



NJ Center for Tourette Syndrome AND ASSOCIATED DISORDERS, INC.

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High resolution photos available upon request
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NJCTS seeks to train a new class of Youth Advocates in Central Jersey

The nation's first Center of Excellence for Tourette Syndrome is expanding its statewide, youth-led education and advocacy program

SOMERVILLE, NJ— The NJ Center for Tourette Syndrome and Associated Disorders, Inc (NJCTS) will be leading a training session for the NJCTS Youth Advocate program for all interested teens and young adults living with Tourette Syndrome (TS). Eligible young adults either have Tourette Syndrome themselves or live with a family member with TS.

The Youth Advocate training will take place on Saturday, May 7, at the Hillsborough Library, 379 S. Branch Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844.

NJCTS Youth Advocates present in schools throughout New Jersey, informing youth about Tourette Syndrome—a misunderstood and misdiagnosed disorder that affects 1 in 100 school-aged children who are often the targets of bullying. In addition to providing an overview of the neurological disorder, Youth Advocates promote understanding and tolerance and deliver a strong anti-bullying message. The presentations have grown to include a discussion of the Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.

Youth Advocates are also trained to serve as patient educators, working with NJCTS partner doctors to provide Grand Rounds presentations at hospitals. The Patient-Centered Medical Education presentation is uniquely designed to provide doctors and medical staff with the personal experiences of patients and helps foster an understanding of the stresses and needs of families living with TS and the associated disorders.

Once trained, NJCTS Youth Advocates have all the resources they need to make a difference in the lives of others living with TS. NJCTS coordinates presentations all across the state, matching requests from schools and medical centers to trained Youth Advocates in the surrounding region.



NJCTS Youth Advocate Mike Hayden presents to an entire school district about TS and the associated disorders.

Since the program's launch in 2009, NJCTS Youth Advocates have conducted more than 250 presentations, raising awareness and increasing sensitivity and understanding.

“Our Youth Advocates foster understanding, sensitivity, and tolerance of TS while displacing the myths and stereotypes that are often associated with this misunderstood and misdiagnosed disorder,” said NJCTS Executive Director Faith W. Rice. “By educating others, we hope that each new generation will grow up with a better understanding of TS, making biases a thing of the past.”

For more information or to attend the May 7 training, please contact Gina Maria Jones, M.Ed, NJCTS Education Outreach Coordinator, at gjones@njcts.org or 908-575-7350.

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*NJ Center for Tourette Syndrome & Associated Disorders, Inc.
Collaborative partnerships for the Tourette Syndrome community*

NJCTS is the nation's first Center of Excellence for Tourette Syndrome and Associated Disorders. Through partnerships and collaborations, NJCTS provides a continuum of services, support, and education for families; outreach and training for medical and educational professionals; and advocacy for collaborative research for better treatments and a cure for TS. For more information, please visit www.njcts.org or call 908-575-7350.