



# THAT DARN TIC

## A NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR KIDS WITH TS



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## Special Friendship Issue

*Eva Hamm* (13 years old)  
Millbrook, Alabama

Friendship is important to me because I have two very important best friends. One is Abbie Gunn and the other is Amanda Baxily. We hang out together and listen to music. Amanda and I are in the band. We also go see movies and go shopping together.

What makes them special is that they understand my TS and what I am going through. That is what makes them my friends. They're both nice so I really do have two best friends!



*Joseph Berquist* (13 years old)  
Boise, Idaho

When I was about 8 or 9, I noticed that I could not control the jerks and "tics." It was kind of hard for me because I did not know what I was doing and it was hard for me to concentrate. When I started talking to my dad about it, he knew what I was talking about.

He told me that he had Tourettes and he tried giving me advice about it. But it didn't help me because I couldn't help but think about it. I have many friends and most of them know I have Tourettes but I used to get made fun of when I would flinch. My friend, Nick, is the friend I

usually hang out with now. Besides the age difference, we are about the same kind of people. He is 10 and I am 13

but we get along really well and I like being able to hang around younger kids without being annoyed. Even though we are very good friends, I don't always see him because I live so far away and it costs a lot more than it used to, to go that far because of gas prices.



### Tough Times

by *Logan Toutkaldjian* (11 years old)  
Wilmington, Delaware

Once there was a girl named May and she had Tourettes. She would chirp all day long. At school she was made fun of. They called her "Chirpy the Chicken" and "Freak Girl." Only her three friends stood up for her. One day there was a new girl named Jenny and she had Tourettes! She chirped too. Jenny and May soon became friends, and no matter what anyone said they never had their feelings hurt again. FRIENDS TIL THE END!!!



*Mark Ciulla* (11 years old) of North Arlington, New Jersey, with his best friend, *Mike Palatella*.

### What Makes A Good Friend?

*Jake Ouellette* (11 years old)

San Diego, California

What makes a good friend? A good friend is someone you can rely on, someone you can trust, and someone that's always by your side.

My best friend has all these traits. He's been my friend since he was 2 years old. I can rely on him time after time. I can rely on him to support me and I can rely on him to comfort me, and to help me.

Another thing is trust. We trust each other to play with each other. I trust him to protect me. We protect each other with our lives.

He's always by my side. When I'm gone, he waits for me, and when I'm back, he'll stay by my side. He's always by my side when I want to play with him. He stands by my decisions. He stands by our friendship. He stands by the fact that he is a dog and I'm human. I'm 11 and he's 8. But he still stands by my side. I love Buddy and I know he'll be by my side for a long time to come.



Brian Molinaro (7 years old) Santa Cruz, California



Drawing by



Brian Brian

My name is Brian and I am 7. I have TS and OCD. When kids or adults make fun of me for blinking my eyes and clearing my throat, I get sad. Then I tell them I have TS and can't help it.

Some people are nice after that and some aren't. That's OK because the ones that aren't don't have cool hair like me and the ones that stick up for me are my true friends. My friends have cool hair too!



Austin Luke Cravy, 10 years old of Post, Texas, wrote the following

I'm Austin Luke Cravy. I have ADHD, OCD, TS, and tics. TS is terrible for me. I got diagnosed with TS at the age of 7. Having TS can be hard. People always make fun of me because I do weird things. They don't understand what it is like to have TS. It is hard to learn certain things because of my TS and my ADHD.

But having friends makes a big difference. Sometimes you can tell them what goes on and they will understand. Parents make a HUGE difference because they can help you with your problems. My mom and dad buy me special medicine for me to take to help my problems. Sometimes they don't always work. Playing sports improves my health and makes me feel better about myself. When I score a point or do something else really good in a game, it makes me feel good about myself.



### Ask the Tic Advisor

Dear Tic Advisor:

Before my doctor told my parents and me that I had TS, Joe was my best friend. He didn't seem to care about my tics. I felt really good about having a name for it, but Joe has gotten a little weird about it. He's made strange comments about my medications. What should I do? I'm afraid I'm losing my best friend.

Guy with a Twitchy Friend

Dear Guy with a Twitchy Friend:

So your best friend has gotten "twitchy" about your TS. He just needs a little time to get used to it. He liked you before, so he'll like you again, but maybe he has a few questions about your TS? Make sure he knows that TS is not something he can catch from you - like a cold or chicken pox. You might want to tell him why you're taking medications and what they do for you. Once he understands, he won't be twitchy about your TS.

Dear Tic Advisor:

I have TS and sometimes I think it makes it hard for me to make friends. I have to explain why I tic. I really wish I didn't tic, but I do. I play violin in the school orchestra, but I have no friends there at all.

Wishing Away My Tics

(Continued on next page)

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Dear Wishing Away My Tics:

Everyone has to cope with something. The smallest girl in the school would probably like to be a little taller. The fattest boy might wish a few pounds away. We all wish we could change things that we can't change. As we grow up we get used to being who we are. The more comfortable you are with you – all of you including your TS – the easier it will be to make friends. Relax and focus on things that make you interesting and special. Enjoy your music and share it with the other kids in the orchestra and friendships will follow.



Dear Tic Advisor:

I have two really good friends – Jane and Fran. We do everything together. We're on the same soccer team during the school year and we go to the town pool together every day in the summer. We're not popular so we don't get invited to the big birthday parties. I used to think this was because of my TS, but now I think it's because my friends are kind of shy and don't want to work on being friends with the cool girls. I'd really like to be included in other groups. What should I do? I'm feeling a little cut off from the fun that everyone else is having.

One of Three

Dear One of Three:

Remember that being popular always looks better from the outside. That being said, go ahead and reach out to other kids because they are fun – and not because they are "cool." Maybe you can add new friends to your group instead of trying to fit into the popular crowd? Jane and Fran have been loyal friends and you share common interests, don't be in a hurry to "trade them in" for friends who are "cooler."



Caleb LeBeau (11 years old)  
Arlington, Texas:

My name is Caleb and I'm an 11 year old 5th grader from Arlington TX. One of my friends is Adam. He is very athletic and fun to hang out with. Another friend in my neighborhood is Niraj. He is very musically inclined.

The three of us like to jump on my backyard trampoline. They both know that I have TS, and they see me as "one of them."

**Interview with Kellie Haines**

Kellie Haines is a ventriloquist. She performed at the recent TSA national conference with her puppets Magrau and Kamilla.

Darn Tic Interviewer: How important is friendship?

Kellie: Friendship is one of the most important things to me in my life. A friend can also be a sister, brother or other family member. My friends pulled me through during my time in the hospital. I didn't even know how many friends I had until I was ill.



True friends are there for you when you are grumpy or are having a bad day. You don't always have to be "up" and perky with true friends because they like you for who you are. My friend Shane makes me laugh really hard until my sides hurt. I haven't seen some of my friends in years, but I know that when I see them we will pick up where we left off and I can go into their mom's fridge without asking.

Darn Tic Interviewer: When you were a child did you have a best friend?

Kellie: Yes. Her name is Donna. We were born in the same hospital in the same room because her mom and my mom went into delivery three days apart. Her birthday is May 26 and mine is May 23. (No I didn't mention my birthday because I want lots of presents.)

Darn Tic Interviewer: Why was she your friend?

Kellie: She was fun and liked to do the same things as I did. We spent a lot of our days playing underneath her big table. I looked under the table as an adult and it wasn't as big as I remembered it. Do you think it shrunk?

Darn Tic Interviewer: Is friendship still important to adults?

Kellie: YES! IT IS STILL VERY IMPORTANT TO ADULTS — WHO ARE REALLY JUST KIDS WHO HAVE GROWN UP.

Darn Tic Interviewer: Who is your best friend right now?

Kellie: I have a few best friends and one of them is my husband, Greg, who really knows how to make me laugh. (He makes me laugh at myself when I get bossy.)



Jackie Baker (9 years old) of McLean, Virginia, sent us the above drawing

### That Darn Tic: Fun & Fiction Issue

A recent issue of *That Darn Tic* showcased the creativity of kids with TS in poems, essays, short stories and drawings. But one issue is simply not enough so we're planning a Fun & Fiction Issue!

Send us your poems, short stories, drawings and cartoons — from short science fiction/fantasy stories to Haiku poems and limericks about tics. Photos are also welcome.

Remember that everything will be edited for length and grammar. Drawings and cartoons should be in black ink on plain white paper.

*That Darn Tic* is TSA's newsletter by and for children up to 14 years old. Please include your name, date of birth, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address. Submissions for this very special issue are due by August 15, 2004. Send to: TSA, *That Darn Tic*, 42-40 Bell Boulevard, Suite 205, Bayside, New York 11361 or email: [peggy.harford@tsa-usa.org](mailto:peggy.harford@tsa-usa.org).

The special *That Darn Tic* Fun & Fiction Issue will be coming your way soon!



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# Summer is Here