

A group of children, mostly girls, are captured in a joyful moment, dancing or performing. They are wearing bright yellow shirts with a blue circular logo that reads 'NAGARA SCOUTS' and features a silhouette of a person. The children are smiling and have their arms raised, some holding hands. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and what appears to be an indoor setting like a school or community center.

# THE TEACHING LIBRARIAN

The magazine of the Ontario School Library Association  
volume 15, number 2 ISSN 1188679X

**Inclusion @ your library®**



# HOW DYLAN P



Seeing a photograph of 10-year-old Dylan Peters with a big smile on his face, proudly displaying a book, one might guess that he finished at the top of his class in a reading contest or perhaps completed a particularly successful book report. Take another guess. Jim Eisenreich, the former professional baseball player who has been afflicted with the motor and vocal tics associated with Tourette's syndrome, has said of Dylan Peters, "Dylan has done what most of us (including me) would not even think of doing, especially at such a young age." What is this ten-year-old author's accomplishment? Rather than merely coping with the challenges of growing up with the symptoms of Tourette's Syndrome, Dylan has taken on the task of educating other people about what life is like for children like him, as well as their families and friends. In his recent book, *Tic Talk* (Five Star Publications, 2007), he shares the insights about tolerance and acceptance that he has gained in the five years since he was diagnosed with Tourette's. Between school, homework and football games, Dylan found the time to answer some questions from *The Teaching Librarian*:

**TL:** What is your biggest challenge in living with Tourette's Syndrome?

**Dylan:** In April 2005, I had a six-week episode of full body tics that made it impossible to get through a full day of school. I was in a great deal of pain from sore muscles. This has been the most challenging episode so far. It is also difficult when I have a tic or tics that cause other problems, like my mouth opening tic caused the creases in my lips to be very sore and bleed; and my eye blinking tic made it hard to read and focus because my eyes would blink every couple of seconds.



# TIC TICS AND TALKS

Derrick Grose

**TL:** How do you cope with those challenges?

**Dylan:** Most of the time I just deal with it. I tell myself that eventually the tic will happen less or change to a different tic. I also remind myself that other kids have more difficult challenges than I do.

**TL:** How can other people help you in living with Tourette's?

**Dylan:** Others can support those of us with TS by becoming more aware of what Tourette's Syndrome is, and being understanding that we cannot stop or walk away from our tics. We want to live our lives just like they do.

**TL:** At 10 years of age, you have written your book, *Tic Talk* and had articles published in *ParentGuide* and *Tweens & Teens News*. When and why did you start writing?

**Dylan:** I started writing short stories at the end of first grade on the computer at home about fun things in my life like family, sports, playing with my brother, etc. I realized that I liked writing from doing schoolwork and I always had a million things running around in my head.

**TL:** What was the subject of the first story you wrote?

**Dylan:** It was a short story about my friends and me at a disastrous birthday party.

**TL:** What do you like best about being a published author?

**Dylan:** I like giving presentations about my story and my message of acceptance and tolerance. I really like hearing from other kids that my book has helped them with their secret, challenge or issue.

**TL:** You gave the opening address at the Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada National Conference 2007 in Niagara Falls. How did you feel about speaking to such a large group of people?

**Dylan:** Well, it wasn't the largest group of people that I had spoken to because I had given a presentation to a middle school of 525 students. I was a little bit nervous because the part of the presentation that my mom usually does was my responsibility at the conference and I was worried I would mess it up or get the kids' names wrong or something... but I didn't and it was great.

**TL:** What was the best part of the experience?

**Dylan:** It is hard to choose just one, but the best would probably be being asked to speak to others who have a story similar to mine..

**TL:** What was the most difficult part of the experience?

**Dylan:** I worried the most about our plane arriving on time, getting across the border with no problems, remembering the new part of my presentation and getting back home in time for my football game.

**TL:** Let's hear more about you. Tell us about a few of your favorite things.

**Dylan:** My favourite Web site is [www.addictinggames.com](http://www.addictinggames.com). I like the *Animorphs* Book Series by K.A. Applegate. My favourite movie is *Rocky IV*. "My Wish" by Rascal Flatts is my favourite song and *Mythbusters* is my favourite TV show.

**TL:** Which of these do you like best? Why?