

## Chandra's Grade 5 Speech

When you look at me do you see Chandra or someone who bounces around and does weird things? If you see Chandra, thank you for seeing me. If you see someone who moves around then let me help you understand why I do it.

I don't do it because I want to do it. I do it because I have Tourette syndrome. Tourette syndrome, or TS for short, is involuntary movements and noises. Many people call them ticks or twitches. You probably have noticed some of mine, like shaking my hair out of my face, extending my mouth or staring. Why do I do these things? Well for starters it is genetic, which means that I got it from my mother and/or father.

When someone wants to flip her hair back and it is not a good time to do it, the brain of someone with out TS tells them NO, but my brain does not tell me to stop.

If you have TS then you also have some form of add and ocd. What are they you might ask. OCD is Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and ADD is Attention Deficit Disorder. These two put together with TS form the big three as they have been nicknamed. You might have a lot of one and just a bit of the others or you might have the same amount of all three.

People with OCD have different types of things that they MUST do. Some can affect their lives very badly and some you do not even notice. Some people cannot leave their homes because they must check that the door is locked or the stove is turned off 100 times or more. Even though they know that it is ok - they just cannot go without checking one more time. When I am counting, I like to make it an even number in the end. If I have 11 cents, I will go around and look for another penny so that I have an even amount.

If you have ADHD, it is hard to concentrate on anything for a long time. The brain wants to get all the information that it can. I might be looking at a book for a couple of minutes, then get up and leave the book and talk to someone before going to get something to eat and sitting down to watch TV for two minutes and then go play with the cats. It is very hard to stay in one spot and when I get excited I find it hard to calm down.

Many famous people have the big three. Did you know that Albert Einstein and Elvis Presley had them? And believe it or not there is a doctor in Vancouver who has Tourette's Syndrome who is a brain surgeon. Imagine having someone with twitches operate on your brain!! How can that be?

When the brain is busy, you don't see the twitches. That is because the brain is thinking about the job that is being done. When I am concentrating on work my brain is not worried about opening my mouth or flipping my hair back. But, beware, after I have completed the job, then my brain sometimes tells me that I need to make up for all the time that I did not do any of them so I might do a lot in a short amount of time.

You might wonder if there is a cure for it. There is no cure, but there is medication to help the symptoms. Medication does not work for everyone and those who take it have side effects from it. For instance, I lose my appetite and when I do want to eat I want sweet things. I also find it hard to go to sleep at night.

I have these things, and there is nothing that I can do about it, except be the best possible person that I can be. I hope now that you will see just Chandra.