



# Complex Child E-Magazine

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## Being a Teenager with Cerebral Palsy by Erin

I would be lying if I said that being a teenager with cerebral palsy was a “walk” in the park. I have my dark days. The days where I want to slap life in the face, and ask why it is so brutally unfair. Some days I question what the point of even living is. Some days the sky is permanently dark grey, a cloud never to be lifted.



I would also be lying, however, if I said that being sixteen with cerebral palsy was all doom and gloom. For the most part, I enjoy life. I have hobbies that any other teenager has, such as listening to music, hanging out with friends, and gossiping about that hot guy that works at the local Subway. Sometimes, though, people don't see me as “one of them.” They see me as “the poor girl in the chair” and treat me like I'm stupid, or five. I

could get offended by this ignorance, or I could simply laugh it off and continue with my day. I prefer to choose the latter. It's much easier, and it brings a smile to my face.

I also like to joke about my disability, especially with friends who are in a similar situation. We'll joke about anything from startling, to having "a spazzy moment," or being "crips," or stand-up comedians. It's all in good spirit. In my opinion, being able to laugh at yourself and your imperfections is important. It allows you to gain a better understanding of yourself, and teaches you not to take life so seriously. Laughing lets me forget the pain often experienced with disability. It truly is the best medicine.

All in all, life is hard, but no matter what, it's still life. No one promised that it would be easy, they just promised that it would be worth it. I often wish that my cerebral palsy would just magically disappear one day, that one morning, I'll wake up without it. I dream about being "normal," about being able to run. Dreams are dreams. Reality is reality. In all honesty, I would feel lost without my disability. I just wouldn't be me. I could choose to complain about how hard having cerebral palsy is, but put simply, it is a part of who I am.

*Erin is a sixteen-year-old girl from New Zealand, and is one of a twin. In her spare time, she enjoys cheering her favourite rugby team on, playing boccia, and generally having a laugh. She hopes you enjoy her article!*