My experiences with Tourette Syndrome have been difficult at times. I get picked on for my Tourette Syndrome and it is hard, but I have learned to deal with it and not care about what other people think or say.

I have had my Tourette Syndrome diagnosis for five years and overtime, I have become more comfortable with it. I know kids with Tourette Syndrome and some adults too. I met some of them through Tourette Syndrome groups. All of the people with Tourette Syndrome that I know are very understanding and kind.

I have many experiences telling people about my Tourette Syndrome. Every year, I tell the kids and teachers about my Tourette Syndrome in all my classes at school so that they are more aware and educated about my illness. Some people act unkind and mean to me about my Tourette Syndrome. They will say mean things about me and how I am weird for having my illness and that I don’t belong. I try not to take it personally.

I see myself making a big impact on people as to why not allowing Tourette Syndrome to control your life, is so important. I don’t let Tourette Syndrome get in the way of things that I want or need to do and I want to share that with other kids and adults that they should be confident and not let their illness stand in their way. I think people will become more educated and understanding about Tourette Syndrome if this happens.

I’m Katie Coburn. I like art, robotics and basketball.

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* Estimate calculated based on 2014 estimated US Census data Ohio population under age 18: of 2,643,469.