

Tips for Kids by Kids with Bipolar Disorder

Taking Medicine: Tricks to Make it Easier

"I am always in a bad mood when it is time to take my medicine each morning. If I take my meds without getting angry, I get to put a quarter in a jar." Cody age 8

"Make taking medicine seem fun like giving yourself a snack afterwards."
Maria, age 9

"I race my mom down the stairs, and we see who can swallow our medicine first."
Samuel age 7

"Sometimes I really don't want to take my medicine, even though I know I have to take it. Then I realize that I should take my pills with with a drink that I love and. That helps a lot."
ZOE 11 years old

"You need to take your medicine cause it makes you feel better. You could take a bite of ice cream after." Rose, age 7

"I put my pills in applesauce so I can swallow them easier." Jonah, age 6

"I use my imagination and pretend my medicine is candy and swallow it quick. I don't like taking it but I have to because it helps me stay calm." Christina Age 8

(It's okay to pretend that medicine is candy to help you swallow it but just remember that it is MUCH different than candy. Never take more or less than your doctor tells you!)

Keeping Your Cool: How to Calm Down Before a Blowout

"When I get angry, I like to go to my bed and hug my stuffed dragon. Sometimes, when I get really mad I like to run around a chair very fast so that I get tired of being mad." Lauren, age 11

"When I am mad I like to think of horses because they run out their energy. I like to pretend I'm a horse. I hope you can imagine something in your mind so you can control your energy like I did." Aly age 8 1/2

"Sometimes I feel I want to kill someone, including myself. So I hit my pillow or go to sleep and try to get the facts of the conflict about whatever I'm mad at. Sometimes it helps to go

somewhere nice and calm." Miah age 8

"Here are things that I can use before a blow out because they calm me down. Coloring, playing, watch a movie. If I'm too angry I go to calm corner. Calm corner is a place where you do things to calm you down." Rick, age 8

"If I get mad, I like to hug my cat and pet him and know that he always loves me." Sarah age 8

"When My Good Energy Turns Bad And I Have Too Much Energy...I try to force myself to go outside alone and Kick a ball , play on a tire swing , make an obstacle course or just run around. Thats what helps me!" Sarah 11 yrs old

"What I do when somebody in my family, including me, sees that I am about to blow up, we say ttt. TTT stands for Tony the tiger. I just grab my stuffed tiger and I have something to hold on to, if needed, while we (my family and I) talk the issue out." Daisy, 11

"Say to your self I'll worry about it tomorrow. Then the next day you say the same thing." Tori age 12

"Sometimes when I get angry, I go to my room until I feel better. When I feel overwhelmed then I turn on calming music." Denise, age 9

"Take deep breaths, go outside, or take a warm bath. It helps me calm down." Julia age 9

"When I get angry or too upset I go under my bed. It is dark and quiet. I take my blanket and pillow and a hot water bottle. It calms me down and makes me feel safe. I like it when my dog crawls under there with me, too." Roy Age 9

"Sometimes my cat bites me and it makes me very mad. I learned to respect my cat's feeling when he gets out of control. I just drop him and not be mean and he runs away. Sometimes I hear him tell me to do mean things to my sister. I know he isn't really talking to me, but sometimes it sounds real." Dale age 6

"I like to keep my cool by hangng out with my best friend. When I talk to my friend about my favorite things, it takes my mind off of other things. Punching a punching bag can help too. P.S. Be cool about it." Camille age 11

"I am 9 yrs old and have trouble controllng my temper. I know i should take 3 deep breaths when i start feeling angry, but I usually act out before i know it. It happen so quickly." Cory age 9

"Think of happy thoughts and then stand there and take deep breaths." Sean, age 9

Going to School: What Helps You to be Successful

"I do my routine, then I have a great day." Christina age 8

"When I don't want to go to school ... It is usually because I hate the way I look and feel. I have to keep talking to myself saying ..."don't look in the mirror" "I look fine"" It doesn't matter, I'm just having these feelings because of the bi-polar." I try to look at it as a whole new adventure." Sarah 11

"I hate mornings so my Mom gives me snuggle time with hugs and butterfly kisses. We even eat breakfast in bed and talk about things. We have a special dim light so the room isn't too bright. This helps me stay calm while I finish getting ready for school. By the time we are in the car driving to school I am very excited about my day." Cody age 8

"When ever have to I write at school, all the kids make fun of my handwriting so my mom bought a special pen that is more comfertible for me and it helps my hand writing." ZOE, 11 years old

Family Members: Tips on Getting Along

"When I feel mad at someone I take a deep breath and then cool myself down with happy thoughts. Then I talk to the person about what was bothering me." Christina Age 8

"My brother and I get into fights a lot to calm my self down I just walk away and go to my room. Then I lie down and hold my special rock until it's hot. Once I feel its then I know I am calmed down." ZOE 11 years old

"I like to play board games with my family. When my brother is afraid I try to talk about silly things or I just try to make him feel better." Rosalie age 8

"When it looks like you're about to get in big time trouble, drop the subject. Don't say anything about it, whine, or bawl. This will only get you in more trouble. Also try playing a favorite video game or something else you love to do." Tanae age 11

"To get along better with my sister I ask to play with her." Rose, age 7

"When I don't get what I want my family sometimes makes deals with me. If I do good things like cleaning the den I HATE THAT. Then they let me do something fun. If I work my point thingy I can play games. I do some of the things they want and I win. If I don't I lose. It makes me mad but I am happy when I win." George, age 7

"You might get bored with a little animal. Then you will want to twirl in circles. Then you will probably hold them wrong and who knows what so just be careful with what you do to make your old pets funner. Bipolar kids tend to go too far with that. Don't get your pets when you are in a noncontrol mood." K.D.,Age 11

"My brother shares my room with me and he snores very very loud. Sometimes I go out to the couch." Kenny age 9

Negative Thoughts: How to Fight Them

"Whenever people act mean around me, I just make up a poem. I make it up so it hurts no one's feelings. Sooner or later, I write it down in my book of poems. Once I fill my composition book of poems, I will try to publish it so I can share my feelings with others." Jen age 11

"If had sad thoughts I would look at the fish because they make me feel happy." Rosalie age 8

"If I have trouble thinking of happy things, I say Butterflies, Butterflies, Butterflies, because they are so delicate and beautiful they help you think happy thoughts." Julia, age 9

"I hear voices in my head telling me to do things that will hurt me. When I do hear it I tell that voice to go back to sleep and I'll deal with it in the morning. Sometimes the voice is an Angel voice telling me to ignore that bad voice and she says I am safe cause my Mommy and Daddy love me." Kenny age 9

Staying Healthy: Your Tips

"When I feel like eating candy I concentrate on something else like healthy foods my cousin would eat so she can swim better. Then I try to choose something healthy carrots with peanut butter dip, bananas oranges, apples (with or without dip) or dried banana chips." Christina Age 8

"I eat healthy foods so I can grow bigger." Samuel age 7

"Eat the right foods and take your medicine." Julia, age 9

"If I have a snack it gives me more energy to write and do all that stuff." Jonah, age 6

Going to Support Groups or Therapy: How has it Helped You?

"I pretend that I am at my friend's house and talk about problem with my therapist."
Christina Age 8

"Always make sure you get a therapist with toys. If you're a little kid, you should always be able to play at the therapist's office because it makes you feel comfortable." Daffodil, age 7

"Tell your parents if you like your therapist or not." K.D., age 11

"My new counselor bought his own Yu-Gi-Oh cards to duel with ME at my visits. I like him !!! I see him sometimes at my school too. I am learning to talk to him about my feelings. He's as good as the counselor I had when I was in K5 - but he got a new job and had to move. I missed my old counselor lots, but this new counselor is cool too. My Mom could'nt believe how excited I was to go this week, and I get to see him next week on my BIRTHDAY and we can duel again!! He said he might get to come to one of my basketball games, and he's proud of me forplaying this year." C.C. 3RD Grade, almost 9 years old

Scary Thoughts or Feelings: How to Make Speaking About them Easier

"These are things that help me, either just crying or hugging your favorite stuffed animal!"
Isabel, age 10

"I hold my stuffed animal, my baby bear, real tight!" Amanda

When one girl gets scared or upset she stops what she is doing. Then, she focuses on a Magnolia blossom. This is a huge flowering tree blossom. If that doesnt work she slowly starts to count. 11 yr old girl

One 8 yr old tries this: He pretends that his whole brain is a canvas. He uses a big wide imaginary paintbrush to paint the whole inside of his head (must paint his entire brain) soft soothing colors. He starts with yellow, pink, orange, green, sky blue, purple, etc. until he feels calm again. 8 yr old boy

"What you can do if you're feeling scared is watch a movie." (Isaac recommends Garfield The Movie!) Isaac age 13

"I'm afraid to ride on trains, so next time I ride a train I'll try to read a book or listen to music so I won't think of the scary things." Rosalie age 8

"If you feel afraid remain calm." Samuel age 7

"If I feel bad, I tell my mommy I need help." Rose, age 7

"Talk to your doctor about your feelings. Take a deep breath and talk to your family." Julia, age 9

Suggested Tip to Try from the Bryna Hebert, author of My Roller Coaster Feelings Book:

"Sometimes the thoughts about our fears are actually worse than the fears themselves. When you first start feeling afraid, notice what your body is doing and how it is feeling and try not to think. If you need to focus your brain, focus on slow, deep breathing and think about your body and how the air feels as it moves in and out of your body. As you stop thinking about your fears, you will probably feel your body relax a little and your breathing slow down a little, and you should feel better."

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