

MARCH 2020

PHOTOS SPEAK M1



Photos positively representing Tanya Speaks

IMAGINE

... going to school every day knowing other kids will tease you and bully you. And it's all because of your bushy, unruly eyebrows – a little row of hair above each eye. You are called names. You're pushed off swings. You're shoved against walls and lockers. Your mom encourages you not to cut your eyebrows. She tells you that everyone will want eyebrows like yours one day. You don't listen, though. You just want them gone so the bullying will stop. Cutting them off lands you in the hospital, bleeding everywhere. You're left with scars that now sit where your eyebrows had been.

This is Tania Speaks' story...or at least how it began. After years of bullying in elementary and middle school, she took matters into her own hands, despite her mother's encouragement. Her eyebrows weren't growing back from using products available in stores. Tania took matters into her own hands again. She created her own gel made from natural, organic ingredients. The gel filled in her eyebrows and made them lay down smoothly. Now instead of being bullied, Tania's peers told her that her eyebrows looked great!

Tania began selling the gel out of her high school bathroom. When she realized she might be on to something, she went to her mom and asked her for a loan. Her mom agreed, and Tania promised that she would pay her back quickly. Tania's grit and integrity allowed her to make good on that promise. Her company, Brow Boost, in its second year of business, was on track to triple what she made in the first year. Tania says about her mom, "She motivates me and inspires me to set and accomplish goals every day." Tania's mom was her biggest cheerleader.

Tania embodies the encouragement her mom gave her and she turns around and gives it to others freely. "I love helping other teens who are being bullied and lack confidence to embrace their



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BROWS BEAT THE BULLYING

differences. My horrible experience showed me how to turn tragedy into triumph." Tania knows that her mom's encouragement is one of the main reasons she is able to run a successful business. Tania wants others to be encouraged as well, saying, "Every kid I can inspire is enough to keep me going."

Tania graduated a year early in the top 5% of her class. She invests her time in talking to other young people and encouraging them. Tania knows the pain of bullying and the joy of overcoming with grit. "When I was getting bullied, I just believed I was always going to be bullied. I was always going to be sad and crying to my mom every day. But I had to realize this was just one phase in my life... Definitely believe pain doesn't last always."

How can you use this encouragement from Tania, or someone else in your life, to overcome difficulty? How can you encourage yourself and others to help write your own best TrueSuccess lifestory?

QUESTIONS LEAD TO UNDERSTANDING M2/5

1. What are ways Tania was encouraged by her mom? How did that help Tania to overcome the bullying?

2. How does Tania encourage others?

3. What can you learn from Tania's lifestory? How can you encourage another person in your life dealing with bullying or another difficult issue?
