

## **Growing Pains**

Body's changing, hormones racing  
Do I look pretty and thin?  
Homework's rough, parents are tough,  
Alcohol and smoking makes it tempting to sin

MTV rules, MSN's cool  
My Ipod's an extension of me  
Paris lives in LA and it's vogue to be gay  
And my role models are Lindsay and Britney

Life as a teen, is a whirlwind it seems  
Not sure who to follow or believe  
Changes galore, with friends by the score  
And a wavering desire to achieve

Now imagine the above stress, with another complex test  
Having schizophrenia, depression or bipolar too  
Wondering why you're feeling sad, or inexplicably mad  
Not just one voice in my head, but a few

Thoughts rushing fast, of future, present and past  
Or some days feeling as numb as ice  
Drugs calm you down, sitting in a hospital gown  
But nowhere near comfortable or nice

Being different is real, not just a look or feel  
With your life changing beyond belief  
Missing school, losing mates, with constantly high and low states  
Suddenly the illness becomes an everyday thief

Luckily help is around, and good doctors can be found  
If you're willing to talk and involve those near and dear

There are strategies to avoid lapse, education to fill gaps  
And from mental illness we can remove the fear

Other teens who are unwell, and community groups as well  
Can provide refuge and solace during darker days  
Counselling can assist, making early warning signs list  
To counteract the next manic or depressive phase

Three years since last ill, keeping ok, staying chilled  
Teenage years have passed and adulthood I begin  
My illness will remain, but in confidence I will gain  
Turning each setback into a lesson and a win