

## **Don't Be Afraid To Ask**

By Dylan Peters

Recently I wrote a book called *Tic Talk - Living with Tourette Syndrome* and my hope was to create acceptance and tolerance for those with Tourette Syndrome or other challenges that life deals you. I have presented at elementary schools, middle schools, junior high schools, high schools and even a college. I have met some amazing people with Tourette Syndrome and other challenges. I believe that I have touched the lives of many kids over the past 6 months and am proud of that accomplishment. At the end of my presentation, my mom and I allow time for questions. I have been impressed with some of the questions that have been asked and have also never thought about others. I would like to share some of the most frequently asked questions and some that are just downright awesome.

Q. What is Tourette Syndrome?

A. Tourette Syndrome is a neurological disorder in which my brain tells a muscle or muscles in my body to move. That action or sound is called a tic and I cannot stop or control these tics.

Q. How many tics have you had?

A. I have had a lot of different motor and vocal tics since I was diagnosed. Sometimes I have several motor or several vocal or even some of both at the same time.

Q. Do you like having tics?

A. No

Q. Do you have tics when you play sports?

A. Yes, I still have the tics when I play sports, video games, ride my bike, etc.

Q. Do you have tics when you are sleeping?

A. No, once I have fallen asleep my tics stop but return again when I wake up.

Q. Why did you choose the title Tic Talk?

A. Originally the title was supposed to be Tic Tic Talk but our publisher did not think it was catchy enough and asked me to do a survey of family and friends on which they liked better. Most people liked Tic Talk best. My mom and I were in the small group of those that liked Tic Tic Talk. The title came from living with "tics" as a result of the Tourette Syndrome and the fact that I was ready to "talk" about my secret.

Q. Are you going to write more books?

A. Probably not but if my mom has anything to say about it - it is possible.

Q. How does it feel to be famous?

A. Actually, I am not famous. I am just a boy that wrote a book about living with

Tourette Syndrome. I have been on the news a couple of times.

Q. Why do you think people tease each other?

A. I think that kids do not understand why other kids behave the way they do or what their challenge is. I also think that the kids that do the teasing are often unsure of themselves or feel like they need to put others down to make themselves feel better.

Q. How do you have the courage to not feel sorry for yourself?

A. Honestly, there have been times that I have felt sorry for myself but I think about what my mom said about making lemons into lemonade and I remind myself that other kids have it worse than I do.

Q. At what age did you notice you were different?

A. In second grade when I was 7.

Q. What is the one thing that you hope to accomplish with your book?

A. I want kids with TS to know that they are not alone and I want others to be aware and accepting of those with Tourette Syndrome.

If I never write another book or present at another event, I will be happy with what I have accomplished to this point. As long as I can smile each night when I lay my head down and know that the kids, parents and teachers that I have heard from are smiling also, all of the hard work is worth it. *Tic Talk - Living with Tourette Syndrome* is a dream come true.