

## Life Without My Big Bro! Speech

Yes!!!! He's gone!!! Wha who!!!

Honourable judges, teachers, and fellow competitors. This year I decided to do my speech on my brother Andy. Now, I know what you are thinking, who would do a speech on their sibling? But... this year was different for my family.

Andy went to a different school in London Ontario called Amethyst. Amethyst is a school for children with learning disabilities. This school provides programs to help children get better in certain skills.

Andy is in grade 7 and he is 12 years old. He has been identified as a gifted student with a learning disability. This is why Andy chose to go to Amethyst.

A learning disability is when people have difficulty processing information like; listening, remembering, reading, writing, math and spelling. Can you imagine, how frustrating it must be to know the answers but you just can't write them down?

Some people are embarrassed because they have a learning disability because they are different. But in our family, we believe being different is something to celebrate, and we are so proud of Andy for taking on this challenge all by himself.

Amethyst has grade 7 to 10. It is a small school with 60 students and only 6 are in his class. With so few students in a class, the teacher can spend

more time with each student helping them to achieve their goals.

Amethyst teaches their students how to use different tools to help with reading and writing. For example, Andy has learned how to use his talking dictionary and some new computer software programs. One computer program I think is pretty cool is called Dragon. It types everything Andy says into a microphone onto the computer screen.

Amethyst has no French or Music classes, but Andy has gym or swim class everyday. Wow, you should see this indoor pool. The floor rises and lowers. So the shallow end could be this deep... or this deep.

Now keep in mind, London is three hours away, so Andy doesn't come home everyday. He sleeps there from Monday to Friday and he comes home on the weekends. Where he sleeps is in a residence connected to the school. Ewe... sleeping in a school!!!!

Now all of a sudden Andy has SIXTEEN brothers including his roommate Kyle.

Andy eats breakfast and lunch in his residence kitchen, and he has supper in the main cafeteria. He says the food is just OK, but it is not as good as mom's! Andy has a primary counselor named Fetah (not the cheese!) and his job is to take care of Andy and his group.

Boy, was I ever excited that he was gone! I thought I would have lots of fun, but it has its ups and downs. So here is the real story.

"Life without my big bro!"

- I get mom and dad to myself and their complete attention, BUT I have more jobs to do around the house.
- I get to sleep wherever I want, BUT I have no one to play with.
- I get the house to myself, BUT when he comes home on the weekends... he belongs to mom and dad!

Oh well, look on the bright side... when Andy grows up, he is going to be a famous architect and he will design my amazing house. But until then... I'll just have to enjoy being an only child.

By Jordan Fawcett  
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