

Cody

My name is Cody and I am 16 years old and attending a senior high school in central Nebraska. My disabilities are: asthma, ADHD, OCD, Touretts Syndrome, and a form of Depression. I have had an IEP ever since I started school.

I had to go to Boystown in sixth grade because I threw temper tantrums. I started going to the Alternative Middle School. I liked going to school there. It was fun, the work was easy and we never had any homework. I got depressed after I left there and had to go to high school. I learned to draw pictures of people to make me happy.



I also got involved with the Y.E.S. (Youth Encouraging Support) Group. They have helped me a lot to understand my special needs and how to help myself. We meet every month and sometimes speak to other people about our special needs and how they can better help us. A simple way to put it, Y.E.S. rocks and I have met a lot of other kids who have special needs like me and we are friends now. We stick up for each other and hang out with each other and have lots of fun.

In High School I am in DLP. That is Developmental Learning Program. I have to attend all these special classes. I want to graduate from high school and get an apartment on my own or maybe live with one of my YES friends. I want to get a job, have my pets live with me, and be able to do things for myself without my mom's help. It will be real cool to have a place of my own. I can cook and buy my own food and do my own laundry when I want to.

If you ask me what people can do to help I will tell you. I wish teachers could help better with the kids that tease and bully me. I tell them what kids do to me and they don't do anything to stop them. When I try to stop them myself I am the one who gets in trouble. I wish teachers would listen to me better and act like they care more. They always seem to be in a hurry and don't think what happens to me is a big deal. I also wish they understood more about my disability and not get mad at me when I start ticking. They tell me I can control it, but I can't sometimes, it just happens. I wish they understood better that my medicines make me sick sometimes and make me not want to go to school.

The best kinds of teachers are the ones who listen and ask me what I need help with. The teachers who tell me what to do all the time are the worst. It really doesn't help, it makes me feel like no one thinks that I have feelings or I can think for myself. I am not stupid, it just take longer sometimes to figure it out. I do better when I figure it

out for myself then when someone does it all for me. Even if they think they are helping me, they really aren't because I have to be able to figure it out for myself sometime. They won't be there always for me.

Cody, Age 16
February, 2005
Nebraska