support of my mom. I am very determined to push forward and reach my goals, which include being a good mother to my daughter and a hard-working professional, so that my family will be proud of me.

**name changed*

