

## School Talks Series - Elementary

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Hi, I'm Jessica's mom and I thought I would stop by and talk a little about why she walks differently than you. Jess was born with cerebral palsy--big words--right? It just means that when she was born she didn't get to breath soon enough and since she didn't get enough air (oxygen) her brain has trouble telling her legs to walk.

Some things she can do the same as you--some things she has trouble with. Do you have trouble with anything? What? (say one kid has trouble with tying shoes/etc.) Jessica can tie her shoes by herself--but she has trouble riding a bike still. I bet that each of us in this room has trouble doing something (this applies to adults too) and each of us is really really good at doing something--it is just a little more obvious that the thing Jessica has trouble with is walking. She wears this brace--called a dafo--see? (pass dafo around--show how it goes on) it helps her heel stay on the ground. Any questions? (some would ask if it hurt, etc. I tried to let Jess answer as many as possible--she would also jump in on the speech itself)

The above is the jist of the speech--obviously not the actual speech as I always went in and just winged it. One year Jessica's older (much) cousin had written a story (made into a book for a present for Jess) about a bird who had a wing that didn't work like all the other birds, and how he overcame his disability. We read that in class. I usually let Jessica read as then her classmates would realize "wow -she is really smart!" as her reading level was at a 6th grade level in kindergarten, this was an added plus. Punch and cookies at the end will make you a mom ALL the kids will love!

Page content written by Janice.