

## Living with Asperger's Syndrome

Social Skills. What's that? It's the worst nightmare ever.

Reasons why? That's easy.

Well, I am not your average child. I am 9 years old and I have something called Asperger's Syndrome. What's that? It's kind of like a disease but not quite. It doesn't need a cure because it doesn't do any harm.

I bet you are wondering how it is kind of like a disease if it doesn't do any harm. Well, I am sure you've heard of autism. It's just like that only a lot less severe. It just changes my behavior.

So let's talk about what types of things affect me and lots of other people because of Asperger's Syndrome.

First of all, it makes it ten times easier and more likely for me to have a temper tantrum or a meltdown. One example is when I was four or five years old, I punched my mom! I also had about ten meltdowns a day.

But that's not all.

The second way I am affected is that it makes me do weird things. When I hear certain words, I have to do certain movements. For example, one word that drives me crazy is "great." When I hear it, I have to move my hands like I am climbing a wall. If I don't do it within 30 seconds, I feel like a house flattened by an F5 twister.

In second grade, when this all began, I literally HAD to do it. My teacher even made me sit on my hands.

There is one last thing I would like to tell you about.

It isolates me.

What does that mean? Here's a hint: It has to do with conversation. It makes it very hard to talk to other children my age.

Want an example? When I went to the cafeteria, to wait for school to start, I couldn't say a word without being teased.

I lied. There is one more thing I want to tell you. I am able to cope with it. That's why all these stories are from the past.

Today, I am in many groups. I'm in chorus and math club. In chorus we sing and, I get along well. In math club we do challenging math. I get along well there to.

The future is an unknown and mysterious place. No one knows what will happen in it. You could die in one minute, or live for a hundred years. What do you think mine will be?