



Invisible Children's Project

– Information for Children –

Up One Day, Down the Next (A Bipolar Disorder Story for Younger Children)

I always knew my mom was different. Her mood changed a lot day-to-day. Sometimes, she would have lots of energy. Other times, she would feel bad and stay in bed all day. When she felt bad, she often drank alcohol and could not stop. That would make her feel worse. She would also get angry with me and even hurt me. I was scared.

Many times, she had to go to the hospital because she felt so bad that she wanted to hurt herself. When she was at the hospital, my sister and I would feel confused. We missed our mom and all her hugs and kisses, but we liked that it was calmer and that she was safe at the hospital. It helped me to talk to our father and to other trusted grown-ups.

When I grew older, I learned that my mother had a mental health problem called bipolar disorder. That is when someone feels really low, then very up or really high. Their mood swings from sad to super-excited. A person with bipolar disorder might do and say things without thinking that might hurt someone. There are doctors who help people with mental health problems like bipolar disorder. The doctors can give people medicine and talk about things to do to help them feel better.

It helped me to learn that my mom was sick, and it helped even more when I understood her mental health problem. I also talked to a counselor about my feelings and felt better having someone help me understand them. If my story sounds like yours, and you are worried or upset, find someone who you trust to talk to and let them know how you feel. It is OK to ask for help.